

## **Maintaining A Safe Household For Your Child (November)**

Each year, millions of babies and young children are injured or accidentally poisoned in their homes. Many are hospitalized, and some end up with serious injuries that lead to lifelong medical conditions.

Identifying possible hazards around the house is the key to preventing many of the accidents that occur in homes with young children. Potential dangers include electrical outlets, appliances, and household cleaners. Here are some specific steps parents can take to ensure the safety of their children.

- Place covers and plates over electrical outlets to prevent electrocution.
- Use safety latches and locks on cabinets and drawers containing medicines, poisonous chemicals, sharp objects, or matches and lighters.
- Buy medicines with child-proof caps, and always keep them closed.
- Keep plastic bags, plants, and night lights with small bulbs out of the reach of children.
- Check all toys for small parts that could be swallowed.
- Install safety gates to prevent children from falling down steps or entering dangerous areas like the kitchen when you are cooking. Gates that screw into the wall are more secure than “pressure” gates.

Remember that children can sometimes find a way around even the most seemingly child-proof device, so parents should be constantly on the alert to ensure their child’s safety.

Additional information on child safety is available from the Lansing Area Safety Council (517-394-4614).

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