



## Child Safety Programme (CSP)

### Manual for health professionals on core child health contacts



Promoting child safety inside and outside the home

Ag cur sabháilteacht leanaí chun cinn laistigh agus lasmuigh den bhaile



# Contents

<b>Introduction</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Materials for parents and carers</b>	<b>2</b>
Wallchart	
Checklist	
<b>Key messages to start with during each visit</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Babies aged 0-12 months</b>	<b>11</b>
Falls	12
Fire safety	14
Burns and scalds	15
Choking, strangulation and suffocation	17
Drowning	24
Poison	26
Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS)	29
Sun	32
Car seats	34
Animals	35
Other dangers in the home	35
<b>Children aged 12-24 months</b>	<b>37</b>
Falls	38
Fire safety	41
Burns and scalds	42
Choking, strangulation and suffocation	44
Drowning	50
Poison	53
Sun	56
Car seats	58
Playing outdoors	59
Animals	61
Other dangers in the home	61
<b>Children aged 2-5 years</b>	<b>63</b>
Falls	64
Fire safety	67
Burns and scalds	69
Choking, strangulation and suffocation	71
Drowning	77
Poison	79
Sun	82
Car seats	84
Play outdoors	84
Cycling and walking	87
Animals	88
Other dangers in the home	88
<b>Child safety on the farm</b>	<b>89</b>
<b>Acknowledgements</b>	<b>93</b>

Photos posed by models. Some images have been altered to show safety risks and solutions.



# Introduction

Children are naturally curious and want to explore the world around them. The more mobile they get, the more adventurous they become. But all around them, particularly in their own home, there are many potential dangers – some are obvious and others are less so.

Childhood unintentional injury remains a major public health challenge. It is the leading cause of death among children and teenagers in Ireland. Children in the 0 to 5 year age group are most at risk of injuries in the home.

Most childhood injuries and the events leading to them are predictable and preventable. This is why the Child Safety Programme uses the term 'unintentional injury' instead of 'accident'.

This manual has been developed by the HSE's Child Safety Programme (CSP).

The Child Safety Programme (CSP) aims are to promote child safety and to reduce unintentional injuries inside and outside the home to children in the 0 to 5 year age group.

## **CSP objectives:**

- To empower families to make the necessary changes to their thinking and to their environment, both inside and outside the home, to promote child safety.
- To deliver a model of best practice on child injury prevention and safety promotion.

## **Delivery of the CSP:**

- The Child Safety Programme is delivered to parents and carers of children in the 0 to 5 year age group by the Public Health Nurses at the core child health contacts in line with the National Healthy Childhood Programme.
- Practice Nurses, Community Medical Doctors and other staff involved in the delivery of child health and social services reinforce the key safety messages as appropriate.

## **This manual:**

This manual is aimed at health professionals to use when talking to parents and carers about child safety during the core child health **contacts**. It has been designed to be easy to read with plenty of images to explain the key messages to parents and carers.

The manual is divided into three age stages as follows:

0-12 months; 12-24 months; 2-5 years.

There is also a section on **farm safety** relevant for all the age groups which should be used in every visit for children living on farms.

## **Resources and materials for parents, carers and health professionals:**

Parents and carers should be given a copy of the materials below during the core child health contacts:

- Child Safety Programme wallchart
- Child Safety Programme checklist

Resource materials including wall charts, leaflets and posters are also available on [www.hse.ie/childsafety](http://www.hse.ie/childsafety). Parents and carers can access child safety information at [www.mychild.ie](http://www.mychild.ie).



**Share this safety information with everyone who looks after your children.**

## Dangers at windows and balconies

### Falls

- ✓ Use window restrictors that you can open without tools (so you can escape quickly in a fire).
- ✓ Keep furniture and objects a child could stand or climb on away from windows and balconies.
- ✓ Block gaps in balcony railings that could be used as a foothold or children could fit through.



### Strangulation



- ✗ Do not install blinds and curtains with cords attached.
- ✓ Make existing cords safer - by replacing them with curtain or blind wands or using a safety device like a tie-down or tensioning device to pull the cord tight and secure it to the floor.

## Farm safety

- Farms are work places.
- ✗ Never allow your child onto a farm unless directly supervised by an adult.



## Fire safety

- ✓ Install smoke alarms, test them weekly and immediately replace used batteries.
- ✓ Use a fireguard and a sparkguard on open fires.
- ✓ Protect stoves and heaters with a fireguard.
- ✓ Secure all fireguards to a wall.
- ✗ Never place anything on a fireguard.
- ✓ Make a fire escape plan and practice it often.
- ✓ Unplug electrical equipment when not in use.
- ✗ Never overload sockets.
- ✓ Ban smoking in your home.



## Road safety

### Cars

- ✓ Securely strap your child into a correctly fitted car seat, appropriate for their weight and height, for every journey (see rsa.ie).



### Traffic

- ✓ Hold your child, or their hand, when near traffic or when cars are coming or going from driveways.



### Cycling

- ✓ Your child should wear a well-fitting helmet and hi-vis clothing. Their bike must have working brakes, lights and a bell.

## Stairs, furniture and doors

### Falls

- ✗ Never leave your child unattended on a changing table or on a raised surface.
- ✓ Use stair gates, correctly secured, at top and bottom of stairs.
- ✓ Use equipment and sitting devices with a 5-way safety harness.
- ✓ Keep steps clear of items that could trip.
- ✗ Do not use baby walkers.

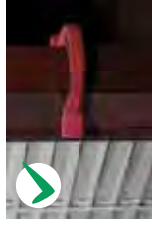


### Furniture and TVs toppling

- ✓ Use furniture safety straps to secure to floor or wall your TVs and stands, chests of drawers, bookcases and other furniture likely to fall.

### Fingers trapped in doors

- ✓ Use finger safety door stoppers on door edges, out of children's reach.



## Pet safety

- ✓ Supervise all contact with pets.
- ✓ Remember, no matter how well you know a dog, never, ever leave a young child alone with it.
- ✓ Model safe behaviour and teach your child how to play safely with pets.





## Burns and scalds



- ✓ Keep hot drinks out of reach.
- ✗ Never hold your child while cooking or while making or drinking a hot drink.
- ✓ Keep your child away from the cooker.



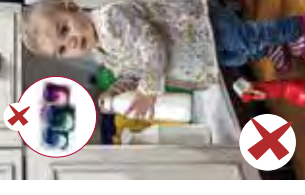
- ✓ Turn pot handles in and cook on the back hobs first.
- ✗ Do not use chip-pans.
- ✓ Keep flexes short and all electrical equipment out of reach.
- ✓ At bath time run cold water first, then warm water, then cold water to cool the taps.
- ✗ Check water temperature before putting your child in. It should be 36°C for newborns and 37-38°C for babies and young children.

## Safe sleep



- ✓ Always place your baby on their back to sleep, even for naps.
- ✓ Place their feet to the foot of the cot, and keep head and face uncovered.
- ✗ Do not let your baby go to sleep wearing a hat. Hats are used immediately after birth but are not needed for sleep after that (unless advised by your doctor or midwife).
- ✓ Keep cot free of soft objects and anything loose or fluffy, including pillows, positioners, bumpers and toys.
- ✓ The safest place for your baby to sleep is in a cot in your room (for at least the first 6 months).
- ✗ Do not let your baby get too hot.
- ✗ Do not smoke or allow anyone to smoke in your home or car.
- ✗ Do not use sitting devices for routine sleep.

## Poison



- ✓ Use cupboard safety locks.
- ✓ Keep medication, laundry products and cleaning products in their original containers and out of reach in a locked cupboard.
- ✓ Do not use bottles or food containers for storing chemicals or cleaning products.
- ✓ Keep alcohol, cigarettes, e-cigarettes and their refills out of reach.



- ✓ Keep cosmetics (perfume, make-up and hair and skin products) and handbags out of sight and reach.
- ✓ Store garden, DIY, agricultural and chemical products in their original containers in a locked shed.
- ✓ Install carbon monoxide alarms.

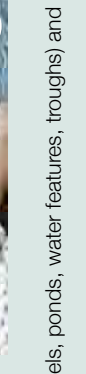
## Choking, suffocation and strangulation

- ✓ Keep small objects out of sight and reach.
- ✓ Cut grapes or cherry tomatoes into quarters lengthways.
- ✗ Do not give popcorn, marshmallows, chewing gum, nuts or boiled sweets to under 5s.
- ✓ Grate hard raw vegetable and raw apples before serving.
- ✓ Peel the skin from sausages or hot dogs and cut lengthways into pieces as small as your child's smallest fingernail.
- ✓ Supervise young children while they are eating.
- ✓ Remove bibs before sleep and after feeding.
- ✓ Keep handbags, plastic bags and plastic nappy sacks out of sight and reach.
- ✓ Check that toys are age appropriate and have the CE mark.
- ✗ Never put jewellery (or teething jewellery), strings, ribbons, or clothes or hats with strings on young children.



## Drowning

- ✗ Never leave your child alone at bath time.
- ✓ Empty the bath immediately after use.
- ✗ Do not use bath seats as your baby could slip out or tip over into the water.
- ✓ Empty paddling pools, buckets and any other water containers immediately after use and store out of reach.
- ✓ Cover and completely fence off water sources (barrels, ponds, water features, troughs) and slurry pits.



My Eircode: \_\_\_\_\_

My Mobile: \_\_\_\_\_

My Work: \_\_\_\_\_

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

### Other numbers:

### Next-of-kin:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

### Neighbour:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

### Poison Information Line

01 809 2166 (8am-10pm, 7 days a week)

### Doctor/GP:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_



# Basic first aid    Seek medical help at any stage if in doubt. Phone 999 or 112 in an emergency.

## Choking

If you can see the object, try to remove it.

There is no need to intervene if your child is coughing effectively, simply encourage them to cough.

Ask older children "Are you choking? Can you breathe?"

If your baby or child is unable to cry, to talk or to cough, check that they are conscious.

If not conscious, phone 999 or 112 immediately.

If your child is conscious but they are not coughing or not coughing effectively, you will need to deliver First Aid:

### Babies under 1 year



**1.** Sit down and hold baby face down on your knee, supporting the head, jaw and neck. Their head should be lower than their body.

**2.** Give **5 back blows** using the heel of your hand between the baby's shoulders.

**3.** Turn baby face up along your thighs.

**4.** Give **5 chest thrusts** by finding the baby's breast bone, placing two fingers in the middle and pushing sharply on the chest.

**5.** Keep doing 5 back blows and 5 chest thrusts until the object pops out and the infant begins to breathe again.



### Children aged 1 year and older

**1.** Stand behind your child and support them in a forward-leaning position.

**2.** Give **up to 5 blows** to the back between the shoulder blades.

**3.** If this does not dislodge the object, stand or kneel behind the child.

**4.** Give **5 abdominal thrusts**: clench your fist and place it between the naval and the ribs. Grasp this hand with your other hand and pull sharply inwards and upwards. Do not apply pressure to the ribs as this may cause damage.

**5.** Keep doing 5 back blows and 5 abdominal thrusts until the object pops out and the child begins to breathe again.

### After taking these steps:

Get medical help after the object has come out in case part of the object remains or your child has been injured during the procedure.

**If the child becomes unresponsive**, call for help and send someone to **phone 999 or 112**.

Stay on the phone and listen carefully for advice.

You must begin CPR (cardio pulmonary resuscitation) – the person who answers your 999 or 112 call will guide you.

During CPR if you see the object that caused the choking, remove it with your fingers but do not place your fingers into the mouth if you cannot see the object.

## Cuts and bleeding

**1. Wash your hands.**

**2. Clean the cut:** use cool running water.

**3. Check the wound:** See if there is an object stuck in it.

**4. Stop the bleeding:** If there is no object stuck in the wound, apply light pressure with a clean cloth or pad until bleeding stops.

If there is an object in the wound do not press on the object. Press either side of it instead.

**5. Cover the cut:** Use a clean non-fluffy dressing.

**6. Get medical advice if:**

- You are worried
- An object is stuck in the wound
- The cut is bleeding heavily
- The cut was caused by a bite
- The cut becomes infected
- The cut fails to heal
- Your child has been incompletely vaccinated against tetanus.

## Burns and scalds

If the burn or scald is above the neck, call for an ambulance and follow their advice while waiting for the ambulance to attend.

If it is other areas which are affected, still plan to get medical attention, but it is safe and a good idea to take a few minutes to apply basic first aid at home:

**Cool the burn or scald** - run cool water over it for 20 minutes.

**Remove tight clothing and jewellery** as burnt skin can swell, but do not remove anything which is stuck to the skin.

**Do not** place any ice, fats, ointments or creams on the injury.

Use a clean **non-fluffy cloth** or clean cling film if you need to loosely cover the injury.

**Get medical advice** immediately unless the burn or scald is very minor.

## Poison

**1. Stay calm and act quickly.**

**2. Take the poison** away from your child.

**3.** If the poison was eaten, make your child **spit it out** and run your fingers around the mouth to flick out remaining pieces.

**4. Never** make your child vomit.

**5.** If chemical has been splashed into the **eye** - **wash with tap water for 15 minutes.**

**6. Wash any skin in contact with poison** using soap and water.

**7. Do not give anything** to eat or drink unless directed to do so by healthcare staff.

**8. Get medical advice:**

- ✓ **Phone the Poisons Information Line on 01 809 2166 (8am -10pm).**
- ✓ Outside these hours contact your GP or the hospital.
- ✓ In an emergency, phone 112 or 999.
- ✓ **Always take the product container** with you to the telephone, GP or hospital.

## Nose bleeds

If your child has a nose bleed, get them to sit down, tilt their head forwards and pinch the end of their nose for 10 minutes. After 10 minutes, check their nose. If their nose is still bleeding, pinch for another 10 minutes.

Get medical advice if the nose continues to bleed.

## First aid kit

Have a well-stocked first aid kit.

**Keep out of children's reach.**  
Include a list of emergency numbers.

**Do not store medication in a first aid kit. It should be stored in a high locked cupboard.**

**Learn the basic first aid skills outlined here and consider doing a first aid course.**





**This wall chart is provided to parents and carers by their local public health nurse.**

Please hang on the inside door of a kitchen cupboard for easy access.

**For more information on child safety, see [mychild.ie](https://mychild.ie)**

**mychild.ie**



Photos posed by models. Some images have been altered to show safety risks.



# Child Safety Checklist

- ✓ Check each room and area. Include halls, stairs and landing, driveway, gardens, shed and garage
- ✓ Get down on your hands and knees to see everything from your child's height. Ask yourself:  
*'Is there anything in this space that could be a danger to my child?'*
- ✓ Use the checklist below to help. Aim to have every box ticked and a plan to fix any items not ticked

## In an emergency

- A well-stocked first aid kit, stored out of children's sight and reach. It should contain a list of emergency numbers
- Children know their address, Eircode, phone number and when to use the emergency services number – 999 or 112

## Fire, carbon monoxide and electrical safety

- Working smoke alarms that are tested regularly (once a week is recommended)
- A fire escape plan that is practiced with your children
- All doors are closed at night to prevent spread of fire
- You do not smoke or allow anyone to smoke in your home
- Open fires have a sparkguard and a fireguard (secured to the wall with nothing placed on top)
- Matches and lighters are stored in a high locked cupboard
- All chimneys are regularly swept and kept clear
- At least one audible carbon monoxide alarm is installed anywhere you burn fuel
- Fuel-burning appliances are serviced once a year
- The lint filter in your clothes dryer is cleaned regularly to prevent fire
- Electrical sockets are in good condition and not overloaded
- Electrical equipment is in good condition and unplugged when not in use
- All electrical items, including hair straighteners, are out of children's reach to prevent burns
- The flexes on kettles and other electrical items are short and out of children's reach (risk of burns)



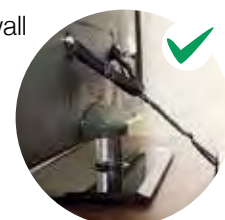
## Windows and balconies

- All windows are secured with window restrictors that don't require tools for opening (for quick escape in a fire)
- Blind cords and curtain cords that cannot be removed have a tie-down or tension device fitted to prevent strangulation
- Furniture and other objects that your child could use for climbing are placed away from windows and balconies
- Any gaps in railings that could be used as a foothold or that children could fit through are blocked



## Around the home – general points to check in all rooms

- TVs and TV stands, drawers, bookcases and other unstable furniture are secured to the floor or wall
- Furniture pads are used on sharp corners
- Correctly installed stair-gates are used at the top and bottom of stairs and steps are kept clear
- There is a 5-way harness on the high chair, baby bouncer, car seat and other sitting devices
- Your child is never unattended on a changing table or any raised surface (risk of falling)
- No baby walkers – they increase the risk of head injuries, burns, scalds and poisoning
- Safety door stoppers are used (but not on fire doors), out of reach of children, to stop fingers getting trapped
- No teething jewellery (necklace, bracelet and anklets) because of strangling and choking risk
- Bibs are removed after feeding and always before putting your child down to sleep (strangulation risk)
- Necklaces, ribbon, jewellery or clothes and hats with strings are never placed on young children (strangulation risk)
- Toys are in good condition, suitable for your child's age and developmental stage and meet current safety standards
- Plastic bags and plastic nappy sacks are out of your child's sight and reach (suffocation risk)
- All medicines, tablets and vitamin supplements are stored in their original containers in a high locked cupboard
- Alcohol, cigarettes and e-cigarettes are stored in a high locked cupboard
- Cupboard safety locks are used to prevent your child finding dangerous items
- Handbags are out of children's sight and reach. Items like medicine, cosmetics and hand gel can poison children
- Small objects children could choke on are out of sight and reach



## Bathroom

- You are within arm's reach of your child during bath time to prevent drowning
- Bathwater temperature is always tested before use (with bath thermometer or your elbow)
- The bath is emptied immediately after use to prevent drowning
- Toilet locks are placed on all toilets to prevent drowning
- Razors and sharp objects are locked away out of children's sight and reach
- Shampoos, soaps, cosmetics and bathroom cleaning products are out of sight and reach of children (poison risk)



## Kitchen and dining room

- No table cloths (children can pull at them causing hot drinks and foods to spill onto them)
- Back rings on the cooker are used first when cooking and all pan and pot handles turned in so children cannot reach them and get burned
- Cooker guard is installed to help prevent your child reaching the hob
- Hot drinks and liquids are kept out of children's reach to prevent burns
- No chip-pan. Chip pans are a fire risk
- Fire blanket and fire extinguisher are ready for use (keep out of sight and reach of children)
- Safety locks are used on cupboards and drawers storing knives, scissors and dangerous or breakable items
- Knife blocks are out of children's sight and reach
- Fridge, freezer and cupboard locks are used to prevent your child from getting unsuitable food or drink including choking hazards
- Dishwasher is kept closed at all times and safety locks used (risks include sharp objects and poison from detergent)



## Laundry

- Washing machine and clothes dryer are kept closed at all times and safety locks used (risks include getting trapped inside and poison from detergent)
- All laundry and cleaning products and liquid detergent pods are in their original containers in a high locked cupboard to prevent poisoning
- Sinks and buckets are emptied immediately after use (drowning risk)



## Safe sleep

- Your baby is always placed on their back to sleep, with their feet at the foot of the cot
  - Their head or face is not covered by clothes, blankets or hats
  - The cot is free of pillows, positioners, bumpers, toys, soft objects and anything loose or fluffy
  - At night your baby sleeps in a cot in your room (for at least the first 6 months)
  - You don't use too many blankets or covers
  - You use a room thermometer to check the room your baby sleeps in is at 16°C to 20°C
  - Your baby does not sleep near a heater, fire or radiator or in direct sunlight
  - Car seats, swings, infant seats and similar devices are not used for routine sleep in the home
- Sleeping in a sitting position can cause your baby's head to fall forward, making it difficult to breathe



## Safety outside

- Children cannot get onto the road or the farm when they are playing outdoors
- Play equipment is in good condition, properly assembled, positioned and used as intended
- An adult supervises all contact between children and animals
- All chemicals (kept in original containers) and garden equipment are stored in a locked shed
- You are within arm's reach of your child at all times when near water
- You have covered or completely fenced off standing water (ponds, barrels and water features)
- Mushrooms and poisonous plants are removed
- Paddling pools, buckets and containers are stored after use in a locked shed so that they will not collect rain water



## Further information

Photos posed by models. Some images have been altered to show safety risks.

- For more information about child safety and to download a Child Safety Wall Chart, visit [mychild.ie](https://mychild.ie)



# Key child safety messages for every visit



**ANTICIPATION**  
Thinking safety



**ACTION**  
Acting safely



**INJURY PREVENTION**  
In 90% of cases

Begin every conversation with parents and carers about child safety by going through these key messages.

The important points below are relevant to children of all ages.

**The key message underpinning the Child Safety Programme (CSP) is:**



Watch your child at all times as children do not understand danger.

## Other key messages:



**Have a well-stocked first aid kit and learn basic first aid skills.**



**Childproof your home inside and out and put safety measures in place before your child reaches their next development stage and age.**



**Install child safety equipment to help keep your child safe.**

**Share essential safety information with everyone who takes care of your child, for example babysitter, grandparents and relatives.**



**Lead by example – from the earliest age children learn from what we do, so act safely at all times when with them.**



# Babies aged 0-12 months

**Key message: Watch your baby at all times, as children do not understand danger**



When a baby becomes part of your family, they are totally reliant on you to make sure that their home is a safe place. Most injuries in this age group happen in the home.

Babies learn fast, are eager to explore their environment and can acquire new motor skills rapidly. Injuries can happen when parents underestimate what their baby can do.

The good news is that most injuries to babies and small children are preventable with a little bit of planning.

- Babies have a natural tendency to put things in their mouth. Be alert to this and crawl around the floor at baby level and remove any small objects from reach.
- Don't leave your baby on a raised surface. You might think your tiny baby can't move but before you know it they could wiggle off and fall.
- Don't underestimate your baby's ability and speed. Your baby may be able to crawl or shuffle on their bottom as early as six months. This will give them a taste of freedom and once they have mastered this task studies have shown that the speed of their crawling increases by 720% in the first 20 weeks.
- Keep all exit doors closed and locked at all times, with keys out of children's sight and reach but near the door in case of fire.
- Keep your baby in your arms when visitors come and go to make sure they don't wander away from you or get in the way of a car.
- Share essential safety information with everyone who cares for your baby, including grandparents and babysitters.

# Falls

Falls from raised surfaces can cause serious injuries

## Raised surfaces



Never leave your baby alone on a baby changer or raised surface.

Don't leave a baby bouncer or any other sitting device on raised surfaces, as your baby could topple over.



## Stairs



Install stair gates correctly and keep them closed. Use stair gates at top and bottom of stairs and other areas that pose a trip hazard, like steps at doorways or changes in floor level. Keep steps and staircases clear.



## Seats

Only use equipment and sitting devices with a 5-way safety harness.



**Watch your child at all times, as children do not understand danger**

## Falls

### Furniture

Avoid placing TVs on cabinets or chests of drawers as children often climb into drawers to reach them. Always secure free-standing equipment and furniture to the wall or floor with brackets or straps.



### Windows and balconies

Use window restrictors that do not require tools for opening (so you can escape in case of fire). Don't place furniture or items children can climb onto near window ledges or balcony doors. Fill in any gaps in balcony railings that a child could fit through or use for climbing.

### Don't use baby walkers

Baby walkers increase the risk of head injuries, burns, scalds and poisoning. Stationary activity centres and play pens can provide a safer alternative. They should only be used for short periods of time and always under supervision. Babies should spend time while you supervise on the floor rolling, crawling and pulling themselves up to support their motor development.



### Other hazards

Reduce hazards by ensuring walls are finished correctly, gates are in good working order and there is no equipment or items lying around that your baby could climb onto.



**Watch your child at all times, as children do not understand danger**



## Fire safety



### Fire alarms

Have working smoke alarms in the hall and landing and aim to have one in every room. Test regularly (once a week is advised) and replace wasted batteries immediately. Make a fire escape plan and practice it often.

### Fireguards

Use a fireguard and a sparkguard on open fires. Stoves and heaters should be protected by a fireguard. Fireguards should be secured to a wall. Never place anything on a fireguard.



### Matches and lighters



**Always keep matches and lighters out of your baby's reach. Make your home a smoke-free zone.**

### Candles

Never leave a lit candle unattended or move it while lit. Position candles away from curtains, drafts and breezes and always out of reach of your baby.



### Sockets

Never overload sockets. Switch off and unplug electrical equipment when not in use.

### Chip pans

Chip pans are a fire risk. Consider a different method of cooking.



**Watch your child at all times, as children do not understand danger**

# Burns and scalds

It only takes a tiny amount of hot liquid to cause devastating injuries

## Hot water

Run cold water first, then warm and finally cold water to cool the taps. Always test bath water with elbow or bath thermometer before putting your baby in the bath. The temperature should be about 36 degrees Celsius for newborns and 37-38°C for babies and children. Never ever leave your child alone in the bath.



## Hot drinks and foods

Keep hot drinks out of your baby's reach or grasp. Avoid using tablecloths as your baby may pull at them.

Never cook while holding your baby.



Keep hot drinks out of your baby's reach. Never drink or make hot drinks while holding your baby.



## Did you know?

Hot drinks, even with milk added, are still hot enough to seriously scald your baby up to 15 minutes after being poured.

**Watch your child at all times, as children do not understand danger**

## Burns and scalds



### Hot bottles and solids

If bottle feeding, make sure bottle contents are lukewarm and not hot. Check temperature by shaking the bottle and placing a drop of liquid on the inside of your wrist.

When your baby starts eating solids, test food temperature before serving.



### Hair straighteners

Hair straighteners can reach 200°C and higher – hot enough to fry an egg – and take up to 40 minutes to cool down. Switch off and unplug straight away and store in a heat-resistant bag out of reach.

**Watch your child at all times, as children do not understand danger**



# Choking, strangulation and suffocation

## Choking

Children under 3 are at the highest risk of choking because of the small size of their respiratory tract

Keep small and unsuitable items out of reach. When weaning, ensure food consistency is suitable for your baby's age and developmental stage. Cut up food to a size your baby can eat safely.

### Common choking hazards



**Watch your child at all times, as children do not understand danger**

## Choking

### Food preparation

- Always cut up food to a size that your child can chew and eat safely, for example:
  - Cut grapes, cherry tomatoes and similar food into quarters lengthways or smaller
  - Carrot, apple and celery can be cooked until soft or finely grated
- Remove or peel skins from sausages or hotdogs and cut lengthways into small pieces (at least as small as your child's small fingernail)
- Use thick pastes like nut butter or chocolate spread very sparingly and spread evenly and thinly onto bread
- Do not give your child popcorn, marshmallows, boiled (hard) sweets, chewing gum or nuts



### Foreign bodies

Your baby could get an item stuck in their eyes, ears and nose. Signs may include redness, irritation, pain, bleeding, discharge or a foul odour. Never try to remove objects that are stuck in your child's ears, eyes or nose as this could cause injury to your child. Always seek medical advice. An object stuck in the nose could cause breathing difficulties or choking if it is breathed in. If your child begins to experience breathing difficulties go to your nearest emergency department.

### Eating

Make sure your baby sits in a high chair or at the table and is always closely supervised when eating. Children are more likely to choke if they are moving around.



**Watch your child at all times, as children do not understand danger**

## Choking



Older children may share unsuitable objects with your baby.



### Bottles

If bottle feeding, always hold your baby in your arms and hold the bottle in your hand. Never prop or lean the bottle against a pillow or another support – this can cause your baby to choke.



### Toys

Use the right toy for your child's age and developmental stage and look for the CE mark. Throw away broken toys.

### Batteries

Keep all remote controls and spare or used batteries in a secure place.

#### Beware button batteries

Your child may not choke after swallowing a button battery but if undetected it can do serious damage to the gastrointestinal system, leading to internal burns. If you think your baby has swallowed one, go to hospital immediately.

Ensure all battery compartments on toys and other items are secure and can't be opened by little hands.





# Strangulation

Strangulation is most likely to be caused by clothing drawstrings, cot bars, window blinds and curtain cords

## Blinds and curtains

Do not fit blinds or curtains with cords attached.

Replace existing cords with curtain or blind wands – prevent eye injury by keeping wands out of reach of your baby.

Cord tie-down or tension devices can pull the cord tight and secure the cord to the wall or floor and prevent strangulation risk from continuous loop cords on vertical blinds.



## Clothing and jewellery

Your baby is at risk from anything placed on or caught around their neck. Never place hair bands, jewellery (including amber teething jewellery), strings, cords, belts, ribbons, clips, ties or clothes and hats with strings or cords attached on your baby. Always remove your baby's bib after feeding.

**Watch your child at all times, as children do not understand danger**

## Strangulation



### Cords, jewellery, string and rope

Older children may share unsuitable objects with your baby. Don't allow your children to play with string, cords, jewellery, strings or ropes.

### Wires and flexes

Keep electrical flexes out of reach.



### Fixtures, fittings and furniture

Beware of the risk of getting trapped or strangled posed by banisters, railings, old cots and other furniture with gaps.



**Watch your child at all times, as children do not understand danger**



# Suffocation

## Safe sleep

Always keep your baby's cot clear. Never place pillows, duvets, bumpers, sleep positioners, wedges, bedding rolls, toys or comfort blankets into it. Use cellular aerated blankets (allows air to circulate).



Sleeping in a sitting position can cause your baby's head to fall forward and make it difficult for them to breathe. Never use a sitting device (like bouncers, highchairs, buggies, swings and car seats) for your baby's routine sleep. If your baby falls asleep in one, remove them and place on their back to sleep as soon as possible.

## Nappy sacks

A plastic nappy sack can cling to your baby's face and cause suffocation. If using plastic nappy sacks and bags, keep them out of your baby's reach at all times.



## Plastic bags and material

Store plastic bags, plastic nappy sacks and bags, dry-cleaning and other plastic packaging out of reach. Plastic material can cling to your baby's face and cause suffocation.

**Watch your child at all times, as children do not understand danger**



## Suffocation



### Long car journeys

If going on a long car journey, plan for breaks where you can safely park your car. Then take your baby out of the car seat. Place them on their back (on your lap or in the back seat) while you supervise closely. Return your baby safely to their car seat before you start driving again.

### Slings

When using a sling, baby carrier or baby-wearing coat, make sure your baby is upright, their head is supported and they don't get too hot. Always follow the T.I.C.K.S. rule below.



### T.I.C.K.S. rule for safe babywearing

**T**ight enough to hug your baby close to you

**I**n view at all times – face should not be covered by clothing

**C**lose enough to kiss

**K**eeP baby's chin off their chest so that airway remains unobstructed

**S**upported back

If your baby falls asleep, remove them as soon as possible and place on their back on a flat surface.

Contact your GP or paediatrician before using a sling, baby carrier or baby-wearing coat if your baby is younger than four months, was premature, born with low birth weight or has a medical condition, including respiratory conditions and colds.

**Watch your child at all times, as children do not understand danger**

# Drowning

Never leave your baby alone near, with or in water – not even for a second

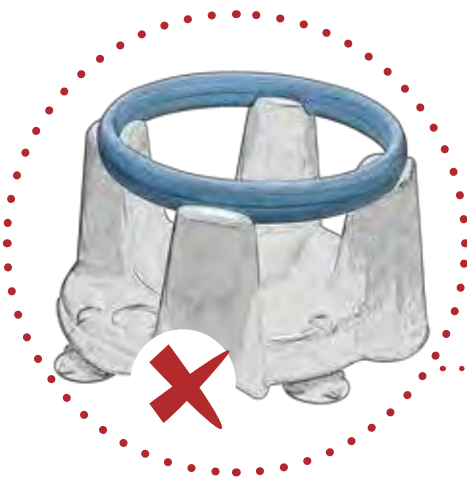
## Even a tiny amount of water is dangerous

Drowning can happen in silence, in an instant and in a very small amount of water like a puddle or a basin of water. Children who survive near drowning frequently have long-term health effects from brain injury.



## Bath-time

Never leave your baby alone at bath time. If you need to leave, bring your baby with you. Don't ask an older child to supervise instead. Always empty bathwater immediately after use.



## Do not use bath seats

Avoid using bath seats. They are not safety equipment. Drowning is a potential danger as your baby could slip out of the seat or tip forward or sideways into the water and become completely covered in the bath water.

**Watch your child at all times, as children do not understand danger**

## Drowning



### Water containers

Empty mop bucket, basins, paddling pools and other water containers after use and store them safely. Use toilet latches.

Look out for and remove containers that could fill with rain water. Use protective covers for garden ponds and fence off open water areas.

### Pools

If your holiday destination has a swimming pool nearby, be very vigilant. Ensure there is a locked gate or door separating your baby from the pool. Lifeguards do not replace the need for parental supervision.



### Swimming aids

Ensure arm bands and other buoyancy aids have an approved safety standard mark (I.S. EN 131138 and the CE mark) and fit properly. These aids do not replace the need for constant adult supervision.

**Watch your child at all times, as children do not understand danger**



# Poison

## Detergents and cleaning products

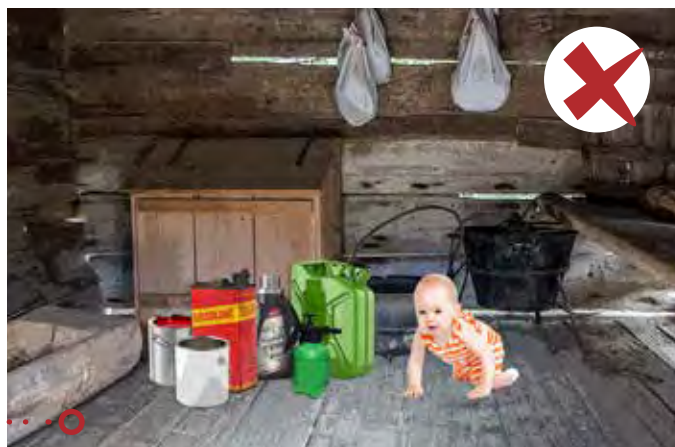
Store chemicals and household cleaning and laundry products (including laundry and dishwasher tablets, capsules and pods) in high cupboards.



Use cupboard safety locks.

## Garden and DIY products

Keep garden and DIY products in original containers and out of reach in a locked shed. Dispose of old and unused chemicals and products safely.



## Never use soft drink bottles for storage

Always keep household products in their original child-resistant containers. (Be aware that child-resistant containers are not child-proof).



Watch your child at all times, as children do not understand danger

## Poison



### E-cigarettes

Do not leave electronic cigarettes or their refills in reach or sight of children. These products contain nicotine which is highly toxic when swallowed or inhaled by children.

### Alcohol and cigarettes

Lock alcohol and cigarettes away out of sight and reach. Even small amounts of alcohol can be harmful to children. Cigarette butts have enough nicotine in them to be toxic to babies.



### Syringes and needles

Keep needles and syringes locked away and dispose of them safely and immediately after use.

### Carbon monoxide

Use carbon monoxide alarms (EN 50291 standard) in every room with fuel-burning appliances.



**Watch your child at all times, as children do not understand danger**

## Poison

### Medicine and supplements

Store herbal, iron and vitamin tablets or substances (including 'gummy bear' type supplements given to older children) out of reach. Iron is very dangerous for young children if taken in a high dose. Don't use the word 'sweets' when talking about medicines or vitamins.



Keep all medicines and vitamin supplements in original containers and lock in an overhead medicine cabinet or high cupboard. Follow instructions on medicine labels carefully. Return old and unused medicines to your chemist.

### Handbag items

Place all handbags out of your baby's reach as they contain items like tablets, chewing gum, hand gel, cosmetics and perfume.



### Public Poisons Line

Call 01-809 2166 (8am-10pm, seven days a week). Outside these hours, contact your GP or hospital. In case of emergency, call 999 or 112.

**Watch your child at all times, as children do not understand danger**



# Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) / cot death

Research has shown that there are ways to reduce the risk of cot death



For the first six months, the safest place for your baby to sleep is on their back in a cot in the same room that you are in.

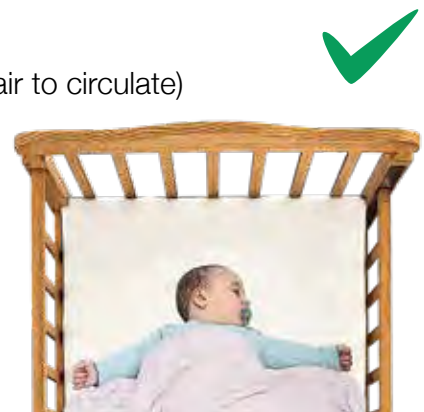
Cot death is still quite rare so while it is important to take all the necessary precautions, do not let fear spoil precious times with your baby.

Bed-sharing can be dangerous and should be avoided if either parent is a smoker or if baby was born prematurely, had a low birth weight (less than 2.5kg or 5.5lbs) or is less than 3 months old.

Don't fall asleep in bed with your baby if you or your partner have taken alcohol, drugs or medication that makes you sleep more heavily. If feeding in bed, always return your baby to their own cot for sleep.

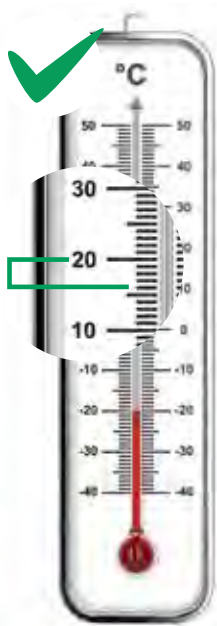
## Sleep position and cot

- Always place your baby on their back to sleep (this does not increase their risk of choking if they vomit)
- Keep your baby's face and head uncovered
- Place their feet to the foot of the cot
- Keep cot clear of all items except a cellular blanket (allows air to circulate)
- Do not use sleep positioners or other similar products – they do not prevent cot death and are a suffocation risk
- Do not use any pillows and cushions. They are a suffocation risk. Elevating your baby during sleep does not reduce reflux and is not recommended
- Make sure the cot is in good condition and properly assembled
- Make sure the mattress is clean, firm, flat with no tears and fits the cot correctly



**Watch your child at all times, as children do not understand danger**

## Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) / cot death



The room should be between 16-20°C. Don't use too many covers or clothes. It is normal for your baby's hands and feet to be cool.



Don't smoke or let anyone smoke in your home, car or around your baby, or around you if you are pregnant.

### Cot after feed

Breastfeed your baby, if possible, as this has been shown to reduce the risk. If feeding in bed, always remember to return your baby to their own cot for sleep.



### Soother use

Some research suggests that giving your baby a soother every time they are being put down to sleep may reduce the risk of cot death. Wait until breastfeeding is well established before introducing a soother. Offer your baby their soother every time they go to sleep, but don't force them to take it if they don't want it. Don't use clips or chains to attach to clothing.

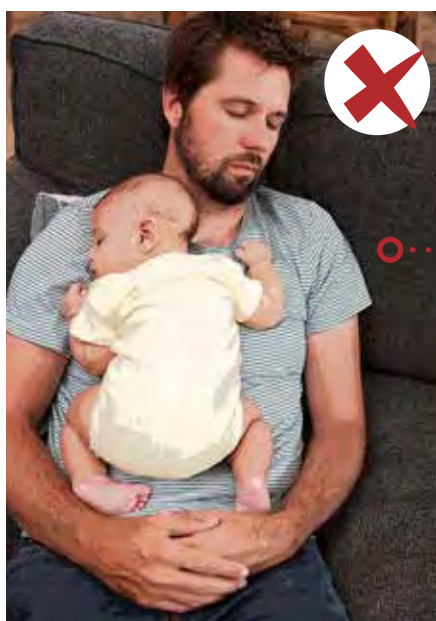
Do not let your baby go to sleep with a hat unless advised to do so by your doctor or midwife. Hats are used to keep a baby's temperature stable immediately after birth but are not needed for sleep after that. Covering your baby's head while asleep may cause them to become overheated.

**Watch your child at all times, as children do not understand danger**

## Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) / cot death

### Sleeping bags

If using a sleeveless baby sleeping bag, make sure there is no hood attached. Check it is the correct size and fit to prevent your baby's head slipping down into the bag. Do not use blankets with it.



### Sofas and armchairs

Never fall asleep with your baby on a sofa or an armchair.



Let your baby have some time on their tummy, when awake and while you supervise. It is important to begin tummy time from birth.



Sitting devices like car seats, swings and seats are not recommended for routine sleep in the home. Sleeping in a sitting position can cause your baby's head to fall forward and make it difficult to breathe. If your baby falls asleep in a sitting device, they should be placed on their back to sleep as soon as is possible. Never leave your baby unsupervised while in a sitting device.

**Watch your child at all times, as children do not understand danger**



# Sun



If your baby's skin is exposed to too much sun, this may increase their risk of skin cancer later in life. It can also cause your baby's delicate skin to become sunburnt, which is painful, itchy and very uncomfortable

Up to 90% of UV rays can pass through light clouds – so you need to take care on cloudy days too.

## Seek shade

Keep your baby out of direct sunlight (especially between 11am-3pm). Keep babies under 6 months in the shade as much as possible. Use a sunshade on your buggy/pram.



## Cover up

Dress your baby in loose-fitting, long-sleeved light protective clothing (made from close-woven fabric that doesn't let sunlight through). Use a wide brim sunhat that protects the face, neck and ears.

## Use sunscreen

- Choose a UVA and UVB sunscreen made for children and babies with at least SPF 30. Patch test it on their skin first. Try sunscreen for sensitive skin if irritation occurs. For best protection apply sunscreen at least 20 minutes before going out in the sun. Cover all exposed areas especially the face, ears, nose, lips and tops of the feet.
- 0-6 months: Keep your baby as covered up as possible. Apply small amounts of sunscreen to your baby's exposed skin.
- 6-12 months: Apply generous amounts of sunscreen and reapply every 2 hours.



**Watch your child at all times, as children do not understand danger**

## Sun

### Keep hydrated

Make sure your baby drinks enough fluids and does not overheat. They cannot adjust to changes in temperature as well as adults. They sweat less, reducing their bodies' ability to cool down.



### Wraparound sunglasses

It is important that children, as soon as they can, wear sunglasses that give as close to 100% UV-protection as possible. Wraparound style offers the best protection.

### Facts about tanning

A tan does not protect skin from burning.

A tan is the skin's way of trying to protect itself from further UV damage.

Even when a tan fades, skin damage caused by tanning never goes away. Getting sunburnt in childhood or adolescence can increase the risk of melanoma - the most serious form of skin cancer - in later life.



### Vitamin D

It is recommended all babies from birth to 12 months be given a daily supplement of vitamin D. Speak to your doctor or pharmacist.

**Watch your child at all times, as children do not understand danger**



## Car seats

By law all children under 150cms and 36kgs must use a car seat appropriate to their height and weight. Child car seats must conform to EU standards and should be fitted by an expert. The Road Safety Authority offers a free 'Check it Fits' service – see [www.rsa.ie/check](http://www.rsa.ie/check)

Rearward facing baby seats are suitable for 0-13kg. Extended rearward are suitable for 9-25kg.

### Rearward facing

It is safer for children to travel in the back seat in their appropriate child car seat. Keep your baby rearward facing for as long as possible to offer greater protection to their head, neck and spine.



Rearward-facing baby seat  
13kg and under

### No front seat

It is illegal and very dangerous to place a rearward facing child car seat in the front where there is an active frontal airbag.

### Clothing and the harness

Your baby's clothing can affect how the harness fits. Use blankets instead of bulky jackets in cooler weather. This makes sure the harness is making contact with your baby's body.



9kg  
to 18kg

The harness should be tight enough so only two of your fingers can fit between the top of your baby's shoulders and the harness straps. Your fingers should be unable to rotate (turn) in that position. Check this before every journey.

**Watch your child at all times, as children do not understand danger**



## Animals

Never leave your baby alone with any animal – no matter how well you know it. Existing pets, especially dogs, can be very jealous of a new baby. Keep all food and water bowls, litter trays and pet toys out of your baby's reach.



## Safety equipment



Ensure dishwasher, washing machine, dryer, fridge and other similar electrical equipment are closed at all times. Use safety locks.

Use furniture pads to cover any sharp corners in the home. Soften hard edges like window sills with cushion corners. Position hard items like wooden hold-backs for curtains so that your child can't run into them.



Use finger safety door stoppers on door edges. Keep door stoppers out of children's reach.

**Watch your child at all times, as children do not understand danger**



# Children aged 12-24 months

## Key message:

**Watch your child at all times, as children do not understand danger**



This is a very exciting time as your child gets more active. The more mobile your child gets, the more adventurous they become.

## **Never underestimate your child's ability and speed**

Young children move very quickly – in the blink of an eye they can move from where you last saw them and creep into other areas in the home or outdoors.

- Keep inner doors and stair gates closed to help prevent your child wandering into other areas.
- Keep front and back doors closed and locked at all times. The keys should be out of sight and reach of children, but for fire safety purposes, should be near the door.
- When people are coming to and going from your house, be aware of where your child is at all times. Hold your child's hand securely or carry them in your arms when people are driving into your driveway or driving away.

## **Lead by example**

Children do as we do, not always as we say. Leading by example is the best way to pass on valuable safety messages to children.

Talk to your child about safety, but remember that young children do not understand danger and are not capable of being responsible for their own safety.



## Falls

Falls from raised surfaces can cause serious injuries

### Raised surfaces



Never leave your child alone on a baby changer or raised surface.

Don't leave a baby-bouncer or any other sitting device on raised surfaces, as your child could topple over.



### Seats

Only use equipment and sitting devices with a 5-way safety harness.

### Don't use baby walkers

Baby walkers increase risk of head injuries, burns, scalds and poisoning. Stationary activity centres and play pens can provide a safer alternative. They should only be used for short periods of time and always under supervision.



Children who are not yet walking should spend time on the floor, crawling, shuffling and pulling themselves up to support their motor development.

**Watch your child at all times, as children do not understand danger**

## Falls

### TV stands and cabinets

Avoid placing TVs on cabinets or chests of drawers as children often climb into drawers to reach them. Always secure free-standing equipment and furniture to the wall or floor using brackets or straps.



### Free standing furniture and TVs

TVs, bookcases, chests of drawers, coat stands and other free standing equipment and furniture can cause serious or fatal injury if the item or its contents falls onto your child. Always secure these items to the wall or floor using brackets or straps.

### Stairs

Use stair gates at top and bottom of stairs and other areas that pose a trip hazard, like steps at doorways or changes in floor level. Ensure they are installed correctly and kept closed. Remove once your child is able to climb over. Show your child how to slowly and safely climb the stairs.



### Ladders

Store ladders away safely – out of sight and reach of children.

**Watch your child at all times, as children do not understand danger**

## Falls

### Windows

Secure all windows with window restrictors that don't require tools for opening (so you can escape quickly in a fire). Do not place beds, cots, toy boxes or other furniture near a window.



### Balconies

Make sure your child can't get out onto a balcony without your supervision. Secure balcony doors and fill in any gaps in balcony railings that a child could fit through or use to climb. Do not place anything children could climb on (like outdoor furniture, plant pots or boxes) near balcony railings.

### Floors

Running in socks on a shiny or wooden floor can lead to a nasty fall – encourage your child to wear well-fitting slippers or go barefoot inside the house.



### Other hazards

Reduce hazards by ensuring walls are finished correctly, gates are in good working order and there is no equipment or items lying around that your child could climb onto.

**Watch your child at all times, as children do not understand danger**



## Fire safety



### Fire alarms

Have working smoke alarms in the hall and landing and aim to have one in every room. Test regularly (once a week is advised) and replace wasted batteries immediately. Make a fire escape plan and practice it often.

### Fireguards

Use a fireguard and a sparkguard on open fires. Stoves and heaters should be protected by a fireguard. Fireguards should be secured to a wall. Never place anything on a fireguard.



### Candles

Never leave a lit candle unattended or move it while lit. Position candles away from curtains, drafts and breezes and always out of reach of your child.

### Matches and lighters

Keep matches and lighters out of your child's reach and sight.



### Sockets

Never overload sockets. Switch off and unplug electrical equipment when not in use.

### Chip pans

Chip pans are a fire risk. Consider a different method of cooking.



**Watch your child at all times, as children do not understand danger**

## Burns and scalds

### Cooking

Use a cooker guard for protection.  
Always cook on back rings first, with handle turned in.



### Hot drinks and foods

Never hold your child while making or drinking hot drinks or while cooking.



Keep hot drinks out of your child's reach. It takes very little liquid to cover a child's face and trunk area, causing devastating injuries. Avoid using tablecloths as children can pull hot drinks down with them.

Hot drinks, even with milk added, are still hot enough to seriously scald your child up to 15 minutes after being poured.



**Watch your child at all times, as children do not understand danger**



## Burns and scalds

### Hot bottles

If bottle feeding, make sure bottle contents are lukewarm and not hot. Check temperature by shaking the bottle and placing a drop of liquid on the inside of your wrist.



### Hot food

Test food temperature before serving food to your child.



### Electrical items

Keep all electrical equipment and flexes out of your child's reach. Store them away safely.



Switch off and unplug electrical equipment when not in use.

### Hot water

Always run cold bath water first, then hot, then cold water to cool the taps. Test the water with elbow or bath thermometer before putting your child into the bath. It should be about 37-38°C. Never leave your child alone in the bath.



**Watch your child at all times, as children do not understand danger**



## Choking

Keep small and unsuitable items out of reach.

## Common choking hazards



**Watch your child at all times, as children do not understand danger**

## Choking

### Food preparation

- Always cut up food to a size that your child can chew and eat safely, for example:
  - Cut grapes, cherry tomatoes and similar food into quarters lengthways or smaller
  - Carrot, apple and celery can be cooked until soft or finely grated
- Remove or peel skins from sausages or hotdogs and cut lengthways into small pieces (at least as small as your child's small fingernail).
- Use thick pastes like nut butter or chocolate spread very sparingly and spread evenly and thinly onto bread.
- Do not give your child popcorn, marshmallows, boiled (hard) sweets, chewing gum or nuts.



### Foreign bodies

Your child could get an item stuck in their eyes, ears and nose. Signs may include redness, irritation, pain, bleeding, discharge or a foul odour. Never try to remove objects that are stuck in your child's ears, eyes or nose as this could cause injury to your child.

Always seek medical advice. An object stuck in the nose could cause breathing difficulties or choking if it is breathed in. If your child begins to experience breathing difficulties go to your nearest emergency department.

### Eating

Make sure your child sits in a high chair or at the table and is always closely supervised when eating. Children are more likely to choke if they are moving around.



**Watch your child at all times, as children do not understand danger**

## Choking



An adult should supervise meals and snacktimes. Older children may share unsuitable food or objects with younger ones.

### Batteries and toys

Keep all remote controls and spare or used batteries in a secure place.



#### Button batteries

Your child may not choke after swallowing a button battery but if undetected it can do serious damage to the gastrointestinal system, leading to internal burns. If you think your child has swallowed one, go to hospital immediately.

Ensure all battery compartments on toys and other items are secure and can't be opened by little hands.



Use the right toy for your child's age and developmental stage and look for the **CE** mark. Throw away broken toys.

**Watch your child at all times, as children do not understand danger**



# Strangulation

## Blinds and curtains

Blind cords, curtain cords and clothing (e.g. ribbons, belts) are a serious strangulation risk

Do not fit blinds or curtains with cords attached.

Replace existing cords with curtain or blind wands – prevent eye injury by keeping wands out of reach of your child.

Cord tie down or tension devices can pull the cord tight and secure the cord to the wall or floor and prevent strangulation risk from continuous loop cords on vertical blinds.



## Clothing

Always remove your child's bib after eating.

Never place jewellery (including teething jewellery), hair bands, strings, cords, belts, ribbons, clips, ties, or clothes and hats with strings or cords attached, on your child.



**Watch your child at all times, as children do not understand danger**

## Strangulation



### Railings, banisters and other gaps

Beware of the risk of getting trapped or strangled posed by railings, banisters and any fittings, fixtures or furniture with gaps.

### Cords, strings, ropes and jewellery

Older children may share unsuitable objects with younger ones. Don't allow your children to play with cords, jewellery, strings or ropes.



### Wires and flexes

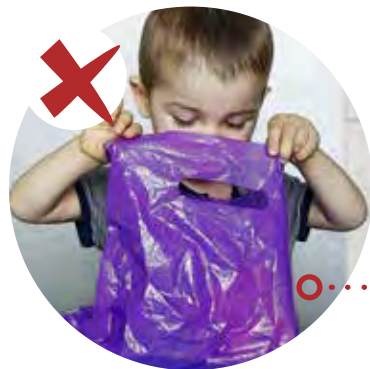
Keep electrical flexes out of reach.

**Watch your child at all times, as children do not understand danger**

## Suffocation

### Nappy bags

Plastic nappy sacks and bags are small and made of very flimsy material. If your child puts one on their face, it could cling there and they will be unable to pull it away, causing suffocation.



### Plastic materials

Store plastic nappy sacks and bags, plastic bags, dry-cleaning and other plastic packaging out of reach. Plastic material can cling to your toddler's face and cause suffocation.

### Sleeping

Sleeping in a sitting position can cause your child's head to fall forward and make it difficult to breathe.



When using a sling, baby carrier or baby-wearing coat, make sure your child is upright, their head is supported and they don't get too hot.

### TICKS guidance:

**T**ight enough to hug your child close to you

**I**n view at all times – face should not be covered by clothing

**C**lose enough to kiss

**K**eeP child's chin off their chest so that airway remains unobstructed

**S**upported back

If your child falls asleep, remove them as soon as possible and place on their back on a flat surface.

Contact your GP or paediatrician before using a sling, baby carrier or baby-wearing coat if your child has a medical condition, including respiratory conditions and colds.

**Watch your child at all times, as children do not understand danger**



## Drowning

**Never leave your child alone near, with or in water – not even for a second**

Drowning can happen in silence (without any splashing or screaming), in an instant and in a very small amount of water like a puddle or a basin of water. Children who survive near drowning frequently have long-term health effects from brain injury.



Watch your child at all times as children can stray very quickly and crawl, walk or fall into water. Always make sure your child is within your sight and arm's reach.



**Watch your child at all times, as children do not understand danger**

## Drowning

### Bath-time

Never leave your child alone at bath time. If you need to leave, bring your child with you. Don't ask an older child to supervise instead. Always empty bathwater immediately after use. Use toilet latches.



### Do not use bath seats

Avoid using bath seats. They are not safety equipment. Drowning is a potential danger as your child could slip out of the seat or tip forward or sideways into the water and become completely covered in the bath water.

### Ponds and water containers

Completely fence off man-made ponds, streams, garden ponds and open water areas. Use protective covers for man-made ponds and water collecting containers. Keep front and back doors closed and locked at all times. The keys should be out of sight and reach of children, but near the door for fire safety purposes.



**Toddlers are most at risk near garden ponds**



Children can drown in very little water. Look out for and remove containers, plant pots and water features outside that could fill with rain water.

**Watch your child at all times, as children do not understand danger**



## Drowning



### Paddling pools

Empty paddling pools immediately after use and store in a locked shed.

### Buckets and basins

Empty mop bucket, basins and other water containers after use and store them safely.



### Swimming aids

Ensure arm bands and other buoyancy aids have an approved safety standard mark (I.S. EN 131138 and the CE mark), fit properly and are appropriate for your child's age and developmental stage. These aids do not replace the need for constant adult supervision.

### Pools

If your holiday destination has a swimming pool nearby, be very vigilant. Ensure there is a locked gate or door separating your child from the pool. Lifeguards do not replace the need for parental supervision.



**Watch your child at all times, as children do not understand danger**



## Poison

### Detergents and cleaning products

Store chemicals and household cleaning and laundry products (including laundry and dishwasher tablets, capsules and pods) in high cupboards.



Use cupboard safety locks.



### Medicine and supplements

Keep all medicines and vitamin supplements in original containers and lock in an overhead medicine cabinet or high cupboard. Follow instructions on medicine labels carefully. Return old and unused medicines to your chemist.

Store herbal, iron and vitamin tablets or substances (including 'gummy bear' type supplements given to older children) out of reach. Iron is very dangerous for young children if taken in a high dose. Don't use the word 'sweets' when talking about medicines or vitamins.



**Watch your child at all times, as children do not understand danger**

## Poison



Child-resistant caps on medicines are not child-proof. Keep medicine out of reach at all times.

### Garden and DIY products

Keep garden and DIY products in original containers and out of reach in a locked shed. Dispose of old and unused chemicals and products safely.



### Never use soft drink bottles for storage

Always keep household products in their original child-resistant containers. (Be aware that child-resistant containers are not child-proof).



### Plants

Remove any poisonous plants indoors and outdoors. Get advice from your garden centre when buying plants to make sure they are not a danger to your child.

### Handbag items

Children are fascinated by handbags, so place them out of reach. Many handbags contain tablets, chewing gum, hand gel, cosmetics or perfume. Be mindful of where visitors place their handbags.



**Watch your child at all times, as children do not understand danger**

## Poison



### E-cigarettes

Do not leave electronic cigarettes or their refills in reach or sight of children. These products contain nicotine which is highly toxic when swallowed or inhaled by children.

### Alcohol and cigarettes

Lock alcohol and cigarettes away out of sight and reach. Even small amounts of alcohol can be harmful to children. Cigarette butts have enough nicotine in them to be toxic to babies.



### Syringes and needles

Keep needles and syringes locked away and dispose of them safely and immediately after use.

### Carbon monoxide

Use carbon monoxide alarms (EN 50291 standard) in every room with fuel-burning appliances.



### Public Poisons Line

Call 01-809 2166 (8am-10pm, seven days a week). Outside these hours, contact your GP or hospital. In case of emergency, call 999 or 112.

**Watch your child at all times, as children do not understand danger**



## Sun

If your child's skin is exposed to too much sun, this may increase their risk of skin cancer later in life. Too much sun can also cause cataracts in adulthood and cancer in the eye

### Did you know?

Up to 90% of UV rays can pass through light clouds – so you need to take care on cloudy days too.



### Cover up

Dress your child in loose-fitting, long-sleeved light protective clothing (made from close-woven fabric that doesn't let sunlight through). Use a wide brim sunhat that protects the face, neck and ears.

### Seek shade

Keep your child out of direct sunlight (especially between 11am-3pm). Use a sunshade on your buggy/pram.



### Use sunscreen

- Choose a UVA and UVB sunscreen made for children and babies with at least SPF 30. Patch test it on their skin first. Try sunscreen for sensitive skin if irritation occurs.
- For best protection apply sunscreen at least 20 minutes before going out in the sun. Cover all exposed areas especially the face, ears, nose, lips and tops of the feet.
- Reapply sun screen (including 'waterproof' and 'water-resistant' products) every two hours, especially after your child swims or plays outdoors.



**Watch your child at all times, as children do not understand danger**

## Sun

### Grab some shades

Protect your child's eyes with sunglasses as close to 100% UV-protection as possible. Wraparound style offers the best protection.



### Keep hydrated

Make sure your child drinks enough fluids and does not overheat. Children cannot adjust to changes in temperature as well as adults. They sweat less, reducing their bodies' ability to cool down.



### Facts about tanning

A tan does not protect skin from burning. A tan is the skin's way of trying to protect itself from further UV damage.

Even when a tan fades, skin damage caused by tanning never goes away. Getting sunburnt in childhood or adolescence can increase the risk of melanoma - the most serious form of skin cancer - in later life.

**Watch your child at all times, as children do not understand danger**

## Car seats

By law all children under 150cms and 36kgs must use a car seat appropriate to their height and weight. Child car seats must conform to EU standards and should be fitted by an expert. The Road Safety Authority offers a free 'Check it Fits' service – see [rsa.ie/check](http://rsa.ie/check)



**Forward-facing child seat**  
9kg to 18kg



**High-back booster seat**  
15kg-36kg

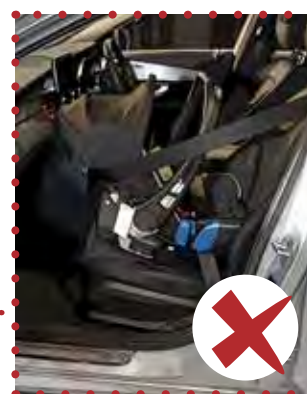
**Extended rearward-facing child seat**  
9kg-25kg

### Rearward facing

It is safer for children to travel in the back seat in their appropriate child car seat. Keep your child rearward facing for as long as possible to offer greater protection to their head, neck and spine.

### No front seat

It is illegal and very dangerous to place a rearward facing child car seat in the front where there is an active frontal airbag.



### Clothing and the harness

Your child's clothing can affect how the harness fits. Use blankets instead of bulky jackets in cooler weather. This makes sure the harness is making contact with your child's body.

The harness should be tight enough so only two of your fingers can fit between the top of your child's shoulders and the harness straps. Your fingers should be unable to rotate (turn) in that position. Check this before every journey.



### Car keys

Never leave your child alone in the car. Always remove car keys from your car and lock doors.

**Watch your child at all times, as children do not understand danger**



## Playing outdoors

### Supervise children at all times outside

Never allow your child access to the road or pathways beyond your home without adult supervision. Keep outside gates closed and locked and ensure there are no gaps in the surrounding fence or wall. Remove objects near gates and walls that children could climb onto.



### Driveways

Due to their size children are at risk from reversing vehicles. When vehicles are coming into or leaving your driveway, ensure your children are safely inside the building, or securely in an adult's arms, or their hand is being held by an adult.

### External doors

Keep all external doors locked. The keys should be out of sight and reach of children but near the door in case of a fire.



### Lawnmowers and trimmers

Keep children away from lawnmowers, trimmers and other garden machinery. Don't try to mow the grass and supervise your child at the same time.

**Watch your child at all times, as children do not understand danger**

## Playing outdoors

### Ladders

Store ladders away safely – out of sight and reach of children.



### Play equipment

Make sure your child doesn't wear jewellery or clothing with ties, strings or cords that could get caught in play equipment.

Ensure your child plays only on equipment suitable for their age and developmental stage.



Check play equipment is in good condition and secured to the ground with no sharp edges or bits sticking out. Look for a recognised safety symbol such as the CE mark.

Locate play equipment away from walls, trees, tree houses or hard surfaces, or near places where children might try to jump on or off.

Trampolines should have safety padding and safety nets. Assemble according to manufacturer's instructions and ensure all safety features are installed. Children under 6 should not be allowed on a trampoline. Do not have more than one person on a trampoline at a time.



**Watch your child at all times, as children do not understand danger**



## Animals

Never leave your child alone with any animal, no matter how well you know it. Model safe behaviour and teach your child how to play safely with pets, avoid dangerous situations, respond to danger signs and wash their hands carefully after all contact with pets and other animals.



Keep all food and water bowls, litter trays and pet toys out of your child's reach.

## Other dangers in the home

### Sharp objects

Always keep sharp objects – scissors, knives, pen knives – out of your child's reach and sight.



**Watch your child at all times, as children do not understand danger**



## Other dangers in the home



### Electrical equipment

Ensure dishwasher, washing machine, dryer, fridge and other similar electrical equipment are closed at all times. Use safety locks.

### Safety equipment

Use furniture pads to cover any sharp corners in the home. Soften hard edges like window sills with cushion corners. Position hard items like wooden hold-backs for curtains so that your child can't run into them.



Use finger safety door stoppers on door edges. Keep door stoppers out of children's reach.

**Watch your child at all times, as children do not understand danger**

## Children aged 2-5 years

### Key message:

**Watch your child at all times as children do not understand danger**



Children in the 2 to 5 year age group are busy exploring their world and climbing is a big part of this. Be aware of the dangers above your child's reach and height which become both inviting and within their range once they start to climb.

### Childproofing

- Your home needs to be childproofed both indoors and outside, including the driveway, garden, play area, shed, garage and any outbuildings.
- The best way to childproof your home is to get down on your knees to your child's height and look at every area of the home from that height – in other words, through your child's eyes.
- Once dangers have been identified – both at the child's height and at what they can reach through climbing – parents can put measures in place to help keep their child safe.
- Childproofing is not a one-off activity – it will need to be completed many times as your child grows and their abilities change.

### Never underestimate your child's ability and speed

- Young children move quickly and climbing is very attractive to them.
- When people are coming to and going from your home, be aware of where your child is at all times. Hold their hand securely when people are driving into or out of the driveway.
- Keep the front and back door closed at all times.

### Talk about safety

- Speak to your child regularly about safety but be mindful that young children do not understand danger and are not capable of being responsible for their own safety.
- Sowing the seeds of safety at an early age will prepare your child to understand the importance of putting safety first as they grow older.

# Falls

50% of all unintentional injuries in children under 5 result from falls. It is the most common cause of injury in children who have to go to hospital.



## Windows and balconies

Secure all windows with window restrictors that don't require tools for opening (so you can escape quickly in a fire). Do not place beds, cots, toy boxes or other furniture near a window.

Secure balcony doors and get rid of any gaps in balcony railings that a child could fit through or use as a foothold to climb on. Do not place anything children could climb on near balcony railings like outdoor furniture, plant pots or boxes.



## TVs and furniture

Ensure furniture is safely positioned to prevent falls from climbing. Keep bedroom furniture to a minimum to limit climbing opportunities.

TVs, bookcases, chests of drawers, coat stands and other free standing equipment and furniture can cause serious or fatal injury if the item or its contents fall on your child. Always secure these items to the wall or floor using brackets or straps. Avoid placing TVs on top of cabinets and chests of drawers as your child may climb into one of the drawers to reach the screen.



**Watch your child at all times, as children do not understand danger**



## Falls

### Bunk beds

Do not allow children to play on bunk beds. Position bunk beds away from windows, ceiling lights, fans and furniture. Carpet can decrease the risk of head injury from a bunk bed fall.



### Bunk bed dangers include:

- Falls from top bunk, from ladder or from windows near the bed
- Suffocation if child slips between the guard rail and mattress
- Heads or limbs getting caught or trapped between parts of the bed or in gaps and crevices



- Strangulation or accidental hanging when head or neck is caught up in clothing, gaps or other objects on or near the bed. These objects include a cord or rope tied to the bed or located near the bed

Children should be at least 6 years old before they are allowed on the top bunk bed.



Store ladders away safely – out of sight and reach of children.

**Watch your child at all times, as children do not understand danger**

## Falls

### Floors

Running in socks on a shiny or wooden floor can lead to a nasty fall – encourage your child to wear well-fitting slippers or go barefoot inside the house.



### Other hazards

Reduce hazards by ensuring walls are finished correctly, gates are in good working order and there is no equipment or items lying around that your child could climb onto.

### Stair gates

Install stair gates correctly and keep them closed. Use stair gates at top and bottom of stairs and other areas that pose a trip hazard like steps at doorways or changes in floor level. Remove once your child is able to climb over. Show your child how to slowly and safely climb the stairs. Keep steps and staircases clear.



**Watch your child at all times, as children do not understand danger**

## Fire safety

Children are fascinated by fire, matches and candles, and do not understand danger



### Fire alarms

Have working smoke alarms in the hall and landing and aim to have one in every room. Test regularly (once a week is advised) and replace wasted batteries immediately. Make a fire escape plan and practice it often.

### Fireguards

Use a fireguard and a sparkguard on open fires. Stoves and heaters should be protected by a fireguard. Fireguards should be secured to a wall. Never place anything on a fireguard.



### Candles

Avoid using candles while your child is indoors. Position candles in a safe place away from draughts, fabrics or anything else that could catch fire. Avoid moving a lit candle.

**Watch your child at all times, as children do not understand danger**



## Fire safety

### Matches and lighters

Keep matches and lighters out of your child's reach and sight.



### Sockets

Never overload sockets.  
Switch off and unplug electrical equipment when not in use.

### Chip pans

Chip pans are a fire risk.  
Consider a different method of cooking.



**Watch your child at all times, as children do not understand danger**

## Burns and scalds

Burns and scalds can lead to serious injuries which often require prolonged treatment and skin grafting. Keep kettles, hot drinks and hot liquids out of reach of children.



### Cookers

Use a cooker guard for protection. Always cook on back rings first, with handle turned in. Make sure your child stays away from cookers when in use and teach them why this is important.

### Hot drinks and foods

Never hold your child while making or drinking hot drinks or while cooking.



Keep hot drinks out of your child's reach or grasp. It takes very little liquid to cover a child's face and torso area, causing devastating injuries. Avoid using tablecloths as children can pull hot drinks down with them.

Use a short flex for kettle and other electrical equipment.



**Watch your child at all times, as children do not understand danger**

## Burns and scalds

### Electrical items

Keep all electrical equipment and flexes out of child's reach.



### Hot water

Always run cold bath water first, then hot, then cold water to cool the taps. Test the water with elbow or bath thermometer before putting your child into the bath. Never leave your child alone in the bath.



**Watch your child at all times, as children do not understand danger**



# Choking, strangulation and suffocation

## Choking

Children under 3 are at the highest risk of choking due to small size of their respiratory tract

Keep small and unsuitable items out of reach.

### Common choking hazards



**Watch your child at all times, as children do not understand danger**

## Choking

### Food preparation

- Always cut up food to a size that your child can chew and eat safely, for example
  - Cut grapes, cherry tomatoes and similar food into quarters lengthways or smaller
  - Carrot, apple and celery can be cooked until soft or finely grated
- Remove or peel skins from sausages or hotdogs and cut lengthways into small pieces (at least as small as your child's small fingernail).
- Use thick pastes like nut butter or chocolate spread very sparingly and spread evenly and thinly onto bread.
- Do not give your child popcorn, marshmallows, boiled (hard) sweets, chewing gum or nuts.



### Foreign bodies

Your child could get an item stuck in their eyes, ears and nose. Signs may include redness, irritation, pain, bleeding, discharge or a foul odour. Never try to remove objects that are stuck in your child's ears, eyes or nose as this could cause injury to your child.

Always seek medical advice. An object stuck in the nose could cause breathing difficulties or choking if it is breathed in. If your child begins to experience breathing difficulties go to your nearest emergency department.

### Eating

Always supervise your child when they are eating. Do not let your child put too much food into their mouth at any one time. Always remove your child's bib after eating.



**Watch your child at all times, as children do not understand danger**



## Choking

### Cut up food

Cut up food to a size that your child can chew and eat safely.



### Food on the go

Children should sit still while eating. Your child is more likely to choke if they are walking or running around. Never allow children to run with sharp objects, food or lollipops in their mouths.

### Bed-time eating

Never allow your child to eat or drink in bed as it is a choking hazard.



### Balloons

Only adults should inflate balloons – children as old as 12 years of age have choked after the balloon they were inflating lodged in their throat. Pieces of broken balloons or from uninflated balloons also pose a choking risk.



## Choking

### Batteries

Keep all remote controls and spare or used batteries in a secure place. Ensure all battery compartments on toys and other items are secure and can't be opened by little hands.



### Button batteries

Your child may not choke after swallowing a button battery but if undetected it can do serious damage to the gastrointestinal system, leading to internal burns. If you think your child has swallowed one, go to hospital immediately.



### Toys

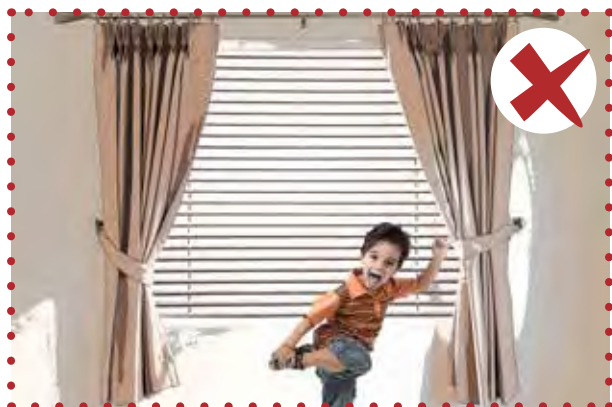
Use the right toy for your child's age and developmental stage and look for the CE mark. Throw away broken toys.



**Watch your child at all times, as children do not understand danger**

# Strangulation

Blind cords, curtain cords and clothing (like ribbons and belts) are a serious strangulation risk.



## Blinds and curtain cords

Do not fit blinds or curtains with cords attached. Replace cords with curtain or blind wands – prevent eye injury by keeping wands out of reach of your child.

Cord tie down or tension devices can pull the cord tight and secure the cord to the wall or floor and prevent strangulation risk from continuous loop cords on vertical blinds.



## Clothing and jewellery

Children are at risk of strangulation from anything placed around their neck or caught around their neck. Never place jewellery (including teething jewellery), hair bands, strings, cords, belts, ribbons, clips, ties, or clothes and hats with strings or cords attached, on your child.

## Wires and flexes

Keep electrical flexes out of reach.



**Watch your child at all times, as children do not understand danger**

## Strangulation

### Strings, cords and rope

Never allow your child to play with string, cords or ropes.



### Railings, banisters and other gaps

Beware of the risk of getting trapped or strangled posed by railings, banisters and any fittings, fixtures or furniture with gaps.

### Bunk beds

Strangulation or accidental hanging is a risk when the head or neck is caught in clothing, gaps or other objects on or near a bunk bed, for example on a cord or rope. Heads or limbs can get caught or trapped between parts of the bed or in gaps and crevices.



## Suffocation

### Plastic materials

Store plastic nappy sacks and bags, plastic bags, dry-cleaning and other plastic packaging out of reach. Plastic material can cling to your child's face and cause suffocation.



**Watch your child at all times, as children do not understand danger**



## Drowning

**Never leave your child alone near, with or in water – not even for a second**

Drowning can happen in silence (without any splashing or screaming), in an instant and in a very small amount of water. Children who survive near drowning frequently have long-term health effects from brain injury.

Drowning is a leading cause of death in children.



Watch your child at all times as children can stray very quickly and fall into water. Always make sure your child is within your sight and arm's reach.



### Water containers

Use protective covers and fence off water collecting containers.



Watch your child at all times as they can wander very quickly. Fence off man-made ponds, garden streams and open water areas.

**Watch your child at all times, as children do not understand danger**

## Drowning

### Paddling pools

Empty paddling pools immediately after use and store in a locked shed.

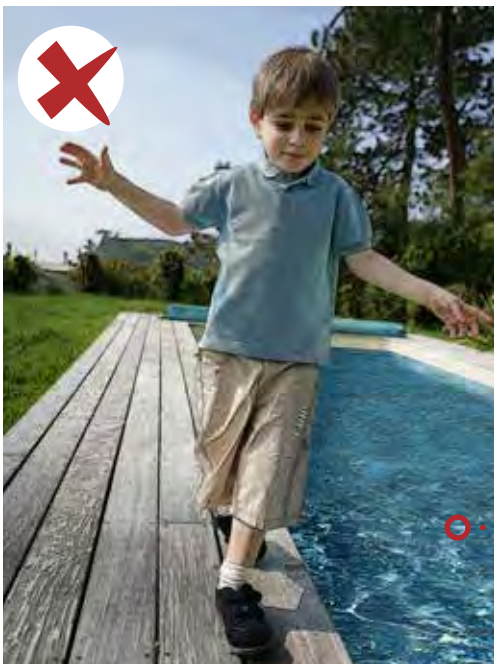


### Bath-time

Never leave your child alone at bath time, even for a second. If you need to leave, bring your child with you.

### Swimming aids

Ensure arm bands and other buoyancy aids have an approved safety standard mark (I.S. EN 131138 and the CE mark), fit properly and are appropriate for your child's age and developmental stage. These aids do not replace the need for constant adult supervision.



**Introduce your child to swimming as early as possible.**

### Pools

If your holiday destination has a swimming pool nearby, be very vigilant. Ensure there is a locked gate or door separating your child from the pool. Lifeguards do not replace the need for parental supervision.

**Watch your child at all times, as children do not understand danger**





## Medicine and supplements

Keep all medicines and vitamin supplements in original containers and lock in an overhead medicine cabinet or high cupboard. Follow instructions on medicine labels carefully. Return old and unused medicines to your chemist.

Store herbal, iron and vitamin tablets or substances (including 'gummy bear' type supplements given to older children) out of reach. Iron is very dangerous for young children if taken in a high dose. Don't use the word 'sweets' when talking about medicines or vitamins.



Child-resistant caps on medicines are not child-proof. Keep medicine out of reach at all times.

## Detergents and cleaning products

Store chemicals and household cleaning and laundry products (including laundry and dishwasher tablets, capsules and pods) in high cupboards. Use cupboard safety locks.



**Watch your child at all times, as children do not understand danger**



## Poison

### Garden and DIY products

Keep garden and DIY products in original containers and out of reach in a locked shed. Dispose of old and unused chemicals and products safely.



### Never use soft drink bottles for storage

Always keep household products in their original child-resistant containers. (Be aware that child-resistant containers are not child-proof).



### Handbag items

Place all handbags out of your child's reach as they may contain tablets, chewing gum, hand gel, cosmetics or perfume.

### E-cigarettes

Do not leave electronic cigarettes or their refills in reach or sight of children. These products contain nicotine which is highly toxic when swallowed or inhaled by children.



**Watch your child at all times, as children do not understand danger**

## Poison



### Syringes and needles

Keep syringes and needles locked away and dispose of safely after use.

### Carbon monoxide

Use carbon monoxide alarms (EN 50291 standard) in every room with fuel-burning appliances.



### Poisonous plants

Remove any poisonous plants indoors and from your garden. Get advice from your garden centre when buying plants to make sure they are not a danger to your child.

### Public Poisons Line

Call 01-809 2166 (8am-10pm, seven days a week). Outside these hours, contact your GP or hospital. In case of emergency, call 999 or 112.



**Watch your child at all times, as children do not understand danger**

# Sun

If your child's skin is exposed to too much sun, this may increase their risk of skin cancer later in life. Too much sun can also cause cataracts in adulthood and cancer in the eye



## Did you know?

Up to 90% of UV rays can pass through light clouds.

## Cover up

Dress your child in loose-fitting, long-sleeved light protective clothing (made from close-woven fabric that doesn't let sunlight through). Use a wide brim sunhat that protects the face, neck and ears.

## Seek shade

Keep your child out of direct sunlight as much as possible (especially between 11am-3pm). Use a sunshade on your buggy.



## Use sunscreen

- Choose a UVA and UVB sunscreen made for children with at least SPF 30. Patch test it on their skin first. Try sunscreen for sensitive skin if irritation occurs.
- For best protection apply sunscreen at least 20 minutes before going out in the sun. Cover all exposed areas especially the face, ears, nose, lips and tops of the feet.
- Reapply sun screen (including 'waterproof' and 'water-resistant' products) every two hours, especially after your child swims or plays outdoors.



**Watch your child at all times, as children do not understand danger**



## Sun

### Grab some shades

Protect your child's eyes with sunglasses as close to 100% UV-protection as possible. Wraparound style offers the best protection.



### Keep hydrated

Make sure your child drinks enough fluids. Children cannot adjust to changes in temperature as well as adults. They sweat less, reducing their bodies' ability to cool down.



### Facts about tanning

A tan does not protect skin from burning. A tan is the skin's way of trying to protect itself from further UV damage.

Even when a tan fades, skin damage caused by tanning never goes. Getting sunburnt in childhood or adolescence can increase the risk of melanoma - the most serious form of skin cancer - in later life.

**Watch your child at all times, as children do not understand danger**

## Car seats

It is safer for children to travel in the back seat in their appropriate child car seat. Keep your child rearward facing for as long as possible to offer greater protection to their head, neck and spine.



### Car keys

Always remove car keys from your car and lock doors.

## Playing outdoors

Never allow your child access to the road or pathways beyond your home without adult supervision. Keep outside gates closed and locked and ensure there are no gaps in the surrounding fence or wall. Remove objects near gates and walls that children could climb onto.



### Driveways

Due to their size children are at risk from reversing vehicles. When vehicles are coming into or leaving your driveway, ensure your children are safely inside the house, or securely in an adult's arms, or their hand is being held by an adult.

**Watch your child at all times, as children do not understand danger**



## Playing outdoors

### External doors

Keep all external doors locked. The keys should be out of sight and reach of children but near the door in case of a fire.



### Ladders

Store ladders away safely – out of sight and reach of children.

### Garden machinery

Keep children well away from lawnmowers, strimmers and other garden machinery.



**Watch your child at all times, as children do not understand danger**



## Playing outdoors

### Play equipment

Ensure your child plays only on equipment suitable for their age and developmental stage.

Check play equipment is in good condition and secured to the ground with no sharp edges or bits sticking out. Look for a recognised safety symbol such as the CE mark.



Locate play equipment in a safe area of the garden not too near walls, trees, tree houses or hard surfaces such as tarmac, decking or paths, or near places where children might try to jump on or off of.

Trampolines should have safety padding and safety nets. Assemble according to manufacturer's instructions and ensure all safety features are installed. Children under 6 should not be allowed on a trampoline. Do not have more than one person on a trampoline at a time.



**Watch your child at all times, as children do not understand danger**

## Cycling and walking



Your child should wear a helmet on scooters and bicycles and reflective clothing when cycling. Their bike should have a working bell and front and back lights.

Always hold your child's hand when crossing the road or when walking near traffic.



Ensure you and your child wear reflective clothing at night and when visibility is poor (for example rainy, misty, foggy conditions or at sunrise and sunset).

**Watch your child at all times, as children do not understand danger**



## Animals

Never leave your child alone with any animal – no matter how well you know it. Model safe behaviour and teach your child how to play safely with pets, avoid dangerous situations, respond to danger signs and wash their hands carefully after all contact with pets and other animals.



**Carefully select a pet that is suitable for your family circumstances. Seek advice from your local veterinary practice.**

## Other dangers in the home

### Electrical flexes and equipment



Always keep tools, electrical items and flexes out of children's reach.

### Safety equipment

Use finger safety door stoppers on door edges. Keep the door stoppers out of children's reach.



Use furniture pads to cover any sharp corners in the home. Soften hard edges like window sills with cushion corners. Position hard items like wooden holdbacks for curtains so that your child can't run into them.



**Watch your child at all times, as children do not understand danger**



# Child safety on the farm

Working farms have many hidden dangers and children can stray very quickly.

Never allow your child to play on the farm. Children are at high risk on the farm from vehicles, machinery, drowning, falls and animals. Teach your child that the farm is a workplace and dangerous. Be very vigilant also of children visiting the farm.

## Fenced-off play area

It is not possible to supervise your child safely and work on the farm at the same time. Provide your child with a child-safe, fenced-off play area, away from the working farm. Fencing and gates should have mesh right down to the ground so that children cannot slip through gates or fences or climb over. Make sure the play area is in view of the house and your child is supervised.



## Poisons

Keep all pesticides, cleaning fluids, chemicals, veterinary medicines and equipment in their original containers and in a securely locked store. Dispose of old and unused chemicals and farm products safely. Never use soft drinks bottles for storage.

## Animals

Keep children at a safe distance from livestock and other animals.



## Drowning

Use protective covers and fence off water-collecting containers (including barrels, basins, buckets and troughs) and tanks as appropriate. Empty containers can fill quickly after rainfall.

**Watch your child at all times, as children do not understand danger**

## Farm safety

### Slurry pits

Securely cover or fence all slurry facilities.



### Falls

Secure gates and doors. Heavy swinging gates or doors are very dangerous, especially in high winds.

Never leave replacement gates, fencing or similar objects lying around – children may be tempted to climb.



Discourage your child from play with bales of any description – it is very easy for children to fall from stacked bales, resulting in serious injury. There is also a suffocation risk if they fall between bales.

**Watch your child at all times, as children do not understand danger**



## Farm safety



### Vehicles

Due to their size children are at risk from reversing vehicles. When vehicles are in use or nearby, ensure your children are safely inside the house, or securely in an adult's arms, or their hand is being held by an adult.

Never allow your child near tractors, farm vehicles or machinery. Never leave running vehicles or equipment unattended. Switch off and remove keys from all vehicles and equipment after use.



Never allow your child to travel in tractors, farm vehicles or on quad bikes.



Stop access to areas where there is potential to climb, for example, hay sheds, lofts, high loads, ladders, walls and gates. Store ladders away safely – out of sight and reach.



**Watch your child at all times, as children do not understand danger**



## Farm safety



### Poisonous plants

Remove any poisonous plants indoors and outdoors. Get advice when buying plants to make sure they are not a danger to your child.

### Visitors

Contractors should always be made aware of the presence of children.



### Lead by example

Lead by example by always acting safely yourself and teach your child how to stay safe on the farm.

### Legal requirements

The Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005 requires all farmers to prepare and implement a Safety Statement (farmers with three or fewer employees may instead follow the Code of Practice).

Store guns safely and in keeping with the Firearms (Secure Accommodation) Regulations 2009.

**Watch your child at all times, as children do not understand danger**

# Acknowledgements

Thank you to the following for their input and expertise in the development of the Child Safety Programme:

- Our colleagues in the Health Service Executive
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- Competition and Consumer Protection Commission
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- Health and Safety Authority
- Teagasc
- Irish Cancer Society
- National Cancer Control Programme
- Road Safety Authority
- Irish Water Safety
- Garda Síochána
- Westmeath Local Authority Fire Service
- Dept of Housing, Planning and Local Government
- Local Authority Veterinary Service – Longford, Westmeath and Cork

For more information on the Child Safety Programme, please visit [MyChild.ie](http://MyChild.ie)

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**mychild.ie**

