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SUMMARY ON CHILDPROOFING & SAFETY GUIDANCE FOR SPECIFIC HOME AREAS & CIRCUMSTANCES

1. General

- ◆ Remove or shorten electrical and extension cords.
- ◆ Install outlet covers that slide over the openings in the outlet when it is not in use.
- ◆ Do not use outlet plugs.
 - Children can defeat them at a relatively early age.
 - Adults fail to replace them when they are finished using an outlet.
 - If a child pulls a cord from an outlet, the openings remain exposed until the plug is replaced.
 - They have been known to be choking hazards
- ◆ Keep hot water temperature at 120° F or below throughout the house.
- ◆ Always use non-toxic products when you paint.
- ◆ Never assume that existing paint in your home is safe.
- ◆ Secure curtain and blind cords with wall- or window frame-mounted cleats or retracting-type shorteners to keep them at a height that is unreachable by small children.
- ◆ Secure all doors in your home.
- ◆ Lock all cabinets and drawers below your waist level.
- ◆ Lock all closet doors and other areas where dangerous objects are stored.
- ◆ Use self-closing hinges with door knob- or lever-covers to prevent children from getting rooms, closets, basement or garages.
- ◆ Change all door stops that can be pulled or unscrewed from the wall to solid rubber ones.
- ◆ Install bumpers where sliding doors make contact to walls to prevent fingers or hands from being crushed.
- ◆ Install bi-fold door locks to prevent fingers from getting pinched.
- ◆ Install covers over the hinge side of the door to prevent fingers from getting pinched in the frame.
- ◆ Keep purses out of reach.
- ◆ Make certain that furniture or other electronic equipment that is prone toppling is tethered, either to a wall stud or the furniture itself.

- ◆ Make certain that windows, especially upstairs ones, cannot open more than 4” wide.
- ◆ Prevent the child from getting access to pet food or litter boxes.
- ◆ Keep the Poison Control Hot Line Number 800-222-1222 clearly marked near your kitchen telephone.
- ◆ Post in your kitchen an emergency contact document that lists out phone numbers, doctors, hospitals, medical conditions, etc. Download one from http://www.coloradochildproofers.com/Library/Emergency_Contact_List.doc.

2. Living/Family Rooms

- ◆ Place a cushioning device on all tables or other furniture or fixtures with sharp edges or corners.
- ◆ Protect the hearth with a pad or gate.
 - Gate is preferable.
 - It protects against falls into the hearth, and
 - Prevents your child from getting to the fireplace.
- ◆ Secure bookshelves or other unstable furniture to walls to prevent them from falling over onto your child.
- ◆ Remove bowls of nuts, popcorn, knickknacks, hard candy, potpourri, etc.
- ◆ Remove area rugs.
- ◆ Cover controls and openings on televisions, VCRs, DVDs, computers to:
 - Protect the children from these items and
 - Protect these items from the children.

3. Gates, Stairways, & Safety Mesh

- ◆ Install hardware-mounted gates at the top and bottom of all stairways, regardless of height.
- ◆ Use quality pressure-mounted gates as barriers to make rooms or areas off-limits to the infant.
- ◆ Pressure gates are acceptable only in locations where the opposing faces are solid and stable, such as walls or doorways.
 - Be aware the pressure-mounted gates can do more damage to a wall, a door frame or molding than hardware-mounted gates.
- ◆ Install plastic sheeting or safety fabric mesh
 - Along stairway banisters, especially ones that have openings greater than 4” across or has footholds for a child to climb over the banister. .
 - Any place where railing runs along the edge of a drop-off such as a loft or sunken area.

4. Dining Areas

- ◆ Keep chairs pushed under tables or they will become a route for climbing.
- ◆ For decorative purposes, use place mats rather than table cloths.
- ◆ When dining, however, forgo placemats or tablecloths. They are easily reached and pulled by the child.

5. Nursery

- ◆ **Ensure that this room is the most protected room in your home as the child may end up spending time there as they get older for “quiet time” or “time-out” in an unsupervised manner. Make certain that ALL outlets, door stops, door frames, windows, blind strings, closet doors, toilets, vanities, etc. are properly childproofed.**
- ◆ Look for the Juvenile Products Manufacturers Association (JPMA) label on any furniture item you plan to use, such as highchairs, changing tables, play yards, cribs, cradles, carriages, gates, or strollers.
- ◆ Use a crib of recent manufacture that meets Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) standards.
 - In particular, slats or spindles should be properly spaced (CPSC standards require a maximum space of 2-3/8”).
- ◆ Make sure the mattress fits snugly; there should be no more than two fingers' width between the crib and the sides of the mattress.
- ◆ Once your baby can stand, position the mattress at its lowest point.
- ◆ Remove crib gyms and mobiles as soon as baby gets on hands and knees or reaches five months of age.
- ◆ Keep large toys out of the crib.
- ◆ Follow guidelines for safe bedding practices for infants:
 - Place baby on his/her back on a firm, tight-fitting mattress in a crib that meets current safety standards.
 - Remove pillows, quilts, comforters, sheepskins, stuffed toys and other soft products from the crib.
 - Consider using a sleeper as an alternative to blankets with no other covering.
 - If using a blanket, put baby with its feet at the foot of the crib. Tuck a thin blanket around the crib mattress, only as far as the baby's chest.
 - Make sure your baby's head remains uncovered during sleep.
 - Do not place baby on a waterbed, sofa, soft mattress, pillow or other soft surface to sleep.
- ◆ Use an infant monitoring device. We recommend one that monitors motion as well as sound.
- ◆ Cut product tags or manufacturers' labels off an item entirely or cut the loop
- ◆ Avoid using plastic bags as a mattress cover or in any area to which the baby has access.
- ◆ Regularly check screws and bolts on baby furniture for tightness to ensure stability.
- ◆ Always stay close and watchful when a baby is on a raised surface such as a changing table.
- ◆ Use the restraining strap on a changing table.
- ◆ Remove peeling paint.
- ◆ Always use non-toxic products when you paint.
- ◆ Never assume that existing paint in your home is safe.
- ◆ Use only diaper pails with a locking lid.
- ◆ If you use plastic bags as liners, ensure that the edges are not exposed to the child over the top of the pail.

- ◆ Use only pacifiers that have a flared guard that has holes to allow breathing if it does get lodged in the mouth.
- ◆ Never tie a pacifier to anything.
- ◆ Cover or file down all sharp corners and edges on furniture and apparatuses.
- ◆ Use nightlights in the nursery, parents' bedroom, connecting halls, and other areas where you may need to walk at night, especially those in which you may be carrying your infant.
- ◆ Avoid placing furniture under windows.
- ◆ Secure all large dressers, etc., to the wall.
- ◆ If you close the door to your baby's room, place a smoke detector in the room.
- ◆ Carbon Monoxide detectors are also a great idea, as are natural gas detectors if your home has any gas appliances or heating.
- ◆ Fire extinguishers should be visibly located in each child's room, including the nursery.

6. Bedrooms

- ◆ Never leave medicine or vitamins on a table or countertop.
- ◆ Secure bookshelves and dressers to the wall. Keep all drawers closed and latched to prevent climbing.
- ◆ Dresser drawers should be secured.
- ◆ Lock all closets to prevent access to shoe polish, plastic bags, wire coat hangers, and other potential dangers.
- ◆ Guns should be stored unloaded with safety on, in a top security Child Safe.
- ◆ Place lights strategically to minimize the risk of falls during your night time trips into the baby's room.
- ◆ A flashlight or emergency light should be placed in each room for use during electrical failure or fire.
- ◆ Never use waterbeds as a sleeping surface for young infants.
- ◆ Place a gate at the doorway of older siblings' rooms, caution them to segregate their toys which contain small parts, and teach them other safety measures.
- ◆ Have a fire ladder easily accessible in bedrooms on the second floor or higher.
- ◆ Fire extinguishers should be visibly located in each bedroom.

7. Bathrooms

- ◆ Lock toilet bowls to prevent drowning and/or loss of valuables.
- ◆ Unplug any electrical device when not in use.
- ◆ Don't keep anything plugged in near the bathtub.
- ◆ Keep toothpaste out of the reach of children under 6 years of age.
- ◆ Keep cosmetics and medicines up high and locked.
- ◆ Administer medicine cautiously.
- ◆ Never say medicine is candy.
- ◆ Never dispense medicine in the dark.
- ◆ Always store medicines in the original containers with childproof caps.
- ◆ Lock all cabinets and drawers.
- ◆ The American Association of Poison Control Centers no longer recommends keeping syrup of ipecac on hand for use in some poisoning situations.

- ◆ Use only non-slip, padded bathroom rugs.
- ◆ Use a tub sidewall cushion.
- ◆ Cushion the tub water spout.
- ◆ Secure your shower curtain rod against being pulled down.
- ◆ NEVER leave your child alone in the tub, even for a minute.
- ◆ If the doorbell rings, scoop him up in a towel and take him with you.
 - Carry a portable phone into rooms, especially the bathroom where you are with the baby if you feel you can't miss a call.
 - If the phone rings do not let the phone distract you from the most important matter – your baby.
- ◆ Teach your child to stay seated in the tub at all times.
- ◆ Remove sharp utensils and appliances from the bathroom. Place them in an adult's bedroom or high up in a linen closet well out of a child's reach.
- ◆ Band-Aids are not a good idea for very small infants – those at an age where they still put things in their mouths – unless they are covered by clothing.
- ◆ Install emergency door lock releases on any door with pushbutton type locks to allow rapid entry in the event a lock-in occurs.

8. Kitchen

- ◆ **NEVER EVER** leave your child alone in this room.
- ◆ Keep a list of emergency contact numbers, easily accessible and written in large print for easy reading, near the phone in the kitchen.
- ◆ Make sure every drawer and cabinet below waist level is locked.
- ◆ Remove chemicals from under the sink and place them in a high locked cabinet.
- ◆ Keep spices, especially salt, in a location that is inaccessible to your child.
- ◆ Do not reserve a cabinet for objects that your child may play with.
- ◆ Do not allow your tots to play with pots and pans.
- ◆ Lock all appliances – dishwasher, refrigerator, microwave, and oven.
- ◆ Though your dishwasher should be locked, take the added precaution of placing the sharp ends of knives, forks, and other utensils pointing downward in the rack.
- ◆ Use a guard on the disposal switch.
- ◆ If your range/oven knobs can be easily accessed by your child, install knob locks that will allow an adult to operate them, but not your infant.
- ◆ Do not remove the stove knobs.
- ◆ Always use the back burners of your stove.
- ◆ Keep the handles of pots and pans on your stovetop turned toward the rear of the range.
- ◆ Use a range top guard to help prevent injury to exploring hands.
- ◆ Store cookies and other goodies away from the stove to minimize your baby's interest in that area of the kitchen.
- ◆ Keep hot dishes away from the edge of the counter.
- ◆ Unplug blenders and grinders when not in use.
- ◆ Shorten the electrical cords on small appliances.
- ◆ Remove knife blocks from the counter. Organize knives in a drawer with at least a plastic tray. An in-drawer knife block is better.

- ◆ Lock other sharps away – skewers, meat thermometers, ice picks, food processor and blender blades, etc. – just look around: on counters, in drawers, in cabinets.
- ◆ Remove all magnets from your refrigerator unless they are the flat card type that is entirely magnetic with no small separate magnets that can fall off.
- ◆ Move your garbage pail under a counter and lock the cabinet door.
- ◆ Keep unused plastic bags locked up.
- ◆ Apply decals or appliqués low – from you baby’s eyelevel and below – on low glass windows and doors.
- ◆ Throw rugs should be removed for the next few years to prevent falls.
- ◆ Keep boxes with serrated edges, such as those on aluminum foil and plastic wrap, in a locked cabinet or drawer.
- ◆ Keep a fire extinguisher for this area of the house.
 - It should be one of many which you own and know how to use.
 - Regularly ensure that it is full.
 - Keep it near but away from directly above a range top or oven.

9. Laundry Room

- ◆ DOUBLE LOCK this area. Access should be restricted by door knob- or lever-covers with self-closing hinges, etc. and cabinet locks should be installed for added safety.
- ◆ Keep detergents and other chemicals and cleansers locked away or up high.
- ◆ Keep your iron locked away and up high.
- ◆ Keep hot water temperature at 120° F or below throughout the house.
- ◆ The laundry room should absolutely be off-limits to your child, yet childproofing should be rigorous for those moments when your back is turned.
- ◆ Don’t let your children play inside front loading washers or dryers, as they can easily get trapped inside.

10. Attic, Basement, Garage, Tool Shed, and Workshop

- ◆ These areas of the home should also be off-limits to your young children.
- ◆ All tools should be stored away from curious children.
- ◆ All chemicals should be labeled properly and stored out of reach in locked cabinets.
- ◆ Ropes, cords, and hoses pose a strangulation hazard.
- ◆ Plastic bags or sheets and tarpaulins can suffocate a child.
- ◆ Any trunks, cabinets, large storage boxes, old refrigerators and freezers should be closed and locked or the doors and lids removed.
- ◆ Any sharp or broken items should be discarded.
- ◆ Properly illuminate attics, basements, garages, tool sheds, and workshops.
- ◆ If you use an automatic garage door-opener, test it regularly to ensure that the auto-stop feature (it immediately stops the door from closing if it strikes an object) is in working order and adjusted to a sensitive level.
- ◆ Garbage collection areas should be located away from any area your child has access to.

11. Swimming Pool Area

- ◆ Install safety fences with self-locking, child-resistant gates with latches that are between your home and pools, Jacuzzis, and hot tubs.
- ◆ Remove ladders to aboveground pools whenever an adult is not present to supervise.
- ◆ Be especially aware of pool covers – Water can accumulate on these and children can easily lose their balance when walking on these and drown.
- ◆ Never allow anything electrical or any glass containers near the pool.
- ◆ Remember to keep your pool chemicals locked up.
- ◆ Keep proper life-preserving equipment in and around the pool.
- ◆ Have a telephone at poolside.
- ◆ Learn CPR.
- ◆ **SUPERVISE YOUR CHILDREN AT ALL TIMES AND NEVER LEAVE THEM ALONE WHEN NEAR THE WATER.**

12. House Plants

- ◆ Remove all toxic houseplants.
- ◆ Move nontoxic plants up and away from your children.
- ◆ Remove potpourri.

13. Indoor Air

- ◆ Air out your house at least once a week to clear out collected fumes.
- ◆ Never smoke in the house.
- ◆ Air your home well for several days to weeks after buying new furniture or rugs.
- ◆ Be aware that radon gas is heavier than air and is quite common in Colorado. Have your home tested and mitigate it as necessary.

14. Drinking Water

- ◆ A water filter is a good idea. Change the filter regularly to maintain effectiveness.

15. Hot Weather Hazards

- ◆ On a sunny day with an outdoor temperature of only 75°F, the temperature inside your car can reach 120°F within minutes.
- ◆ It is best to keep infants out of the sun altogether. Check with your pediatrician about using sunscreen on babies younger than 6 months.
- ◆ Almost all sunscreens need to be applied approximately thirty minutes before exposing the baby to the sun. Reapply at least every two hours and after swimming or toweling off.
- ◆ Keep your baby covered with a brimmed hat, sunglasses and light clothing.

16. In The Yard

- ◆ Pesticides are not only toxic if ingested; they are often harmful if inhaled or put in contact with the skin.
- ◆ Ensure that there are no containers that water can accumulate, such as 5 gallon buckets, pails, etc.

17. Visitors to Your Home

- ◆ Inform guests in your home about your safety and childproofing measures and products.
- ◆ Ensure that visitors' purses and bags are kept out of baby's reach.

18. In Other Homes and Locations

- ◆ When visiting another home, make no assumptions about the presence of childproofing products or the homeowners' level of awareness of proper safety practices.
- ◆ Never leave your child anyplace – even in grandparents' homes – without ensuring your child's safety there. The hosts must be prepared to take every possible step to protect your baby. Some products may be carried with you to such locations. Some items which are not ideal for the child's home environment may be effective on a temporary basis, such as in friends' or relatives' homes or a motel room. Examples are doorknob covers, temporary cabinet locks, or outlet plugs. These items present some measure of protection because your baby is unaccustomed to seeing them.
- ◆ It is a sensitive topic to address the safety (or lack of) in someone else's home, but this is your baby. The topic must be addressed, tactfully but insistently.

19. INFANT CPR AND SAFETY FIRST AID COURSES

- ◆ Each year many lives are saved because a person attended classes on these topics. They are available through many organizations. Check with your local hospital, the American Red Cross, the American Heart Association, your local fire department, school districts' community education programs, **the Dallas Association for Parent Education (D.A.P.E.) at 972-699-0420**. Many instructors will provide a course in the privacy of your home.