

# Keep me Safe at Home

ROSPA

**SAFE AT HOME**  
The National Home Safety Equipment Scheme

# Falls



While education and supervision is very important, fitting the appropriate equipment can help to reduce the risk of a fall

# Falls

Over 40,000 children under five are hurt each year as a result of a fall down stairs.

- Never leave trip hazards on the stairs
- Be prepared for your baby to move quickly – especially when they learn to crawl
- Stairs should be carefully maintained – damaged or worn carpet should be repaired or removed
- Make sure banisters are strong and do not have any footholds for climbing
- Vertical rods should be spaced no more than 10cm apart
- Stairs should always be well lit
- Fit child-resistant window restrictors but make sure you can get out easily in an emergency
- Do not put anything under the window that can be climbed on
- Furniture and tall kitchen appliances at risk from being pulled over should be secured to the wall
- As soon as your baby can raise themselves they will be able to roll – never leave a baby on a raised surface
- Fit a safety gate conforming to BS EN 1930:2000 at the top and bottom of stairs



## Remember

Use safety gates at the top and bottom of the stairs once your baby is on the move

# Burns



While education and supervision is very important, fitting the appropriate equipment can help to reduce the risk of a burn

# Burns

Domestic fires pose one of the greatest risks to children. Children playing with matches and lighters frequently start house fires. 46% of all child fatalities are caused by house fires.

- Keep matches and lighters out of sight and reach of children
- Always use a fire guard and secure it to the wall
- Do not dry washing on the fire guard
- Extinguish and dispose of cigarettes properly
- Have an escape route planned in case of fire – and practice it
- Fit a smoke alarm which complies with BS EN 14604:2005 and check it regularly
- The incidence of burns and scalds in young children is much higher than that of older children and adults
- Keep hot irons, curling tongs and hair straighteners out of reach even when they are cooling down
- Never leave candles or naked flames unattended and always place them in a suitable holder and well away from curtains



## Remember

Always use a fire guard and fit a smoke detector on each floor of the house

# Suffocation & Choking



While education and supervision are very important, fitting the appropriate equipment can help to reduce the risk of suffocation and choking

# Suffocation & Choking

Children less than 36 months are at a high risk of choking. They can swallow, inhale or choke on items such as small toys, peanuts and marbles.

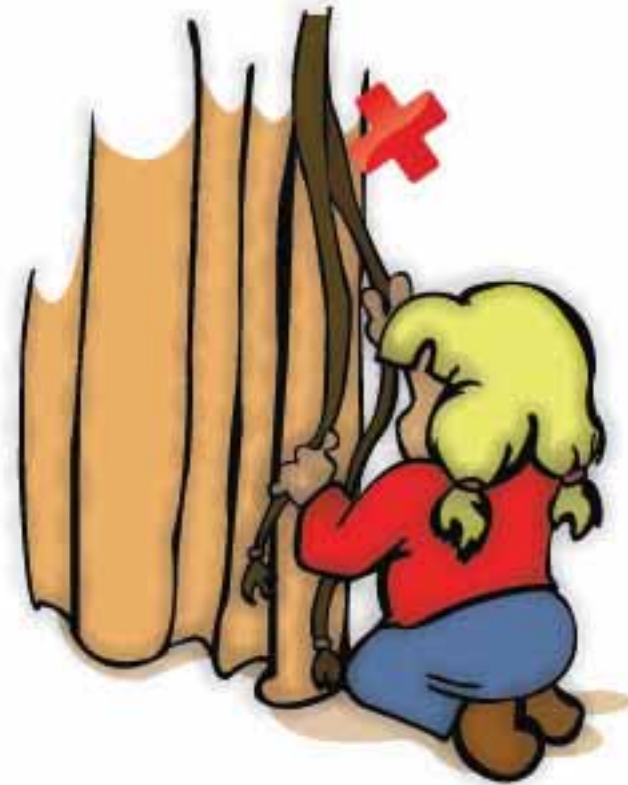
- Choose toys appropriate to the age of the child
- Ensure that small objects such as marbles and peanuts and small toys are kept out of reach of children under three years old
- Encourage older children to keep their toys away from their younger playmates
- Keep animals, especially cats, out of the bedroom and use a net on a pram
- Never go to sleep with your baby in your bed. It is very easy to roll over and suffocate them
- Lie a small baby down on his/her back and make sure the child's feet are at the bottom of the cot
- Never leave a baby or toddler to feed alone
- Cutting food into small lengths rather than rounds can help minimise risk; cut grapes and cherries into quarters
- Keep plastic bags out of reach
- Never allow young children to play with balloons unsupervised



## Remember

Children can choke on small toys, sweets and nuts

# Strangulation



While education and supervision is very important, fitting the appropriate equipment can help to reduce the risk of strangulation



# Strangulation

Looped cords, such as blind cords and chains, can pose a risk to small children. We typically hear about one or two children dying each year in the UK after becoming entangled in blind cords, and there are many more near-misses. To reduce these risks, cords should be kept out of the reach of children.

- Don't hang drawstring bags where a small child could get their head through the loop of the drawstring
- Install blinds that do not have a cord, particularly in a child's bedroom
- Do not place a child's cot, bed, playpen or highchair near a window
- Looped pull-cords on curtains and blinds should be kept short and kept out of reach
- Use one of the many cleats, cord tidies, clips or ties that are available to ensure that cords are out of reach of children



## Remember

Install blinds that do not have looped cords, or shorten the cord so it is out of reach

# Scalds



# Scalds

76,000 under-fives attend A & E each year following a burn or a scald.

Hot drinks cause the most scalds to children under the age of five. A child's skin is much more sensitive than an adult's and a hot drink can still scald a child 15 minutes after being made.

- Run the domestic hot water system at 46°C or fit a thermostatic mixing valve to taps
- When running a bath turn the cold water on first and always test the water temperature with your elbow before letting a child get into the bath or shower
- Never leave children or babies in the bath unsupervised, even for a moment
- Make sure that a baby bath is on a firm surface
- Keep hot drinks out of reach and away from the edges of tables and worktops
- Never hold a hot drink and a child at the same time
- Keep kettles at the back of the worktop
- Encourage the use of a cordless kettle
- Keep small children out of the kitchen whenever possible
- Always use rear hotplates and turn the pan handles away from the front of the cooker



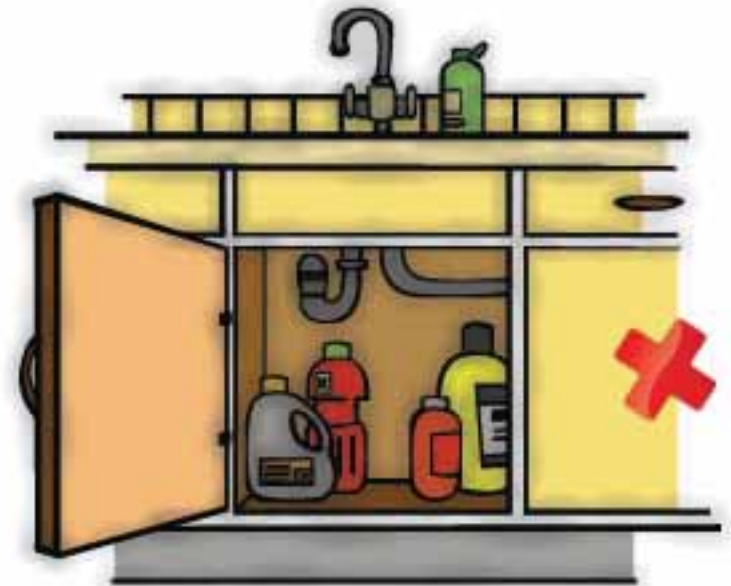
## Remember

Always check the water temperature before giving a child a bath or a shower

## Remember

Small children cannot understand the dangers around them

# Poisoning



While education and supervision is very important, fitting the appropriate equipment can help to reduce the risk of poisoning

# Poisoning

Most poisoning accidents involve medicines, household products and cosmetics. Some poisoning agents can cause breathing difficulties. Seek medical attention immediately.

40,000 children swallow pills, chemicals, cosmetics and perfumes each year.

- Keep medicines and chemicals out of sight and reach of children, preferably in a locked cupboard
- Wherever possible, buy products in child resistant containers
- Always store chemicals in their original containers
- Dispose of unwanted medicines and chemicals safely
- Avoid buying plants with poisonous leaves or berries
- Some plants can irritate the skin



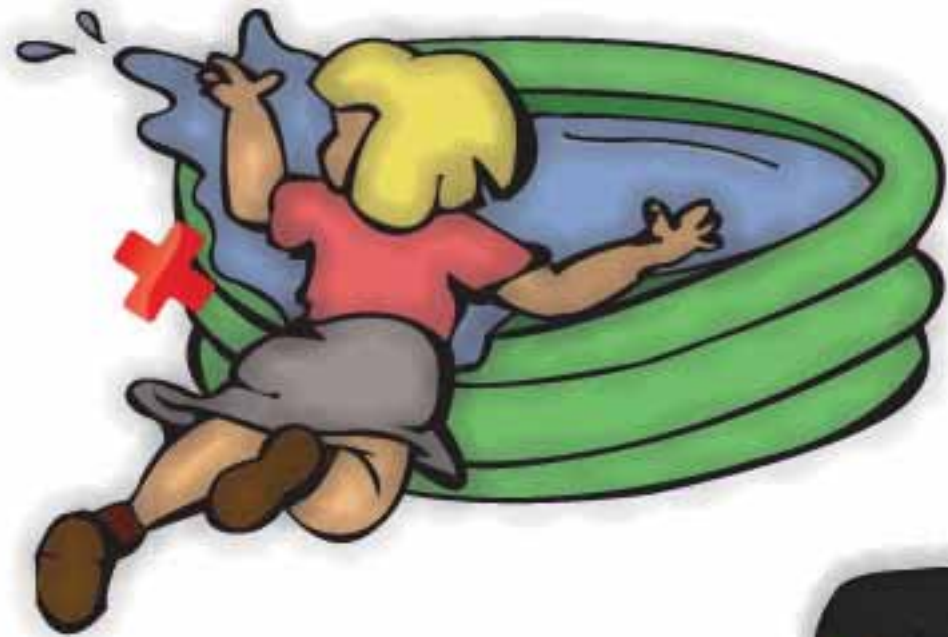
## Remember

Fit cupboard locks and be especially careful when visiting older friends or relatives, since their medicines may be more accessible

## Remember

Young children want to put everything in their mouths

# Drowning



While education and supervision are very important, fitting the appropriate equipment can help to reduce the risk of drowning

# Drowning

Every year in the UK, 13 children under the age of five die from drowning

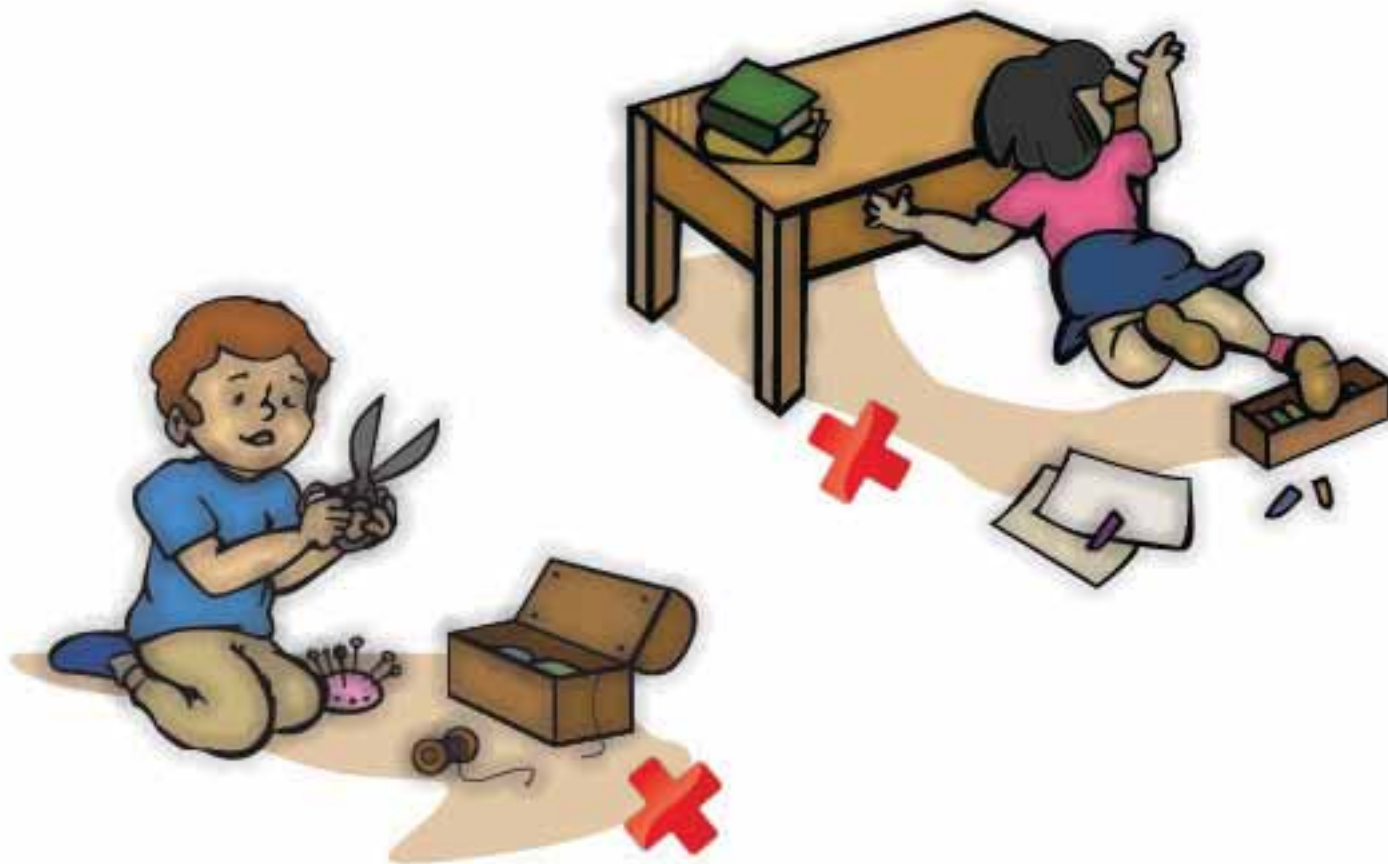
- Never leave children or babies in the bath unsupervised, even for a moment
- Never leave uncovered bowls or buckets of water around the home
- Paddling pools should be emptied and stored away when not in use
- Garden ponds should be filled in while children are small or securely fenced off. Take special care when visiting other people's gardens
- Use a bath mat to reduce the risk of an accident



## Remember

Children can drown in less than 3cm of water. They should be under constant supervision when in or near water.

# Cuts



While education and supervision are very important, fitting the appropriate equipment can help to reduce the risk of cuts



# Cuts

The increased use of glass within the home has led to more glass-related accidents. Every year children die following an accident with architectural glass. Many children are also injured when glass tumblers and bottles break.

- Keep sharp knives and scissors out of reach of small children
- Use safety scissors when children first start to use scissors on their own
- As soon as they are old enough teach children how to use knives and scissors safely
- Use safety glass which conforms to BS 6206 (laminated, toughened or glass which passes the impact test) in all replacement windows and doors - especially at low level. Laminated glass is good for safety and security
- Make existing glass safer by applying fragment retention film
- When buying furniture which incorporates glass, look for approval to BS 7376 and BS 7449
- Always clear up broken glass quickly and dispose of it safely
- Buy a greenhouse or cold frame with special safety glazing features or isolate with fencing.
- Put gardening tools away as soon as you have finished with them



## Remember

There are lots of sharp edges in the kitchen

# Safety Equipment



While education and supervision are very important, fitting the appropriate equipment can help to reduce the risk of accidents.

Over 1 million children under the age of 15 experience accidents in and around the home every year for which they are taken to Accident and Emergency Units. Many more are treated by General Practitioners and by parents and carers.

Those most at risk from home accidents are children aged 0-4 years. Falls account for the majority of non-fatal accidents whilst the highest numbers of deaths are due to fire. Most of these accidents are preventable through increased awareness, improvements in the home environment and greater product safety.

This resource has been designed to help stimulate discussion with families about how to keep their children safe from accidents.

- 6,000 under-fives attend A & E following a burn or a scald each year
- Most accidents to children happen in the living room
- 13 children under five die each year from drowning
- 40,000 children swallow pills, chemicals, cosmetics and perfumes each year
- Over 40,000 children under five are hurt each year as a result of a fall down stairs

The Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents.  
Telephone: 0121 248 2000 Fax: 0121 248 2001  
RoSPA is a registered charity, no. 207823  
[www.safeathome.rospace.com](http://www.safeathome.rospace.com)

