

It's unsettling to think that family or friends could be severely hurt in your home. Unfortunately, more than 75% of injury-related emergency room visits among children from birth to 4 years of age are caused by accidents that take place on residential property.<sup>1</sup> For those between the ages of 1 and 34, unintentional injuries are the leading cause of death and hospitalization.<sup>2</sup> Despite these shocking facts, many say they don't know what they would or should do to make their homes safer environments. Often, people aren't aware of the potential hazards that exist. That's why it is important to take time to educate your family about the dangers that may be found in your home and how to prevent accidental injuries.

# Home SAFE Home

**Falls:** 20% of injury-related deaths among seniors are a result of falls.<sup>2</sup> They are also the leading cause of injury-related hospitalization among children and youth.<sup>3</sup> Installing sturdy grab bars in the showers and railings on the stairs will help prevent falls. All indoor and outdoor walkways and stairways should be adequately lit.



**Poisonings:** Many common household items pose a threat to all members of the family, especially children and pets. It's a good idea to contact your local poison control centre for help with potentially dangerous situations. Keep all medications and cleaning supplies out of reach; safety locks can easily be added to cabinets in the kitchen, bathrooms and garage.

Sources:  
<sup>1</sup>publichealthgreybruce.on.ca  
<sup>2</sup>phac-aspc.gc.ca  
<sup>3</sup>ofm.gov.on.ca  
<sup>4</sup>fiprean.ca  
<sup>5</sup>safekidscanada.ca

**Fires and Burns:** Residential fires account for 73% of all fire-related deaths.<sup>4</sup> Of these fatalities, many are due to smoke inhalation. Fire can spread quickly; it is critical to create an escape plan and practice it annually.



**Obstructed Airways:** Nearly half of children's hospital visits related to airway obstruction are a result of choking on food.<sup>5</sup> Other items commonly found around the home, such as coins or small toys, are also potential hazards. Balloons and objects measuring 5 centimetres or less are especially dangerous.

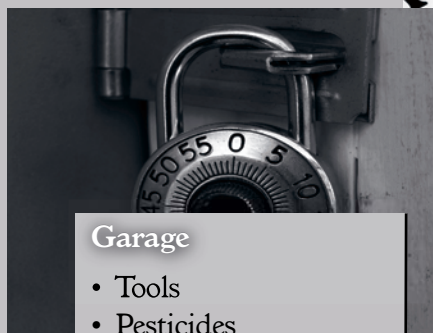
**Drowning:** Submersions and drowning are the second leading cause of death for those under the age of 14. A young child can drown in as little as 2.5 centimetres of water.<sup>5</sup> Be cautious when children are in or near a bathtub, pool or other body of water.



# More Safety Tips

- Create an emergency response plan with your family. Designate evacuation routes and a meeting place outside the home. Everyone should be aware of the locations of fire extinguishers and emergency kits.
- Place a list of important numbers, including the fire department, police, medical assistance and poison control, near each phone in your home. Make sure children know to call 911 in an emergency.
- Keep your first aid kit well-stocked. For information on what to include, visit [redcross.org](http://redcross.org).
- Install and check smoke and carbon monoxide detectors to ensure they are working properly. At a minimum, place one of each in the hallways between the bedrooms of your home.
- Test and replace fire extinguishers. Make sure your entire family knows where to find them and how they are used. It is important to keep one on each floor of your house, as well as in the kitchen.
- Have your chimney inspected once a year and cleaned regularly to reduce creosote.
- Make sure burning candles are at least 30 centimetres away from fabrics and other flammable items. Extinguish them before leaving the house or going to bed. Candles should be placed in glass, ceramic, metal or other noncombustible materials.
- Protect your home from electrical hazards by not overloading electrical sockets or running electrical wires under carpets. Consider using lightning and surge protection devices and investing in Arc Fault Circuit Interrupters (AFCIs).
- Have your heating and cooling systems serviced regularly. Keep portable space heaters at least 1 metre away from flammable objects like paper, beds, curtains, clothing and upholstery.
- Tie window blinds and curtain cords with clothespins or specially designed cord clips.
- Check for recalls on items such as appliances, electronics, furniture and children's toys.
- Securely fasten heavy furniture including bookcases, shelves, artwork and mirrors to the walls.

Are potentially dangerous items properly stored?



## Garage

- Tools
- Pesticides
- Cleaning supplies
- Automotive fluids
- Pool chemicals
- Gardening products



## Bathroom

- All types of medications
- Cosmetics
- Cleaners
- Mouthwash
- Perfumes
- Hair dyes and sprays
- Nail polishes and removers



## Kitchen/ Laundry Room

- Cleaning products
- Sharp objects
- Small appliances