

## 2 TO 4 YEARS

### Safety for Your Child

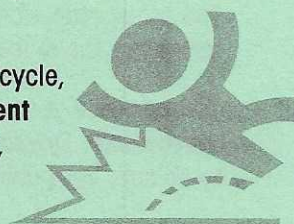
Did you know that injuries are the leading cause of death of children younger than 4 years in the United States? Most of these injuries can be prevented.

Often, injuries happen because parents are not aware of what their children can do. Children *learn fast*, and before you know it your child will be *jumping, running, riding* a tricycle, and *using tools*. Your child is at special risk for injuries from falls, drowning, poisons, burns, and car crashes. Your child doesn't understand dangers or remember "no" while playing and exploring.

#### Falls

Because your child's abilities are so great now, he or she will find an endless variety of dangerous situations at home and in the neighborhood.

Your child can fall off play equipment, out of windows, down stairs, off a bike or tricycle, and off anything that can be climbed on. **Be sure the surface under play equipment is soft enough to absorb a fall.** Use a rubber mat, or 12 inches of sand, saw dust, or wood chips underneath play equipment.



Lock the doors to any dangerous areas. **Use gates on stairways and install operable window guards** above the first floor. Fence in the play yard. **If your child has a serious fall, or does not act normally after a fall call your doctor.**

#### Firearm Hazards

Children in homes where guns are present are in more danger of being shot by themselves, their friends, or family members than of being injured by an intruder. It is best to keep all guns out of the home. If you choose to keep a gun, keep it unloaded and in a locked place separate from the ammunition. **Handguns are especially dangerous.** Ask if the homes where your child visits or is cared for have guns and how they are stored.



#### Burns

The kitchen can be a dangerous place for your child, especially when you are cooking. If your child is under foot, hot liquids, grease, and hot foods can spill on him or her and cause serious burns. Find something safe for your child to do while you are cooking.



Remember that kitchen appliances and other hot surfaces such as irons, ovens, wall heaters, and outdoor grills can burn your child long after you have finished using them.

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American Academy of Pediatrics

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If your child does get burned, immediately put cold water on the burned area. Then cover the burn loosely with a bandage or clean cloth. Call your doctor for all burns. To protect your child from tap water scalds, reduce the maximum temperature of your hot water heater to 120°F.

Test the batteries on your smoke alarm every month to be sure that they work. Change the batteries every year on a date you'll remember, such as daylight savings time.

## Poisonings

Your child will be able to *open* any drawer and *climb* anywhere curiosity leads. Your child may *swallow anything* he or she finds. Use only household products and medicines that are absolutely necessary and keep them safely capped and out of sight and reach. Keep all products in their original containers.

If your child does put something poisonous in his or her mouth, call your Poison Center or doctor immediately. Attach your Poison Center number to your phone. Have syrup of ipecac on hand to make your child vomit, but use it only if you are told to do so by the Poison Center or your doctor.

## And Remember Car Safety

Car crashes are the **greatest danger** to your child's life and health. The crushing forces to your child's brain and body in a collision or sudden stop, even at low speeds, can cause injuries or death.

To prevent these injuries, correctly **USE a car safety seat EVERY TIME** your child is in the car. If your child weighs more than the highest weight allowed by the seat or if his or her ears come to the top of the car safety seat, use a belt positioning booster seat.

The safest place for all children to ride is in the back seat. In an emergency, if a child **must** ride in the front seat, move the vehicle seat back as far as it can go, away from the air bag.

Do not allow your child to play or ride a tricycle in the street. **Your child should play in a fenced yard or playground.** Driveways are also dangerous. Walk behind your car before you back out of your driveway to be sure your child is not behind your car. You may not see your child through the rear view mirror.

**Remember, the biggest threat to your child's life and health is an injury.**

