

Children's Health Protection Month

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) celebrates Children's Health Month each October by developing publications and activities that highlight the importance of protecting children from environmental risks. <http://yosemite.epa.gov/ochp/ochpweb.nsf/content/chm07.htm>

This is a great opportunity for parents, grandparents, and caregivers to take into account the environment in which children may live in or visit.

Here are some simple, low-cost product safety tips to protect children:

1. Never leave standing liquids unattended. Stay within arm's reach while your child is bathing or near any container of water. If the phone rings, let it ring; stay with your child.
2. Prevent tap water scalds by adjusting the temperature on your hot water heater to 120° F.
3. Keep medicines and hazardous household chemicals locked up and out of sight. Use child-resistant packaging for medicines and hazardous household chemicals, and call 1-800-222-1222 if a poisoning occurs.
4. Cut the loops on window-blind cords and call 1-800-506-4636 for a free repair kit.
5. Make sure your hairdryer has a large rectangular plug. The immersion protection device prevents electrocution if the hairdryer is dropped in water.
6. Change the battery in your smoke alarm when you change your clock's setting in the fall and spring months.
7. Have a professional check your furnace for carbon monoxide leaks and your chimney for blockages; put a CO alarm in the hallway near every separate sleeping area.
8. Prevent electrocutions by installing a ground fault circuit interrupter (GFCI) in your household outlets.
9. Installing Arc Fault Circuit Interrupters (AFCIs) can prevent electrical fires. AFCIs can sense electrical arc and trip the circuit.
10. Babies on adult beds risk suffocation from hidden hazards such as entrapment between the bed and wall; entrapment involving the bed frame, headboard and footboard; or soft bedding such as pillows or thick quilts and comforters.

The EPA also provides a 31 Day Guide of helpful hints in improve the environment for children: <http://yosemite.epa.gov/ochp/ochpweb.nsf/content/calendar.htm>