

Promoting child safety at home

Your adult-friendly home has lots of potential hazards for a child. But you can keep your child safe by **finding out what the risks are**, and then preventing or removing them.

But even when you think you've removed all the home safety hazards, the reality is that children can still have tumbles and falls. That's why **supervision is one of the keys to child safety at home**.

Also, as your child grows and learns to climb and open things, you need to be alert for new hazards. You'll probably need to change the environment to make sure your home is still a safe and creative place to play and explore.

And along with supervision and a safe environment, you can also improve home safety by **teaching your child about what's safe and what's not**.

Preventing falls at home

[Falls](#) are the **most common cause of injuries and visits to hospital** in every age group.

You can help to keep your child safe by watching the new skills she's learning, and the new places she can reach – and then adjusting your home. For example:

- When your child starts crawling, install safety guards across entries to stairs and balconies. And you still need to supervise your child on stairs and balconies.
- When your child starts climbing, lock windows – particularly upper-storey windows – restrict window openings, or shield them with firmly attached window guards. This will stop your child climbing out and falling.
- Leave a hall light on at night, or use sensor lights to make it easier for older children to get to the toilet without tripping.

Don't leave babies unattended on raised surfaces like change tables, sofas or beds. Babies might roll or wriggle off and fall.

Poisoning

[Poisoning](#) is one of the leading causes of injury to children under five, and children are often poisoned by common [household chemicals](#) and [medicines](#).

You can make your child's environment safer by:

- removing potential poisons
- storing chemicals and medicines up high in a locked cupboard or cabinets

- putting a child-safety latch on the doors of cupboards where you keep household poisons.

Strangulation and suffocation

Many homes have everyday items that could strangle or suffocate a child. These items include soft toys and bedding, blinds, cords and ropes, and bags, boxes and packaging.

Here are some essential safety tips to [keep your child safe from suffocation and strangulation](#):

- Keep stuffed toys, cushions and piles of clothing out of cots and prams.
- Wrap blind cords in cleats attached to the wall at least 1.6 m above the floor.
- Tie knots in plastic bags, and keep them away from children.

Courtesy of raisingchildren.net.au