



Safety and Protection: Home Safety Tip Sheet

For Early Head Start/Head Start (EHS/HS); Refugee Resettlement; Migrant and Seasonal Head Start (MSHS);
Early Care and Education Providers

All providers can support families by offering information on how to ensure a safe home environment. This Home Safety Tip Sheet corresponds to page 9 of the

[Raising Young Children in a New Country: Supporting Early Learning and Healthy Development](#) Handbook.

Conversation Starters: (or staff, families, and partners can design program-specific questions)

- All parents are concerned about their child's safety in the home. How did you keep your child safe in and around your home in your home country?
- What are some of the safety concerns you have noticed in the US?
- What are examples of things you do to keep your child safe in your home in the US?
- If your child had an emergency in your home country, what did you do?
- How is this response similar or different in the US?



Cultural Considerations:

- Beliefs, practices, laws, and law enforcement regarding child safety can vary widely between countries. Use questions like the ones above to explore families' beliefs and practices regarding child safety in the home.
- Refugee families and children may not be accustomed to the hazards in their new home environments in the US. Information on safety risks common in U.S. households, such as toxic cleaning products, toys with choking hazards, secondhand smoke, and lead paint in older homes may be helpful.
- Some home features may be completely new, particularly for refugees from rural areas or those who have lived in refugee camps for years. For example, some refugees may be unaccustomed to guarding against falls from stairs and windows or preventing burns from hot tap water if access to running hot water was previously unavailable.
- Refugees are by definition fleeing persecution, usually by authorities in their home countries. It may take time for families to learn about the different roles of government authorities in the US, including the police, emergency response, and child protective services.

Remember to Mention:

- Young children's curiosity about their environment puts them at risk for a variety of potential dangers. Keeping children safe during this stage can be tiring for parents, but it is important to have safety rules to ensure that children remain safe and healthy.
- Parents can learn how to childproof their homes by removing possible dangers from children's reach. A home safety checklist can be used to help ensure homes are safe.
- Always keep medicines in a safe place—up and out of reach of children—to prevent medication overdoses.
- Refugees may have had less exposure to information about the health effects of secondhand smoke on children.
- All homes should have smoke and carbon monoxide detectors. Knowing safe ways to heat a home and use electric outlets can help avoid dangers such as fire, smoke, or carbon monoxide poisoning.



Safety and Protection: Home Safety Tip Sheet (cont'd)

- Parents must ensure that a responsible adult is always supervising their child. In the US, state and county laws specify requirements for supervising children according to their age, maturity, and length of time that a child can be left alone.
- National child safety organizations recommend that children under 12 years old should not be left home alone, nor left to supervise younger siblings.
- Never leave children unsupervised near water; including in the bathtub, swimming pool, or at a lake, river, or beach. Children can drown in just a few inches of water. Make sure no electrical devices, such as hairdryers, are near the water in a bathtub or sink.
- Children can be burned by tap water used to wash hands or for a bath; hot liquids or food on the stove or in a microwave; and hot drinks. Make sure your home water heater is adjusted to below 120° F, and that children cannot reach hot items.
- Health care providers recommend that family members learn basic first aid and CPR (cardiopulmonary resuscitation) for emergencies, so that they can use these life-saving skills until trained medical personnel arrive.
- Despite our best efforts to prevent injuries, they can still occur. Keep a list of emergency phone numbers, including your medical care provider, fire station, and poison control hotline. In case of an emergency, call “911” immediately. Teach older children how to call “911” as well. In the U.S., emergency responders (such as ambulances, fire engines, and police) are a public service and all people are expected to use them.

Applicable Head Start Program Performance Standards:

<http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/standards/hsp/1304>

45 CFR 1304.40 Family partnerships (f)(2)(iii)

Resources on ECKLC:

National Center of Health

- **Lead Screening: Well-Child Health Care Fact Sheet.**
http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/tta-system/health/center/health-literacy-family-engagement/family-education/health_fts_00748_072905.html
- **Food Safety at Home.**
<http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/tta-system/health/center/nutrition/food-safety-sanitation/FoodSafetyatHo.htm>
- **Safe and Healthy Family.**
<http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/tta-system/health/center/safe-healthy-family>
- **What is Injury Prevention?**
<http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/tta-system/health/center/safety-injury-prevention/safe-healthy-environments/HealthyChildren.htm>

National Center on Parent, Family, and Community Engagement

- **Safety and Prevention.**
<http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/tta-system/family/for-families/Safe%20and%20Healthy%20Family>

