



## Connecting Health & Housing: Child Safety Basics

Presented by:

The California-Nevada  
Public Health Training Center

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## Learning Objectives

### After this tutorial you will be able to...

1. Identify the healthy homes issues related to child safety in the home
2. Describe the connection between injury prevention and the home
3. Address and promote the prevention of childhood injuries, poisonings, burns and drowning in homes by implementing healthy homes recommendations

## Identify the Problem

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Home accidents kill one person every 16 minutes and injure one person every 4 seconds in the United States.

-U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)

Every year, nearly 9 million children ages 0 – 19 are treated for injuries in the emergency departments and more than 225,000 require hospitalization at a cost of around \$87 billion in medical and societal costs related to childhood injuries.

-Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

## Identify the Problem

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- Unintentional Childhood Injuries
  1. Trips and Falls
  2. Poisonings
  3. Fire/ Burns
  4. Suffocation:
    - A. Strangulation
    - B. Choking
  5. Drowning

## Identify the Problem

- Trips and Falls
  - In 2009, fall-related injuries accounted for more than 2.8 million emergency department visits
  - Common locations
    - Windows
    - Playground Equipment
    - Bunk beds
    - Landings and balconies

## Identify the Problem

- Childhood Poisonings
  - In 2009, 824 children died from unintentional poisoning
  - Young children are most at risk for poisoning from medications
    - Prescription
    - Over-the-counter



## Identify the Problem

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- Childhood Burns
  - Curiosity, impulsiveness and lack of experience
    - Puts young children at greatest risk
  - Children cannot generally escape residential fires without the assistance of others
  - In 2009, 119,000 children experienced fire and burn injuries which required emergency department care

## Identify the Problem

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- Suffocation
  - A leading cause of death for infants and young children
  - Infants and young children more likely to choke due to narrow airways and undeveloped chewing and swallowing skills
    - Objects smaller than a Ping-Pong ball should be placed out of the reach of young children
  - Mini-blind cords and electrical cords are both considered strangulation hazards.

## Identify the Problem

- Childhood Drowning
  - Lead cause of unintentional injury and death among children 1-4 years of age
  - Locations
    - Bathtubs
      - Highest rates for infants
    - Swimming Pools
      - Highest rates for 1-4 years of age



## Vulnerable Populations

- Boys have a higher risk for injury than girls
- Infants - most often injured by suffocation
- Toddler - most often injured by drowning
- Vulnerability to traffic injuries increases with age of the child
- Associated with increased risk:
  - Poverty and over crowding
  - Young maternal age and low maternal education
- American Indians and Alaska Natives
  - Highest death rates

# Vulnerable Populations

**Table 1. The five leading causes and number of child deaths, by age group, United States, 2009**

Rank*	Age <1	Ages 1-4	Ages 5-9	Ages 10-14	Ages 15-19
1	Suffocation 907 (77%)	Drowning 450 (31%)	Motor Vehicle (MV) Traffic 378 (49%)	MV Traffic 491 (68%)	MV Traffic 3,242 (67%)
2	MV Traffic 91 (8%)	MV Traffic 363 (25%)	Drowning 119 (15%)	Transportation – Other 117 (15%)	Poisoning 715 (15%)
3	Drowning 45 (4%)	Fire/Burns 169 (12%)	Fire/Burns 88 (11%)	Drowning 90 (10%)	Drowning 279 (6%)
4	Fire/Burns 25 (2%)	Transportation – Other 147 (10%)	Transportation – Other 68 (9%)	Fire/Burns 53 (6%)	Transportation – Other 203 (4%)
5	Poisoning 22 (2%)	Suffocation 125 (9%)	Suffocation 26 (3%)	Suffocation 41 (5%)	Fall 58 (1%)

Source: National Vital Statistics System from the National Center for Health Statistics, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; accessed through WISQARS.\* Percent of all age-specific deaths in parentheses

Center for Disease Control and Prevention. (2012). National Action Plan for Child Injury Prevention. Retrieved from: [http://www.cdc.gov/safekid/pdf/National\\_Action\\_Plan\\_for\\_Child\\_Injury\\_Prevention.pdf](http://www.cdc.gov/safekid/pdf/National_Action_Plan_for_Child_Injury_Prevention.pdf)

## Connection to the Home

### • Injury Prevention Checklist:

Accessible sharp Objects <1m*	Unsecured pool/spa
Sharp edges on furniture/cabinets <1m*	Unsafe conditions (crib slats, walker near stairs)
Glass surfaces on furniture/cabinets <1m*	Unsecured drowning hazards (buckets, toilets)
Fire hazards <1m* (matches, lighters, candles, incense)	Uncovered outlets, power cords misused <1m*
Improperly stored chemicals <1m*	Unsafe outdoor playground equipment
Unsecured tipping hazard <1m*	Dangerous cords <1m*
Choking hazards (Ping-Pong ball or smaller) <1m*	Other strangulation hazard <1m*

\*Each of these hazards is to be assessed at <1m above the ground (approximately hip-height)

## What are the Recommendations?

### CDC Approach to Injury Prevention: “Three E’s”

1. Education
  - Inform the public about potential risks
  - Give parents safety options
2. Enforcement
  - Influence behavior legally
  - Increase effectiveness of existing regulations
3. Engineering
  - Technological improvements
  - Use products and strategies to reduce the risk of injury
    - e.g., fencing around a pool

## What are the Recommendations?

- Have first aid supplies accessible and in a central location
- All pools and spas should have a fence with a self closing, self-latching gate
- Store buckets upside-down
- Install soft playground surfaces
- Remove choking hazards from the home
- Always store chemicals, cleaning agents, pesticides, and medications out of the reach of children or in a locked cabinet



## What are the Recommendations?

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- Invest in child safety devices
  - Cabinet and drawer locks
  - Oven locks
  - Additional door lock, door knob cover
  - Electrical outlet covers
  - Safety gates
    - Bottom and top of stairs
    - To keep out of hazards
- Fire escape plan
- Remove and/or organize electrical cords and mini-blind cords

## Healthy Homes Recommendations

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Children are **MOST** safe when supervised by an adult!





## Healthy Homes Recommendations

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- WISQARS (Web-based Injury Statistics Query and Reporting System)
  - Obtain interactive databases
  - Provide customized reports and charts of injury-related data
  - Create customized maps
  - Search and sort based on:
    - Intent of injury, mechanism, body region, nature of injury, geographic location, or demographics
  - <http://www.cdc.gov/injury/wisqars/index.html>

## Conclusion

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- Common unintentional childhood injuries include trips and falls, poisonings, burns, suffocation and drowning.
- Millions of children are impacted by preventable unintentional injuries each year in the United States
- The use of a healthy homes checklist for child safety can help public health professionals assess child safety and create a healthy home.
- Childhood injuries can be prevented by educating parents, enforcing current guidelines, and utilizing child safety equipment and interventions.
- Customizable injury data is available to the public through WISQARS on the CDC website.