



Injury Prevention Toolkit

Keeping your family safe in the home and on the road



NORTON
Children's
Prevention & Wellness

Funded by Norton Children's Hospital Foundation



Dear Family

As a mother of three and pediatrician with over 20 years of experience, I understand both the excitement and anxiety of raising children. While keeping children safe and healthy is the goal of every family, kids are curious and don't always follow the rules or plans we have for them. They will get into things and places around the house you never thought they would find or fit. They will do this in a matter of seconds, when you least expect it or when you briefly leave a room.

Unfortunately, accidental injuries are the leading cause of death in children ages 1 to 9. It is impossible to keep our children safe from every injury, but with good education we can minimize the risk as much as possible. How is a parent or caregiver supposed to do that with so much information available online and in books? It can be hard to know where to get the most accurate, up-to-date advice on how to keep kids safe. Norton Children's Prevention & Wellness has created this toolkit to help bring reliable information to you. I hope you can use this to keep your children safe and healthy.

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National trends

In the United States, the leading cause of death for children ages 1 to 9 is accidental injury. Each year, accidental injuries result in over 3,000 deaths among children under age 10 and send more than 2 million children to the emergency room.

More than 40% of fatal injuries in kids occur during “trauma season” from May to August. These injuries are preventable, and most are caused by firearms, car accidents, accidental ingestions, drowning, home fires, bicycle injuries and unsafe sleep.

Firearm injuries: Firearm injuries are the leading cause of death in children under age 18, occurring most frequently from ages 11 to 15. Around 50% of these injuries take place in the child’s own home after they find the firearm loaded and unlocked.

Motor vehicle collisions: When a car seat or booster seat is used according to the manufacturer’s guidelines, the risk for fatal injury decreases significantly among infants, toddlers and children. The risk for injury among children requiring a car seat decreases 71% to 82% when they are restrained in the proper car seat versus a seat belt. Seat belt usage by a driver accounts for a lower fatal injury risk among child passengers who model the adult driver’s behavior.

Accidental ingestions: Accidental ingestions occur most often in children ages 1 to 2. Fewer than half of parents store household cleaners in spaces above the height of their children. Almost all accidental ingestions of medication resulting in emergency room visits occur when the child is not being watched by an adult.

Since the COVID-19 pandemic, reported cases of accidental ingestion of edible cannabis products have increased by 1,375%. Over the past few years, edible cannabis ingestions have sent a significant number of kids to hospital critical care units.

According to the Kentucky Poison Control Center of Norton Children’s Hospital, the top substances accidentally ingested by children include painkillers, antihistamines, antidepressants, heart medication, sedatives or hypnotics, cleaning supplies, cosmetics, pesticides and alcohol.

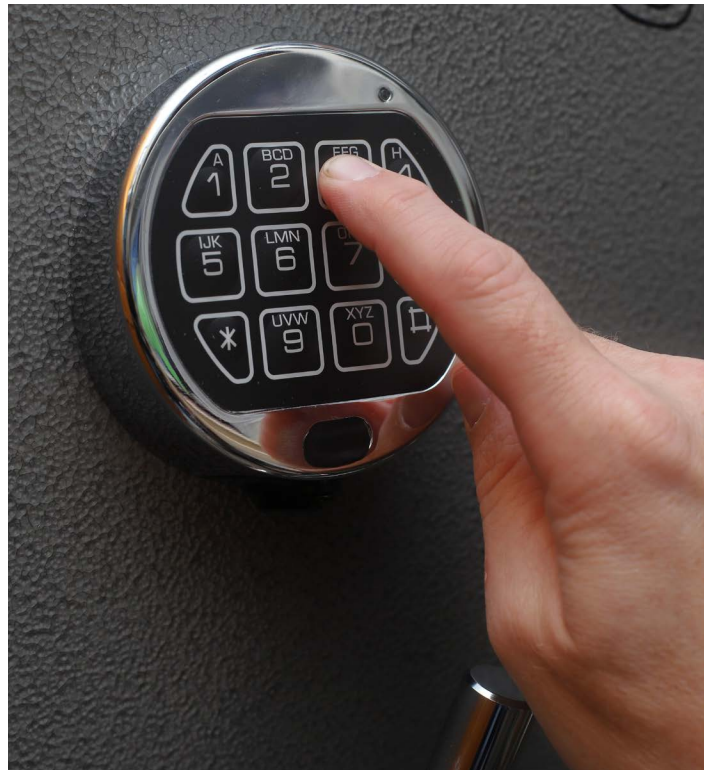
Drowning: For children ages 1 to 4, accidental drowning is the leading cause of death. It’s the third leading cause of death in children under age 19. Children are most likely to drown in open water, such as a lake, compared with other bodies of water.

Injuries in the home: Each year, over 3 million children are taken to the emergency room for other injuries that take place in the home. Around 9,000 children are admitted to the hospital for injuries caused by a house fire. About 280,000 children go to an ER for bicycle-related injuries. The leading cause of accidental injury-related death in children under age 1 is suffocation due to an unsafe sleep environment. This results in thousands of infants dying each year.



Firearm safety

- Keep firearms in a lockbox or safe. Always store guns in a locked location, unloaded, and out of reach and sight of children.
- Store ammunition separately from the gun in a locked location, out of reach and sight of children
- Keep gun and ammunition safe keys and combinations hidden. This adds an extra layer of safety.
- Use gun and trigger locks. These devices can prevent the firearm from being discharged accidentally.
- When a gun is not being stored, it should be on your person and in your immediate control at all times.
- If a visitor has a gun in your home, provide them with a space to lock it up.
- Educate children about firearm safety. Children are naturally curious. Teach them that guns are not toys and should never be touched without adult supervision. Tell children to tell an adult immediately if they come across a firearm or ammunition.
- Ask about the presence of firearms in homes your child visits. Find out if guns are present and how they are stored in the homes of relatives, friends and caregivers before your child visits their home. Asking about firearm storage can be a sensitive topic, but it's necessary to keep your child safe when you are not around.
- Safely dispose of guns you don't need. Consult with law enforcement in your community on how to do this.



Resources



To explore firearm storage options, visit [this link](#) or scan the **QR code**.



To sign up for our “Safe Kids, Safe Storage” virtual class and receive a free gun lock, visit [this link](#) or scan the **QR code**.

If you are worried that your child or someone else may be struggling with mental health issues or thoughts of suicide, help is available. Call or text the Suicide and Crisis Lifeline at **988**.



Motor vehicle safety

Infant seat

- This type of seat is for newborns up to the age stated by the manufacturer for upper weight and height limits. Find this information on a sticker on the seat.
- The seat **must** be installed rear-facing with the handle in the designated position.
- **Never** place a rear-facing seat in front of an active airbag.
- Harness straps should come through the slots in the back of the seat at or just below the level of the baby's shoulder.
- Keep the harness clip at armpit level.
- **Always** keep the harness straps snug. You should not be able to pinch the shoulder straps between your fingers.
- The seat **must** be partially reclined so the baby's head doesn't fall forward. To check for the proper angle, look for the leveling ball or line on the seat. Never allow the baby's head to fall forward.



Rear-facing convertible seat

- This type of seat may be used for newborns and children up to 40 pounds. This seat choice is not as convenient but eliminates the need for an infant-only seat.
- Keep the harness snug and at or just below shoulder level. Keep the harness clip at armpit level.
- Put the recline adjuster in the appropriate position for a rear-facing seat.



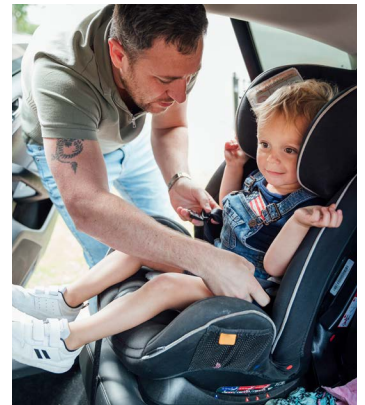
Forward-facing convertible seat

- Adjust the following to change a rear-facing seat to forward-facing:
 - Change the seat's recline adjuster to the upright position.
 - Adjust the harness straps to be at or slightly above the child's shoulders.
- Use the top tether strap located on the back of the seat. Read the vehicle's instruction manual to find the correct anchor to attach the tether strap.



Toddler car seat

- Toddler seats are **only** forward-facing. Read the label for minimum and maximum weight limits. These seats have a full harness (with a noted weight limit) that can be removed for use as a booster seat. The booster seat will have another weight limit.
- Keep the child in the full harness until the upper weight limit for the harness has been reached (read the label on the seat).



Motor vehicle safety

Belt-positioning booster seat

- Seat belts are not designed for people under 4 feet, 9 inches tall, and the belts will not lay over the bony structures properly without a booster seat. Typically, a belt-positioning booster seat will fit a child from ages 4 to 10.
- Children younger than age 4 should not ride in a booster seat, as they are not developmentally mature enough. At this age, they need a full harness to ensure they ride safely.
- Not all booster seats are the same. Some fit the child and vehicle better than others. Choose your booster carefully.
- The shoulder belt must be adjusted to lay over the middle of the shoulder, and the lap belt must be routed appropriately using the booster seat directions.



Lap and shoulder seat belts

- When your child has reached the upper limits of the booster seat, they can graduate to using the vehicle's seat belt. One of the most common mistakes is moving a child out of a booster too early.
- The child's knees should bend naturally over the vehicle seat while sitting against the back of the seat. If they don't do so comfortably, the child will slouch down. This will cause the belt to ride too high over the abdomen area.
- The child's shoulder belt must lay between their neck and arm. It should not lay against their neck. The lap belt should sit on the upper thighs across the child's hip bones.
- Children ages 13 and younger should ride in the back seat to avoid injury from the front seat airbag in the event of an accident.



Additional tips

- When properly installed, the car seat should not move more than 1 inch side to side or front to back at the seat's designated seat belt path.
- The safest place for any child is in the middle of the back seat.
- Check the labels on the car seat for the weight, height and age limits to ensure the child fits properly. Pay close attention to the correct label for each phase of use (rear-facing, forward-facing and booster seat). It's important to use each phase of the car seat as long as possible, according to the seat's label. Don't rush to the next phase!
- Register your car seat. This will ensure that you are alerted if there are any recalls or changes to important information regarding your car seat.
- Check your car seat's expiration date. You can find the expiration date on one of the labels or imprinted on the plastic.
- Make sure you know the history of the car seat. A used car seat is unsafe if it has been in a crash or is missing parts. If the history is unknown, choose a different car seat.

Resources



To watch a video about what to look for when purchasing a car seat, visit [this link](#) or scan the **QR code**.



Visit [this link](#) or scan the **QR code** to visit the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration website, which lists open car seat recalls.

If you need help installing a car seat or would like a certified car seat technician to check whether you've installed it properly, Norton Children's Prevention & Wellness offers year-round car seat checks. To schedule an appointment, call **(502) 629-7358**.

Avoiding accidental ingestions

Medications and supplements

- Safe storage includes keeping all medications, vitamins and supplements in their original packages and out of sight and out of reach of children at all times.
- Kids are curious and put all sorts of things in their mouths. Turning away for less than a minute is enough time for a child to get into something that could hurt them.
- Find a storage place in your home that children are unfamiliar with.
- Use a medication lockbox for safe storage.
- Safely dispose of all unused or expired medicine, vitamins and supplements.
- Put medicine away every time, even if you must give or take another dose in a few hours. This includes medication, vitamins and supplements you take every day.
- Always relock the cap on a medicine bottle. For bottles with a locking cap that turns, twist it until you hear it click or until the cap no longer twists.
- Teach children what medicine is and why a trusted adult must be the one to give it to them.
- Never tell a child that medicine or a vitamin is candy to get them to take it, even if they don't like to take their medicine.
- Due to the increasing popularity of edible cannabis products and the subsequent increase in accidental ingestions by children, take extra precautions to store them:
 - Cannabis products should be locked up and stored in an unknown location outside of the kitchen. This reduces the possibility of children thinking the products are food items.
 - Caregivers should not use cannabis products in front of children since children tend to mirror behaviors of adults.
 - Keep products in their original packaging. **Note of caution:** Some products may come in packaging or a form that resembles candy. Take extra care to keep these products hidden from children who may mistake them as candy.

Cleaning supplies

- Store all household cleaning supplies in their original containers as opposed to containers that could look like food or drink, such as plastic soda bottles or jars.
- Store household cleaning supplies out of children's reach. Do not store these items under sinks.

Resources



To sign up for our “Safe Kids, Safe Storage” virtual class and receive a free medication safety box, visit [this link](#) or scan the **QR code**.



Visit [this link](#) or scan the **QR code** for a list of locations that accept expired or unused medications.

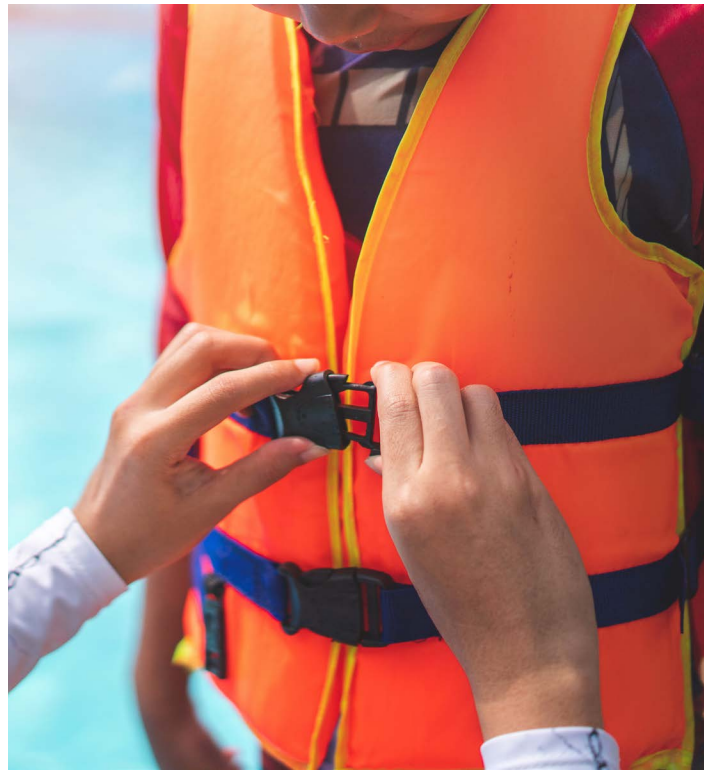
Keep the Kentucky and Indiana poison centers number in your cellphone and in a prominent location in your home: **(800) 222-1222**

If you are worried that your child or someone else may be struggling with mental health issues or thoughts of suicide, help is available. Call or text the Suicide and Crisis Lifeline at **988**.



Water safety

- Give children your full attention when they are playing in or around water.
- Stay within an arm's length of young children around water. Small children can drown in as little as 1 inch of water.
- Make sure children are not swimming alone.
- Make sure a home pool has at least a 4-foot-tall fence and self-latching gates that stay closed when the pool is not in use.
- Empty buckets and kids' pools right after the child is done playing with them.
- Learn water rescue skills and CPR. You should know how to respond to a water emergency in an appropriate way that does not put yourself in danger.
- Confirm the child is using a U.S. Coast Guard-approved life jacket.
- Check that the child's life jacket is appropriate for their weight and the type of water activity they are participating in. In order to easily see a child in a body of water, have them wear a brightly colored life jacket, such as neon pink, orange or yellow.
- Prepare your bathroom with everything you need before bath time so you do not need to step away from the child in a tub to retrieve items. Empty the tub immediately after removing the child.
- Keep doors to bathrooms closed and toilet lids down when not in use.
- Keep the door to the laundry room closed when not in use.



Resources



To find a CPR class near you, visit [this link](#) or scan the **QR code**.



To find swim lesson resources in your area, visit [this link](#) or scan the **QR code**.



Home safety

Bicycle safety

- Wearing a bike helmet can reduce the risk for head injury by as much as 85%.
- Insist the child wears a helmet when they start riding tricycles and outdoor toys with wheels.
- Set a good example by wearing a bike helmet when you ride too.
- The helmet should fit the head snugly and not be so large that it covers the eyes and ears.
- Adjust the chin strap so the helmet stays in place and sits level on the top of the child's head.
- Once a helmet has been worn in a bike accident, it must be replaced.
- Take the helmet fit test:



Eyes: Put the helmet on your head. Look up. You should see the bottom rim of the helmet.



Ears: Make sure the straps form a "V" under your ears when buckled. The straps should be a little tight but comfortable.



Mouth: Open your mouth as wide as you can. Does the helmet hug your head? If not, tighten the straps

Fire safety

- Make sure you have a smoke detector on every floor of your house and ideally near bedrooms.
- Test your smoke detector batteries every six months.
- Create a fire escape plan with your family. Determine two ways to exit each room in your house.
- Keep flammable items, such as towels and wooden utensils, away from the stovetop.
- Keep an unexpired fire extinguisher in your kitchen. Read the instructions ahead of time in order to be prepared in case of a fire.

Carbon monoxide safety

- Install a carbon monoxide detector on each floor of your house and test them monthly.
- If the detector sounds an alarm, leave your home immediately.
- Call **911** once everyone is outside.



Home safety

Preventing falls

- Drops and falls are preventable! Starting in the hospital, only hold and care for the baby when you are awake and alert. Newborns can easily slide out of the arms of tired parents and caregivers.
- Safety gates should be placed at the top and bottom of staircases.
- Confirm that a safety gate has been approved by the manufacturer for the way it is being used in your home. Some gates are not made to be installed at the top of stairs.
- **Always** use the straps on high chairs, strollers and swings when in use.
- When using a baby carrier, **never** place it on top of furniture. Place it on the floor.

Resources



To check for recalled cribs, clothing, helmets, toys and technology, visit [this link](#) or scan the **QR code**.



To request free home fire safety education and installation of smoke detectors, visit [this link](#) or scan the **QR code**.

Safe sleep

- Babies need to sleep **alone** in a safe bed. Sharing sleeping space with an adult or child is dangerous for a baby.
- The baby needs to sleep in a safe crib, bassinet or playpen. Do not let a baby sleep in an adult bed, on a couch or in a swing, car seat or any sitting position. Place the crib, portable crib, playpen or bassinet in an adult's bedroom until the child's first birthday.
- Use a firm mattress covered with a tight-fitting crib sheet in the baby's crib. Keep bumper pads, pillows, toys, blankets and comforters out of the baby's sleeping space.
- The baby needs to sleep on their **back** on a flat surface, unless the baby's doctor tells you something different.

Resources



If you need a safe crib, visit [this link](#) or scan the **QR code** for resources.



To sign up for our "Safe Baby Essentials" virtual class to learn more about creating a safe sleep environment, visit [this link](#) or scan the **QR code**.



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