

1-4 years

Safe exploring



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why you should read this brochure?

Your son or daughter goes out into the world with a single goal in mind: to discover as much as possible. And that means touching anything and everything. Your child is already able to do quite a lot and is happy to do so. He pulls open drawers and empties them on the floor. He climbs onto a chair and comes down again upside-down. And feels hopelessly drawn to the stairs.

Now that your child can move around and reach a lot more, taking a few measures to childproof your home can give you much peace of mind. After all, you can't be right next to your child 24 hours a day. This brochure contains practical tips for:

- Dealing with falls (including first aid tips)
- Dealing with hazardous substances (including first aid tips)
- Dealing with water (including first aid tips)
- Traffic safety

And a handy checklist: is your home ready for a toddler?

→ dealing with falls

Children learn by taking risks. But, obviously, serious falls should be prevented, such as falling down the stairs, from a changing table or, worse yet, from a window or balcony. The following tips will help you make your home safer:

- Until the age of around 2½, never let your child climb stairs alone.
- Install window latches and stair gates.



- Never leave your child alone in a room with the window open.
- Remove all stools, rubbish bins and other items that your child can climb up onto on the balcony.
- Make sure you have non-slip mats or stickers in the shower, bath, on the stairs and under rugs.

Practicing using the stairs

As long as your child is still very young, stair gates are needed to prevent falls. But it can be helpful to practice walking up and down the stairs together. After all, your child will eventually have to learn to do this himself. Here are our tips:

- Have your child climb the stairs in front of you on the wide side of the stairs (if curved).
- As soon as your child can reach the banister, teach him to always hold onto it with one hand.



- Always walk behind your child going up and in front of your child going down.
- If your child cannot walk well yet, let him go down the stairs sitting on his bum, step by step.
- Never let your child play on the stairs or close to the stairs.

First aid after a fall

If your child falls, this is how you respond:

- Tooth through the lip: hold your child on your lap, hold together the wound (using a piece of gauze) and hold a washcloth with ice against his lip. The bleeding should stop within 5 minutes.
- Nosebleed: press both nostrils against the nasal septum and have your child tilt his head forward. The bleeding should stop within 15 minutes. If not, contact a doctor.

- Scrape: clean the wound well with lots of water and disinfect with Betadine. A plaster is not necessary.
- Small cut: let the wound bleed a little so that it cleans itself out. Put a plaster on afterwards.
- Large wound: cover the wound with an emergency bandage or gauze and go to the doctor or hospital.
- Bump: cool the bump with a cold, wet washcloth (with ice if desired).

Do you think your child has broken something or suffered a serious head injury? First see whether he can stand up by himself. If this is not possible, have him lie down and call 112 immediately.

After every fall, keep an extra close eye on your child. If, after a little while, he becomes drowsy, dizzy or nauseous, contact the doctor immediately.

Older children have a tendency to fall off of playing equipment. For tips on playing safely on trampolines, swings and climbing equipment, see www.veiligheid.nl/trampoline

➔ dealing with hazardous substances

Some substances in the home are dangerous for your child. This includes medications, cigarettes and alcohol, as well as dishwasher and clothes detergent. Small children do not understand the danger and put everything in their mouths. And because they're so small, a small amount can be very harmful.

A few tips:

- Buy a medicine chest with a good lock and make sure your child cannot access it.
- Keep cleaning products and other hazardous substances in a high cupboard or a locked cabinet.
- Close the packaging of hazardous substances, even if it needs to be used again soon afterwards. This ensures that cleaning products are out of reach of your child, even when in use.
- Keep cigarettes, ashtrays and alcohol out of reach of children.

Check whether you have any poisonous plants in your home and garden and get rid of them. For more information, see www.gifwijzer.nl or download the Gifwijzer (poison manual).

First aid for poisoning

If your child ingests a poison, this is how you respond:

- Find out which product or plant has been ingested.
- Always call 112.
- Follow the instructions of the 112 dispatcher.
- Take the packaging or any remainders of the substance ingested with you to the hospital.

Important: do not let your child vomit, drink anything or take Norit, unless the 112 dispatcher tells you that this is necessary.



→ dealing with water

Children are often drawn to water. A pond in the garden, a ditch behind the house, a recreational lake or swimming pool at a campground – all of these are dangerous places for a child who cannot swim yet. This is how you can protect your child:

- Never leave your child alone around water, not even a small baby bath with a little water in it.
- Do you have a garden pond? Convert your pond temporarily into a sandbox or make it inaccessible with metal grating or fencing.
- Make sure your garden is fenced off and that your child cannot open the garden gate himself.
- Teach your child to be safe around water, especially if there is a lot of water in the neighbourhood.
- Always have your child wear a life jacket when on a boat or in an area with much water.

First aid for drowning

If your child is in danger of drowning, this is how you respond:

- Remove your child from the water as quickly as possible.
- If your child is conscious, wrap him in a blanket. Always go to your family doctor to check your child, even if he seems okay.
- If your child is unconscious, check whether there is anything in his mouth and remove it. Check his breathing. Wrap your child in a blanket and turn him onto his side. Tilt his head backwards with his chin upwards so that his tongue does not block his throat. This clears his airway.
- Have someone call 112 in the meantime.

Going to the beach or a recreational lake?
See www.veiligheid.nl/water for tips

→ traffic safety

- Always set a good example, which includes waiting at red lights – even when you are in a hurry.
- Take the safest route, not the shortest one.
- On narrow pavement, have your child stand in front of you.
- First check the situation together and have your child say whether or not it's safe to cross.
- Keep in mind that a young child is not yet able to distinguish between 'right' and 'left'.
- If your child is a little older, let him take the lead. This will show you how much your child understands about traffic and where he still needs your help.



checklist →

is your home ready for a toddler?

- There is an approved stair gate at both the top and bottom of the stairs.
- There are non-slip stickers on the stairs, in the shower and under rugs.
- All outlets at child height have been childproofed.
- Windows - especially on the first floor - have latches or childproof locks.
- There are no poisonous plants or cut flowers (such as oleander, rhododendron or Christmas roses) in your home or garden.
- Dangerous products (medicine, cosmetics, cleaning products) are stored out of reach of your child.
- Freestanding cabinets have been secured to the wall.
- Sharp corners at child height have been covered with, for example, protective corners.
- Drawers and doors your child is not allowed to open have been childproofed with a lock.

Were you able to check off everything on the list?

Then you are well on your way to making your home as safe as possible for your child.

Did you have to skip one or more items? Take care of those aspects right away and, in both cases, take a good look around the room with safety in mind.

want more information?

For all info on Growing Up Safely, visit www.veiligheid.nl. Want to learn more about how to prevent poisoning? Have a look at www.gifwijzer.nl or download the Gifwijzer (poison manual).

This brochure is part of the 'Growing Up Safely' series.

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