

Often Overlooked Safety Traps Put Children at Risk

by **Melissa Kay**

Each year in the U.S., more than 2,000 children under the age of 14 die as a result of a home injury, according to Safe Kids USA, a non-profit organization.

“Parents often underestimate their kids’ abilities and overestimate their intelligence,” says Chrissy Cianflone, Director of Program Operations at Safe Kids USA. “They think, my child’s too smart to do X and they often don’t realize how strong their kids are.”

There are so many things to think about as you safe-proof your home to protect small children that it’s easy to overlook important risks.

Most people are aware of common safety measures like covering your electrical outlets, keeping your child away from hot stoves and watching them like a hawk as they bathe, but there are other dangers that don’t readily come to mind.

1. Cords from window treatments – According to the Consumer Product Safety Commission, one child a month between the ages of 7 months and 10 years dies from strangulation or is severely injured by near strangulation from the loose strings or cords on window blinds and shades. A window covering advertised as cord-less does not mean that it is truly cord-free.

2. Dressers and other tall furniture – Dressers are dangerous because they are heavy, not always well balanced and can be pulled over if a child tries to climb them. An unsteady toddler trying to climb doesn’t understand that a heavy object can topple. Invest in brackets found at home improvement stores or baby stores like Babies R Us to anchor dressers, TVs and wall units. Keep heavier items on lower shelves or in lower

drawers, and don’t keep remote controls or temptations like candy or toys on top of furniture. www.BabiesRUs.com

3. Window screens – Never rely on a window screen to keep children safe from an open window. Screens are for keeping insects out, not for keeping kids in. Invest in heavier child-proof window screens, which cost under \$30. Don’t place furniture by a window, potentially creating a climbing opportunity and the associated risk. <http://www.cpsc.gov/cpscpub/prerel/prhtml00/00126.html>

4. Open medication containers – Be vigilant about your child’s safety away from home. A risky situation can exist when a child visits a grandparents’ home where pills may be left within their reach. Vitamins and OTC medications can be extremely dangerous to children. Remind family members and caretakers to buy pill bottles with child safety caps and keep all medicines and pills out of your child’s reach, preferably locked up.

5. Under the Kitchen Sink – More than 100 children ages 14 and under die each year from unintentional poisoning, according to Safe Kids USA. In addition to household cleaning supplies, pesticides, cosmetics, art supplies, paint products and alcohol are dangerous to children. To avoid accidental poisoning, store these products up high in locked cabinets. It is a good idea to install a safety latch to keep the doors to under the kitchen sink secured at all times.

Melissa Kay works in the marketing department of Kenney Manufacturing, makers of the new Truly CordFree™ Roman Shades.

Music Key to Raising Kids' IQ

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force? Creativity is what makes the difference and gives any company the cutting edge.

There are many benefits of being involved in making music, but the neural pathways drives home the point and gets our attention. Scientists are reluctant to state that playing a musical instrument makes you smarter, but all the indicators are there, so let’s look at it from the opposite angle. Instead of trying to prove that music makes you smarter or is good for you and your child, try to prove that it is not. I can’t think of a single reason how learning a musical instrument is detrimen-

tal, can you?

Give your child every opportunity and advantage you can: Enroll them in music lessons and watch them grow and mentally develop as they play, create, express, and struggle through the rigors of the discipline mastering an instrument. You will discover a more creative, brighter and mature person in the making.

Nationally regarded music education teacher and advocate Sharon Burch is the author of Freddie the Frog® - a fantastical 4-book with companion CD series that helps young children learn musical concepts while they are duly immersed in Freddie’s colorfully illustrated adventures. She may be reached online at www.FreddieTheFrogBooks.com.



Trying to be a good role model

OK, you know you probably would be surprised if you found out that some of your friends – or even their younger brothers and sisters – look up to you. Think about people in your own life that you have looked up to. By being a good role model, you can show others that you are responsible.

Always try to be aware of your actions and realize that somebody is probably watching you most of the time. Whether you are working hard or goofing off, chances are somebody notices. Try to recognize what your bad habits and problems are, and

try to fix them.

It will be hard at first, but making the effort to change them will be good for you and for everyone who looks up to you.

Mikki



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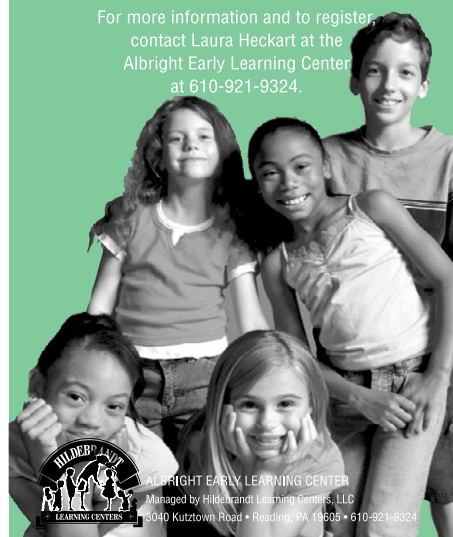
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