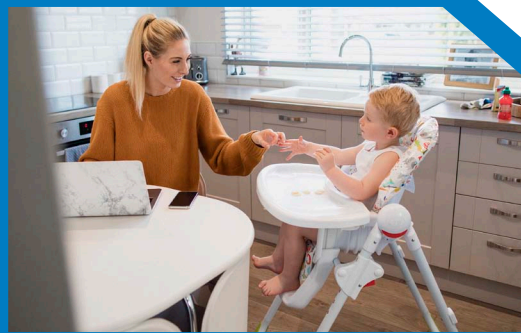
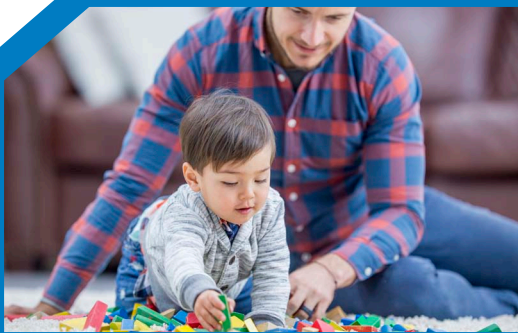




Home Safety Checklist

for Parents and
Guardians



NB Trauma Program
Programme de
traumatologie du NB

Table of Contents

Outside Your Home	1
Garage	2
Stairs	3
Living Room	4
Play area	5
Kitchen	6
Bathroom	7
Bedroom	8
Other Safety Concerns	9
Checklist	10

Using your Home Safety Checklist

Unintentional injuries in children are often due to hazards that are easy to overlook but simple to fix. In order to reduce their risk of injury, this checklist will help you identify some of the most common hazards in and around your home. It will also provide you with helpful suggestions for reducing and removing those hazards.

The Home Safety Checklist will help you address hazards that are found in the different room of your home. As you go through each room and answer the questions, make note of any changes and/or repairs that need to be completed. If possible, consider having a family member or friend help you.

When you are finished, go through your notes and make a plan to eliminate the hazards you discovered. However, it is important to determine which tasks you can complete yourself, which ones require two or more people to complete, and which ones require professional assistance. If you are uncertain, you are encouraged to consult a licensed professional before getting started. Keep in mind that you may be creating a new hazard if you try to repair something in an unsafe manner.

Thank you for taking the time to make your home a safer place for your child and the rest of the family!

Disclaimer: The information presented in this publication is intended as a guide to help address common hazards for children. This guide does not list every potential environmental hazard in the home. The recommendations provided in this document may not be appropriate in all circumstances. The user of this guide should take all reasonable steps to recognize tasks that may require two or more people to complete and/or professional expertise.

Outside Your Home

	Yes	No	N/A
<p>1. Does your child have access to a safe play area?</p> <p>Suggested action: Make sure that your child's play area is free from debris and other hazards. All play equipment such as swings, seesaws and slides should also be kept in good repair.</p>			
<p>2. Is the yard free of trip hazards, such as tools and hoses?</p> <p>Suggested action: Keep all yard tools in a proper storage area away from any walk paths. Use a hose reel to store your garden hose.</p>			
<p>3. Are the paths around your home in good repair?</p> <p>Suggested action: Keep paths free of moss, leaves and snow. Have your walkways repaired before the winter season to avoid hidden trip hazards.</p>			
<p>4. Are the paths and entrances well-lit?</p> <p>Suggested action: Install extra lights outside your house to keep paths and entrances well lit. Sensor lights that turn on automatically are recommended</p>			
<p>5. Are the stairs leading to your home in good repair?</p> <p>Suggested action: Fix any loose, cracked or uneven steps as soon as possible. In addition, make sure that all outside steps have sturdy, easy-to-grip handrails.</p>			
<p>6. Is your outdoor swimming pool properly secured?</p> <p>While parental supervision remains an important means of preventing drowning, the only passive prevention strategy that has been shown to significantly reduce childhood drowning is ensuring the use of proper pool fencing such as using a four-sided isolation fence or fencing the ladder area of above-ground pools. For more information, please consult the pool fencing checklist developed by Parachute at www.parachutecanada.org/downloads/policy/SaferPoolFencingChecklist.doc</p>			

Did you know?

Researchers estimate that proper fencing could prevent 7 out of 10 drowning incidents in home swimming pools for children under the age of five.



Garage

	Yes	No	N/A
<p>7. Is your garage secured?</p> <p>Suggested action: Keep the garage locked, especially if it contains any dangerous equipment or hazardous products for children.</p>			
<p>8. Is your garage floor free of debris and other hazards?</p> <p>Suggested action: Garage floors should be kept from any clutter. Watch for liquid leaks from your vehicle and clean any wet spots immediately.</p>			
<p>9. Are hazardous materials safely stored in your garage?</p> <p>Suggested action: Keep all hazardous products such as windshield washer and antifreeze safely stored and out of children's reach.</p>			

Are you using the right child safety seat?

Children travelling in vehicles must be safely secured in a car seat or booster seat that is appropriate for their age, weight and height. These seats must also be used according to the manufacturer's instructions. While the law outlines the minimum safety standard for children in cars, you may choose to keep your child rear facing, forward facing or in a booster seat longer. Please follow the outlined recommendations to reduce the risk of injury to your child.



Rear-facing Seat

- A rear-facing seat provides the best protection for your child's head, neck and spine in a sudden stop or crash.
- Infants must be secured in a rear-facing seat until at least one year old **AND** 10 kg (22 lb).
- However, it is also recommended to keep your child rear facing for as long as they still fit within the height and weight limits for the seat. This may mean keeping the child rear facing until 2, 3 or even 4 years old.

Forward-facing Seat

- A forward-facing seat protects a child who has outgrown their rear-facing seat.
- A child must be secured in a forward-facing seat until they weigh a minimum of 18 kg (40 lb).
- However, it is recommended to keep your child in a forward-facing seat until they are also able to sit straight and tall without moving around or unbuckling.

Booster Seat

- A booster seat lifts the child up so that the adult seatbelt can fit across their strongest bones.
- A child must continue to use a booster seat until at least **ONE** of the following criteria is met:
 - 9 years old
 - 36 kg (79-80 lb)
 - 145 cm (4' 9")
- It is also recommended to use a high-back booster seat if your vehicle does not have head support to the tops of the child's ears.

Seat belt

- The driver is responsible to ensure that all passengers under the age of 16 are securely buckled in the right car seat, booster seat or seat belt.
- Make sure the shoulder belt crosses your child's chest and stays between their neck and shoulder. If not, use a booster seat.
- It is also recommended that your child remains in the back seat of your vehicle when traveling until the age of 13 years old.

Remember to read your vehicle manual and follow the instructions for your seat.

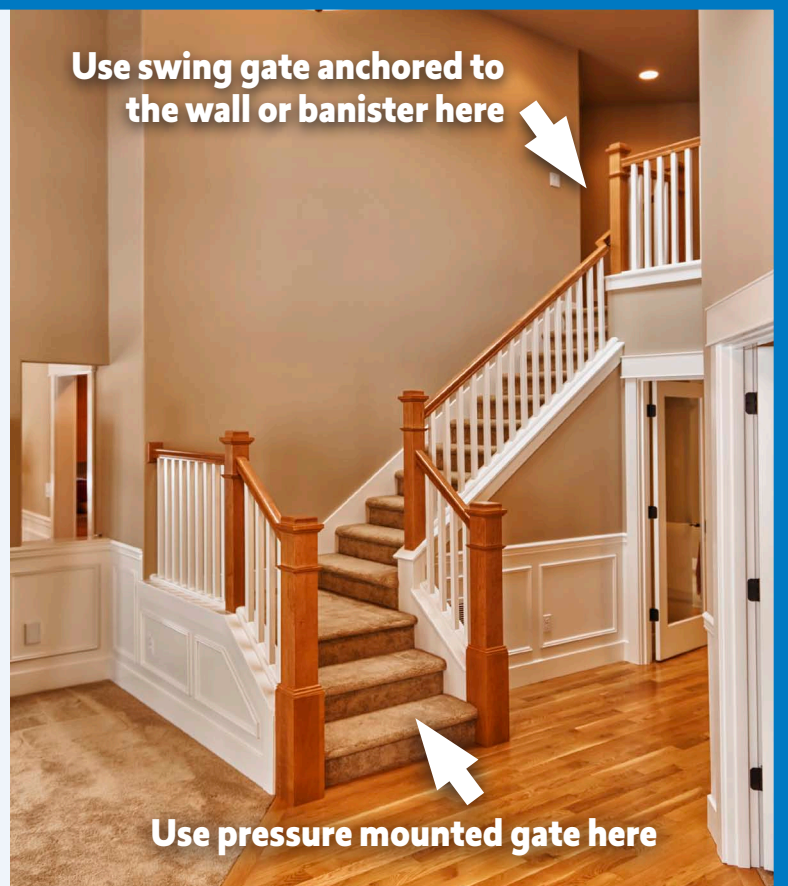
For more information about child passenger safety, please consult the different resources developed by Child Safety Link at www.childsafetylink.ca/child-passenger-safety/car-seat-safety-resources/

Stairs

	Yes	No	N/A
10. Are the stairs in good repair? Suggested action: Fix any loose or uneven steps as soon as possible. Fix any loose handrails or put in new ones. Handrails should be installed on both sides of the stairs for maximum safety.			
11. Are all stairs well lit? Suggested action: Make sure that both the light switch at the top and bottom of each stairway function properly so you are never using the stairs in the dark. Consider installing a night light in the stair area for extra lighting.			
12. Are the stairways free of clutter? Suggested action: Avoid leaving any objects such as toys on the stairs to reduce the risk of falls. Do not place throw rugs at the top of the stairs.			
13. Is the appropriate safety equipment installed for all stairs? Suggested action: Make sure that a stair gate is installed at the top of all stairs. It is also recommended to place a safety gate at the bottom of the stairs. Also consider using a mesh guard for the rails of each staircase, especially if they are wider than 4 inches apart.			

Did you know?

You should **NOT** use easy to install pressure mounted stair gates at the top of the stairs since the child's weight could cause the gate to fall over when leaned on. Instead, use a stairway swing gate that needs to be anchored to the wall or banister with screws and that swings open one way only. In addition, make sure that the gate does not swing out over the stairs.



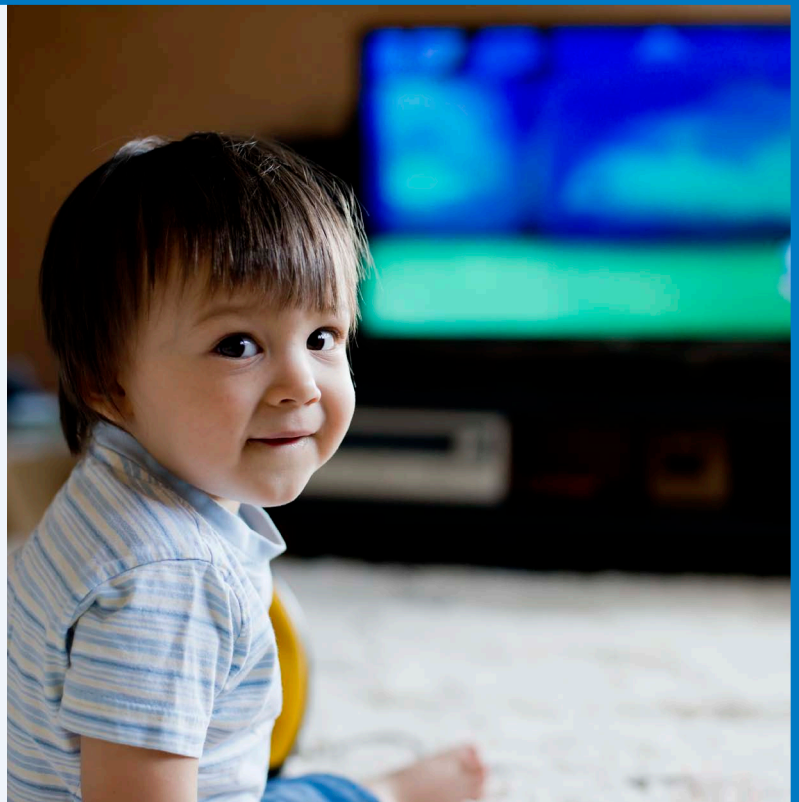
Living Room

	Yes	No	N/A
<p>14. Are the windows appropriately secured?</p> <p>Suggested action: Do not rely on window screens to keep your child safe. Use child safety locks, window stops and/or guards as needed to prevent falls from windows. Do not place furniture that children can climb on in front of windows. Consider installing tempered glass on low windows that are close to the child's play area. Window blind cords should also be secured out of reach of children by using a blind cord wrapper, a twist tie or a clothespin.</p>			
<p>15. Are heating sources safe?</p> <p>Suggested action: Use child safety devices such as gates or screens to prevent your child's access to the fireplace, wood stove or other heating source. Never leave a space heater running while unattended. Make sure to have your chimney inspected and cleaned every year.</p>			
<p>16. Is the furniture properly secured?</p> <p>Suggested action: It is important to secure furniture including heavy shelving, artwork and mirrors to the wall to prevent them from falling or tipping over. Avoid using floor lamps that can tip over easily. In addition, look for sharp edges and corners on furniture. Consider removing them from the room or install corner protectors and edge guards as needed. As an alternative, you may also choose to simply tape foam over such furniture.</p>			

What can I do to keep my TV from toppling?

Televisions can fall on children causing serious injury. While most injuries happen when children are unsupervised, parents should also:

- Mount your flat-screen TVs on a wall if possible.
- If unable to mount on wall, keep televisions on secure stands that are meant to fit the size and weight of your TV. Consider securing the stand to the wall if needed.
- Place the TV as far back as possible on the stand and secure it to the wall with the help of specialised TV straps.
- **Do not** place the TV on the top of any tall furniture with drawers
- **Do not** place remotes, toys or other items on top of the TV where children might be tempted to reach them.



Remember

When a child opens a drawer, climbs on a shelf, or leans on an open door, the center of gravity changes, creating a risk for a tip-over.

Indoor Play Area

	Yes	No	N/A
17. Are electronic devices appropriately secured?			
Suggested action: Keep electronic devices away from your child's play area. Check all electronic devices (such as the TV remote) to make sure that the battery compartment is secure.			
18. Is your child's play area secured?			
Suggested action: Make sure that there are no sharp corners or edges in your child's play area. Remove all small objects such as coins and batteries that can become a choking hazard. Consider using child safety gates at the entrances of the room with the play area to keep your child in or out.			
19. Are your child's toys safely stored?			
Suggested action: Do not store toys on top of any tall furniture since your child may try to climb up to get them. Keep all toys (especially plush and soft toys) away from heat sources like stoves, fireplaces and heaters. Make sure that you use a toy box without a lid or one that is equipped with large air holes and a lid support system so that your child can still breathe if they decide to hide inside it. Lid supports are spring-loaded support devices that should keep the lid open, no matter what position the lid is in. Also check to make sure that the toy box is sturdy and has a lead-free finish.			

Are Your Child's Toys Are Safe?

It is recommended to purchase age appropriate toys to help avoid choking hazards for children who still put non-food items into their mouths. Toys may also become unsafe over time due to wear and tear. Check your child's toys regularly for loose parts, broken pieces or sharp edges that could harm them. Make sure to repair or throw away all broken toys. Check with Health Canada's Consumer Product Safety Program to learn more about toy safety and to see if any of your child's toys have been recalled by following this link:

www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/toy-safety



Kitchen

	Yes	No	N/A
20. Are your cabinet doors and drawers adequately secured? Suggested action: Doors and cabinets should be able close all of the way so children don't unexpectedly walk into one. In addition, use child safety locks on all cabinets and drawers where a child is not allowed.			
21. Are your appliances adequately secured? Suggested action: Use child safety locks on all appliances such as refrigerator and oven doors. Keep in mind that some appliances have safety lock buttons for child safety. In addition, consider installing child proof control knob covers for certain appliances such as stoves and ovens.			
22. Are all unsafe foods for child consumption safely stored? Suggested action: Store all unsafe foods for child consumption such as pet food, alcohol and cannabis infused products out of their reach. It is also important to keep these products in a childproof container and/or in locked cabinet.			
23. Are all hazardous products safely stored? Suggested action: Store all unsafe products such as hazardous chemicals and flammable items out of reach of children and in a locked cabinet or container. Make sure to also keep plastic bags out of reach to prevent your child from putting them over their head. Consider posting an emergency information sheet on the fridge for easy consultation if needed.			
24. Are tabletops and countertops free of hazards? Suggested action: Make sure to remove all tablecloths, table runners and place mats since your child can pull these down and spill hot foods or drinks on themselves. Store all sharp and breakable objects out of reach of children. Keep small appliance cords from hanging over the edge of the countertop. Consider using tape or cable clips to secure cords, wires and cables along the wall to keep them out of reach.			
25. Are you using an appropriate high chair? Suggested action: The high chair you choose for your child should have a smooth finish (no cracks, sharp edges or other defects), a wide base and a restraint system that includes both waist belt and a strap which fits between your child's legs. Keep in mind that the feeding tray will not stop your child from climbing out or sliding down under the tray. Do not let your child climb up the sides of a high chair as it can tip over.			

Remember

Never leave a young child alone in a high chair. In addition, avoid placing the high chair too close to a counter or table by checking to see whether your child's feet can touch them. Your child may be able to push hard enough against these surfaces to tip the chair over.



Bathroom

	Yes	No	N/A
26. Do you use slip-resistant mats in the bathroom?			
Suggested action: Use slip-resistant mats on the bathroom floor. A non-slip mat or self-adhesive slip-resistant strips should also be used in the shower and bath.			
27. Are medicines and make-up safely stored?			
Suggested action: Make sure that all medicines, vitamins and herbal medications are in a clearly labeled packaging with a childproof safety cap. Keep all medicines and make-up out of reach of children and in a locked cabinet. Make sure that all expired medicine are collected and safely returned to the pharmacy.			
28. Is your toilet secured?			
Suggested action: Children can drown in a toilet bowl if they fall in headfirst. Put a lid lock on your toilet seat to keep younger children out.			
29. Is the hot water set to a safe temperature?			
Suggested action: Make sure that the water from your taps does not exceed 49°C (120°F). Consider installing a scald protection device for each of your faucets so that the maximum allowable temperature for the bath, shower and bathroom sink does not put your child at risk. You can also reduce your child's risk of injury by making sure to check the bath water temperature with the inside of your arm or your elbow.			

Remember

Bathtub drowning can occur within seconds, without a sound and in only a few centimetres of water.

Keep your child in sight and in reach at all times.

- **Never** leave a child alone in a bathtub
- **Never** rely on a bath seat or a bath ring to ensure the safety of your baby while they are in the tub.



Bedroom

	Yes	No	N/A
<p>30. Is the furniture securely fastened to the wall?</p> <p>Suggested action: It is important to secure furniture including heavy shelving, televisions, artwork and mirrors to the wall.</p>			
<p>31. Are your child's toys safely stored?</p> <p>Suggested action: Do not keep any pillows, stuffed animals, toys or heavy blankets in your child's crib. Do not store toys on top of tall furniture. Make sure that you use a toy box without a lid or one that is equipped with large air holes and a lid support system so that your child can still breathe if they decide to hide inside it. Lid supports are spring-loaded support devices that should keep the lid open, no matter what position the lid is in. Also check to make sure that the toy box is sturdy and has a lead-free finish.</p>			
<p>32. Are the windows appropriately secured?</p> <p>Suggested action: Do not rely on window screens to keep your child safe. Use child safety locks, window stops and/or guards as needed to prevent falls from windows. Do not place furniture that is easy to climb by a child directly under a window. Window blind cords should also be secured out of reach of children.</p>			
<p>33. Is the child's bed age appropriate?</p> <p>Suggested action: Make sure that the crib and/or bed meets safety standards. Drop-side cribs should not be used due to the risk of falls and other injuries. In addition, bumper pads should not be used at any age because of the risk of suffocation. Your child is ready for a toddler bed when they show signs of being able to climb out of the crib or if your child is taller than 90 cm (35 inches), whichever comes first. If you don't have a toddler bed, consider using an adult-size bed and install bed rails to keep your child from falling out.</p>			



Bunk Bed Safety

Make sure that the bunk bed meets the latest safety standards and that the top bunk has guardrails on all sides, even if the bed will be placed against a wall. Make sure to teach your child that they should always use the ladder when getting on or off the top bunk and that only one person should be on the top bunk at a time.

Remember that **no child under six years old** should be allowed to sleep on the upper bunk of the bed.

Other Home Safety Concerns

	Yes	No	N/A
<p>34. Are smoke detectors and carbon monoxide alarms installed and working?</p> <p>Suggested action: Make sure that you have a smoke detector and a carbon monoxide alarm on every floor of your home, especially near sleeping areas. Test the alarms once a month to make sure the battery is working and that you can hear the alarm from your bedroom. Change the batteries at least once a year or whenever the alarm “chirps” to tell you that the battery power is low. Any alarm that is 10 years old should be replaced.</p>			
<p>35. Is there a fire extinguisher in the house?</p> <p>Suggested action: Have at least one easily accessible fire extinguisher in your home. Make sure that you use the right type of fire extinguisher and that you know how to operate it properly. However, if a fire becomes large, get out of the house immediately since fire extinguishers are designed to put out small fires, not large ones.</p>			
<p>36. Are the electrical outlets secured?</p> <p>Suggested action: Cover all unused electrical outlets with plastic outlet covers that fit tightly in each socket. As an alternate measure, consider installing self-closing outlet covers or electrical outlet boxes to prevent children from figuring out the process required to access the sockets.</p>			
<p>37. Are all doors to the exterior secured?</p> <p>Suggested action: Consider using an automatic alarm at all exits in order to be alerted when a child tries to leave the home. Be sure that balcony doors are always locked. The doors to the deck should also be kept locked, especially if there is a backyard pool.</p>			
<p>38. Are appropriate safeguards used to prevent poisoning by household plants?</p> <p>Suggested action: Keep plants out of your child’s reach since some are poisonous. Label your pots with the name of the plant so that you will be able to provide that information to healthcare professionals in case your child eats part of it. In addition, make sure to teach your child to not put indoor or outdoor plants in their mouth.</p>			

Home safety over the years

Preventing injuries in children involves a combination of ensuring active supervision and creating a safe environment. However, as your child gets older, you will need to adjust which safety measures you will need to use around your home so that they can be free to learn and explore safely. For more information and resources on home safety for each stage of your child’s development, please visit Child Safety Link at <https://childsafetylink.ca/safety-at-home/home-safety/>





The NB Trauma Program, and our provincial stakeholders, would like to remind you that most injuries can be prevented!

We encourage everyone to learn more about how to stay safe.

For more information on this and other injury prevention topics, for people of all ages, please visit www.NBTrauma.ca.



Horizon Health Network
Réseau de santé Horizon

Vitalité Health Network
Réseau de santé Vitalité

Ambulance NB

New Brunswick Department of Health
Ministère de la santé du Nouveau-Brunswick

www.NBTrauma.ca

 @TraumaNB