

Protecting Wisconsin Consumers for 75 Years

Child care safety tips

For parents and child care providers

The following safety tips checklist is provided to help care givers and parents provide a safer environment for young children.

✓ **CRIBS:**

Make sure cribs meet current safety standards, are assembled correctly, have mattresses that fit snugly and are in good condition. Look for a certification safety seal. Older cribs may not meet current standards. Crib slats should be no more than 2 3/8" apart.

Babies should be put to sleep on their backs in cribs with firm, flat mattresses and no soft bedding (like quilts, pillows, and pillow-like toys).

This can prevent strangulation and suffocation associated with soft bedding, older cribs with loose, broken or missing hardware and mattresses that are too small.

✓ **HIGH CHAIRS:**

Check that children are always restrained by safety straps around the waist and between the legs. Most high chairs also have a hard plastic restraint between the legs. Straps and restraints can prevent children from climbing out of high chairs or slipping between high chair trays and seats, risking head entrapment.

Safety straps and other restraints help prevent falls – and strangulations – associated with high chairs.

✓ **CHANGING TABLES:**

A child can easily fall off a changing table – which is why you should never leave a child unattended on changing tables. When using a changing table, always keep one hand on the child.

Always keep one hand on a child when using changing tables to help prevent injuries associated with falls.

✓ **SOFT BEDDING:**

Be sure that no soft bedding like pillows, soft bedding, quilts, pillow-like toys or comforters are used when you put babies to sleep. Babies should be put to sleep on their backs in a crib with a firm, flat mattress.

This can help reduce Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) and prevent strangulation and suffocation related to soft bedding.

✓ **PLAYGROUND SURFACING:**

Look for safe surfacing on outdoor playgrounds—at least 9 inches of wood chips, mulch, sand or pea gravel, shredded rubber or mats made of safety-tested rubber or rubber-like materials are good shock-absorbing materials. In addition, regularly check playground surfacing and equipment to make sure they are well-maintained.

Proper and well-maintained playground surfacing helps protect against injuries from falls, especially serious head injuries.

✓ SAFETY GATES:

Be sure that safety gates are used to keep children away from potentially dangerous areas, especially stairs.

This can help prevent against many hazards, especially falls.

✓ WINDOW COVERING CORDS:

Be sure window covering cords (for miniblinds, Venetian blinds, and curtains) do not have looped cords or chains. Check that vertical blinds, continuous looped blinds, and drapery cords have tension or tie-down devices to hold the cords tight. Install cordless window coverings in children's bedrooms and play areas. For a free repair kit for cords, contact the Window Covering Safety Council, www.windowcoverings.org or 1-800-504-4636.

Safety devices for window covering and curtain cords can help prevent strangulation in the loops of these cords.

✓ CLOTHING DRAWSTRINGS:

Be sure that there are no drawstrings around the hood and neck of children's

outerwear clothing. Other clothing fasteners – like snaps, zippers, or hook and loop fasteners (such as Velcro) – should be used.

Outerwear without drawstrings – which can catch on playground and other equipment – helps prevent strangulation.

✓ RECALLED PRODUCTS:

Check that no recalled products are being used in your home or child care center. Recalled products have caused burns, broken bones, strangulations, and electrocutions. Keep a current list of recalled children's products readily visible or available. Check highchairs, baby walkers, infant swings and other children's products to see if they have been recalled.

Recalled products can pose a threat of injury or death. Displaying a list of recalled products in child care centers reminds caretakers and parents to remove or repair potentially dangerous children's toys and products.

For more information

For more child care safety tips, go to the Consumer Product Safety Commission's (CPSC) Web site at www.cpsc.gov, www.recalls.gov and New

Parents Network Web site www.npn.org.

To learn more about product safety, go to CPSC's Web site at www.cpsc.gov or call CPSC's Hotline at 1-800-638-2772. To receive a free subscription of "Safety News," a quarterly, hard copy publication of CPSC announced recalls, call the CPSC toll-free Hotline. To join CPSC's list for instant e-mail notification of recalled consumer products, go to www.cpsc.gov/cpscclist.asp. To find out more about all products recalled by the federal government, visit www.recalls.gov.

For more consumer protection information, or to file a complaint, contact the Bureau of Consumer Protection at:

(800) 422-7128

2811 Agriculture Drive
PO Box 8911
Madison WI 53708-8911
(608) 224-4976

FAX: (608) 224-4939

TTY: (608) 224-5058

**E-MAIL:
DATCPHotline@Wisconsin.gov**

**WEBSITE:
www.datcp.state.wi.us**

(Information taken from U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission informational materials.)