

SERVIZIO SANITARIO REGIONALE
EMILIA-ROMAGNA

Regione Emilia-Romagna

Watch out for those two!

Safety for the little ones

2023 edition



REGIONAL CAMPAIGN FOR THE PREVENTION OF ACCIDENTS IN THE HOME

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Watch out for those two

*Don't touch this, be careful with that, don't put that other
thing in your mouth: what a drag!*

*Mom and Dad always said lots of things weren't allowed,
but they've been good parents.*

*They taught me to be cautious and most of all they
managed to keep me away from all the little dangers
there can be in the home.*



It's a real pain to grow up safe

But let's start from the very beginning.

My name's Alex and I'm a real curious one: when I was a child at home, nothing got past me. Actually, it drew me in. Sometimes I could even be a little monster: curiosity and lack of a sense of danger made me act unpredictably, which put my safety at risk. Emma, my sister, looks like me when I was little: she wants to play with everything she can get her hands on too and doesn't realize how dangerous things can be.

Mom and Dad had their work cut out preventing any possible risk, and it's only now I'm older that I understand the importance of how careful they were.

First of all, they made the house safe by surrounding themselves with state-of-the-art equipment and putting it all in the right places. Of course, they really needed all that stuff that can be very useful for an adult if it's used the right way. In the hands of a kid though, they can become... dangerous weapons? Much worse than that: deadly bombs, devastating cannons, lethal swords... sorry, I started getting carried away there.

But the fact remains: Mom and Dad had to take so many precautions, watch carefully, and sort out all the equipment and safety devices that could be used to prevent accidents in the home.

I've learned to be careful and cautious now too. Emma's learning as well. And now I'd like to tell other kids like me, and the grown-ups, about what we can all do to make home a safer place.

Watch out for those two



My room: my world

See those weird little holes in the wall?

They're sockets. The first time I saw them, I tried to stick my fingers in: they seemed to be specially designed for that. Just as well though, Dad was thinking ahead much more than I was. To stop me getting hurt, he had sockets with the safety mark installed, ones with those "little sticks" inside ("tiles," Dad calls them). They stopped me putting anything sharp that came to hand into them.





Watch out for those two

• POWER SOCKETS

Have protected child safety sockets installed, so children don't get an electric shock if they put a piece of metal into them.

• LAMPS AND LIGHTS

For your children's bedroom, you can buy special toy lamps, made in a fun shape and powered at a very low safety voltage (12 V). The technical name is "toy-like mobile lighting fixtures". A night light is also a good idea: it consumes less than one watt and plugs directly into a power socket.

• HUMIDIFIER

To be placed out of children's reach, if possible, on a solid surface. Remember to change the water every day to prevent bacteria or germs from forming.

• BABY MONITOR

Consisting of two units, it records all noise, loud or quiet, in the nursery and sends it to the parents' bedroom. You can keep an eye on your little ones, and you can rest assured.

• BABY CHANGING TABLE

The top must be sturdy and stable, with dimensions of at least 60 x 80 cm, and made of a non-toxic and washable material. Babies should never be left alone on a changing table.

• TOYS

To be stored somewhere children can access them.

Electric toys: buy ones made in accordance with safety regulations.

Beware of toys marked "for use under adult supervision": follow the rules! Check the batteries: if corroded, they can release toxic acids.

• COT

Must be solid, with padded sides and base. The sides must be at least 80 cm high and the distance between the bars must be between 6 and 7.5 cm, to prevent the child from sticking their head in.

• PILLOW

Must not be too fluffy or large, to avoid choking hazards. Foam pillows with ventilation channels are available on the market, so your child can breathe comfortably even when lying on their front. Bear in mind that babies should sleep on their backs until the age of one.

• MOSQUITO NET

In summer, mosquito nets are the best way to protect children from insect bites: they are both protective and ensure that air and light can flow freely.

The kitchen: loads of great stuff

I'm doing my favorite thing here today:

eating (even if the first few times it was annoying to be "put" on that very high little chair when everyone else was sitting much lower down and without a belt, free to go wherever they wanted).



There's everything you could ever want here:
fire, water, the heat of the oven, the noise of small appliances, plugs to put in, tangled cables, cupboards to open, bottle tops to unscrew. A real treat for the little ones. But Mom and Dad made sure everything was safe and sound.



Watch out for those two

• HIGH CHAIR

As well as a solid base to stop it from toppling over, it must also have a footrest so the child can't use it to lift themselves up. Always fasten the safety belt.

• BOTTLE WARMER

To be kept out of the reach of children. When in use, make sure that the water level in the bottle warmer never falls below the minimum and adjust the temperature accordingly. Before giving milk to a baby, always check the temperature on the back of your hand.

• STOVES

First of all, teach children not to go near the stove when in use, and definitely not to play with the gas knobs. In general, go for gas stoves with a protective screen – which prevent children from knocking pans over – fitted with protection devices (thermocouples) that stop the gas from escaping in case the flame goes out. If possible, install your stove against a wall, to make it more difficult for a child to reach it. Make sure the handles of your pans don't stick out over the edge of the stove.

• ELECTRICITY

Never leave electrical appliances running unattended when children are nearby. Teach children not to touch appliances when hot, to prevent burns.

• DRAWERS AND CUPBOARDS

Detergents, matches, knives, scissors, knives, disinfectants, insecticides, etc. must be kept out of the reach of children. Put everything away in drawers and cupboards, which should be fitted with suitable locks or latches.

• SMALL APPLIANCES

Always make sure they meet safety regulations and keep them well-maintained. Never leave them plugged in after use, and put them away properly. Pay careful attention to the power cord. Choose appliances with protection systems, which keep moving parts in place when the lid is lifted.

• OVEN

Keep an eye on glass oven doors, which can get very hot and cause burns. When open, an oven door can become a step; even if the appliance meets safety regulations and has passed tests to prove it will not tip over, always pay attention.

• GAS

Never install any gas-powered appliances in the garage. If installed in an adjacent room, the communicating door between the two spaces must be fireproofed. Gas appliances that are not airtight (those with an open flame) must not be installed in bedrooms, bathrooms, nor in rooms – or ones adjacent to them – where there is an open wood-burning fireplace. For these appliances, a vent is required for air to flow in from outdoors, depending on the power of the appliance, and in any case with a net surface area of at least 100 cm² (vent diameter of approx. 12 cm). Airtight gas appliances (with no open flame) must be installed in a room with a door or window that can be opened outwards or, alternatively, with a permanent opening to the outside, with a net surface area of at least 100 cm² (vent diameter of approx. 12 cm).

The living room: so much fun

It was open season to explore the living room too.

Mom and Dad hadn't taken me up into the mountains yet, so I climbed up on the bookshelves instead... and there I was, up on top.

But what a drag, Dad had thought about that too.

And what was that "talking machine" doing there, switched off, silent and all on its own? It was real tempting: I tried to pull the cable... then I stopped and thought of what Dad would say: "don't do that, it's dangerous!"





Watch out for those two

• DRAWERS

To be kept closed with suitable stoppers – they could easily become makeshift steps or tip over onto the little ones.

• TELEVISION

Not recommended for small children. To be watched at a safe distance to avoid damaging the eyesight (at least five times the diagonal measurement of the screen). To be positioned to make sure it cannot fall over.

• EXTERNAL CABLES

Electrical systems with external cables are prohibited: just as well, as children could pull them out.

• LIGHT BULBS

When a light bulb burns out, always turn it off at the switch. Never leave the bulb socket empty as children may unintentionally stick their finger in and could receive an electric shock.

• ELECTRICAL WIRES

Don't leave any wires dangling from audiovisual equipment; tuck them away as much as possible. Also be careful with extension cords, as children could trip over them. Avoid plugging multiple appliances into the same outlet; purchase a power strip with safety marking.

• CIRCUIT BREAKER

Have a circuit breaker – also known as a “cutout” – installed, to keep the electrical system “under control”.

• SHARP EDGES AND GLASS

Cover all sharp edges of furniture with rubber corner protectors. Glass tops and doors can be protected with a special, fully transparent adhesive film; when applied to glass, it stops it from shattering into a thousand pieces, and the shards stick to the film instead of posing any hazard.

• BALCONY

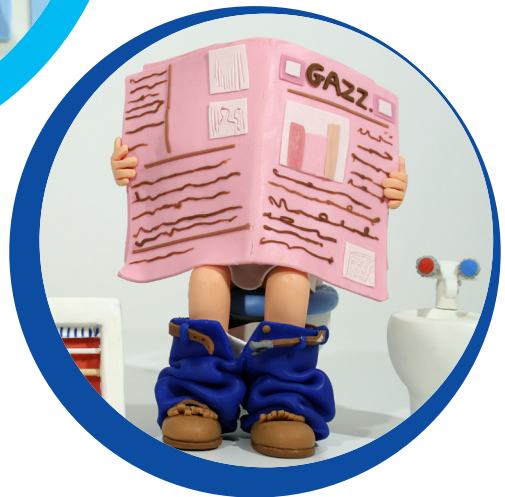
If the living room leads out onto a balcony, make sure the railings are not horizontal and cannot therefore be climbed. If vertical, the railings should be narrow enough to prevent the child from sticking their head through. It would be best to cover them with a very dense mesh.

Always make sure there is nothing next to the balustrade that could be used as a step to climb up onto, which could be dangerous. The same goes for windows.

The bathroom: Fatal attraction

Actually, when I was in the bathtub, instead of washing it was always more fun to splash around, make a racket and play with the water.

But I had to be careful. Mom always told me that there are two friends in the bathroom: water and electricity. Very useful friends, but when used at the same time they turn into dangerous enemies that can do real harm. One at a time then, please: clear understandings make for long friendships.





Watch out for those two

• HAIR DRYER

A good rule of thumb is not to use a hair dryer in the bathroom, and never near a bathtub or sink, especially if it has water in it. Don't let children handle one on their own. Teach them not to use one with wet hands or bare feet. Once your hair is dry, unplug it.

• FAUCETS

The clear and present danger is hot water, which can scald or burn. Check that the water isn't too hot.

• BATHTUBS

Don't overfill the bathtub. To prevent children from slipping, get a non-slip mat or apply the right kind of non-slip strips. Always check the water temperature. Never leave little ones on their own in water.

• MEDICINES

To be stored out of the reach of children, or in cupboards with suitable safety locks or latches.



Out and about; in the garden

When I was little, people used to take me from one place to the next, trussed up like a turkey in a stroller.

In the car and on the bike, I was always strapped into the child seat, but outside, they always decided!

In the garden, I wanted to do everything by myself but Mom and Dad were being really careful: they checked the swing, they took me to see the fish in the tank, and when I learned to ride a bike, they made me put on a helmet!



Watch out for those two

• CHILD SEAT

Child seats have been mandatory since 1988; they must be approved and must bear a sticker showing compliance with ECE regulations 44.03 or 44.04. To ensure safety, child seats must be used the right way and be suitable for the child's age throughout their development (up to approx. 36 kg in weight and 150 cm in height). There are four types of seats: group 0 and 0+ (the classic egg shape), to be set up in the opposite direction to travel; group I and II, in the direction of travel; group III, conventional raised seats to be used with the built-in seat belt. For cars with airbags, the child seat must always be placed on the rear seats, which is the safest place anyway.

• STROLLER

Must be sturdy, stable, fitted with an efficient braking system and good safety catches. Make sure the safety devices are securely locked and the seat belts are fastened.

• BIKE SEAT

When looking at seats to be attached to the luggage rack, go for one with leg rests on the sides, so the child's feet don't get caught or hurt in the spokes. For infants, child seats to be attached to the handlebars are also available. Always fasten the belt.

• TRIKES AND BIKES

Most of all, they must be sturdy and the right size. Only let children ride around protected spaces such as parks, gardens and roads closed to traffic. When older kids ride a bike, they should wear a suitable safety helmet, which must bear the CE (*Conformité Européenne*) marking to certify its compliance with European safety standards.

• GAMES

Before letting a child get on a swing, slide or carousel, make sure the supporting structure is sturdy, that the slide has side protection, that the carousel has a safety chain and its rotation mechanism is working properly.

• KIDDIE POOLS AND SWIMMING POOLS

Children can drown in only a few centimeters of water. Although kiddie pools don't hold much water, always keep an eye out and never leave children alone in one. After use, don't leave water in the pool and check no toys that could draw the child's attention have been left in it. Pools should always be protected and closed with a cover or gate when not in use.

Toy safety

All toys must bear the CE (*Conformité Européenne*) marking, must be made of non-toxic materials and must not be flammable. Before buying any toys, always check that they are suitable for your child's age, and read the instructions and specific warnings carefully. After use, always check the condition of the toy: if it's damaged or broken, or if you're in any doubt at all about its safety, have it repaired properly or throw it away.



Baby S.O.S.

Electric shocks

If a little one receives an electric shock, they become very frightened and the part of the body that came into contact with the current turns red. Bathe the area affected under cold running water for about five minutes. Don't use oils or ointments.

Alternatively, if the child remains "attached" to the source of electricity, it must be disconnected from the mains immediately. If this is not possible, use an insulating tool (made of wood or plastic) to quickly move the child away from the power source.

If the burn is deep and the child is showing symptoms of shock (sweating, pallor, faint and rapid pulse, vomiting), call an ambulance (118 in Italy) immediately and calmly follow the operator's instructions while you wait for the emergency services to arrive.





Watch out for those two

Burns

If the little one burns themselves slightly, bathe the area affected in plenty of cold running water; the low temperature reduces the pain and prevents a blister from forming. If the burn is more serious, don't attempt to remove their clothes, which could make the situation worse. Instead, bathe and cool the area affected with plenty of cold water, call an ambulance (118 in Italy) and calmly follow the operator's instructions while you wait for the emergency services to arrive.

Never use oils or ointments.



Poisoning

Call an ambulance (118 in Italy) immediately, provide all the information they ask you for and calmly follow the operator's instructions while you wait for the emergency services to arrive.



Choking

If the child has swallowed a foreign body, they need help to remove it. For very young babies (less than one year old), put them on their front on your arm, with their head resting on the palm of your hand, then tap them five times between their shoulder blades to help expel the foreign body. If that doesn't work, perform five compressions in the middle of their chest, using two fingers. If the child is older, put them on your knee with their head facing downwards and support their chest, then tap them five times in a forward motion from their shoulder blades. Carry on if the foreign body has not been expelled, by kneeling behind the child and wrapping your arms around their sides. With one hand clenched into a fist, put your thumb flat against their abdomen between the breastbone and belly button. Grab your fist with your other hand and tap them five times in an upward motion to try to expel the foreign body. At the same time, call an ambulance (118 in Italy) and follow the operator's instructions while waiting for the emergency services to arrive.

Safety is... not letting stress get to you

Stress, worries, psychological unease, but also excessively elated moods, can result in a lack of attention and in overlooking precautions and the right way to do things. It's easier to have an accident if:

- you're exhausted or agitated because you have too much to do
- you're anxious
- you underestimate danger as a result of a false sense of security.

To prevent

Learn to prioritize what needs to be done first, bearing in mind your needs.

Exhaustion or having too much to do are incompatible with quality of life.

Stop and think. Anxiety gets in the way and has an effect on you.

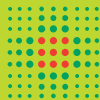
To prevent... intoxication and poisoning

- **Carefully read** the label on any container with a hazard symbol, and the instructions for use of cleaning and hygiene products.
- **Don't buy products** with no label or instructions for use, even if they are cheaper.
- **Don't put potentially dangerous products** into unlabeled containers or anything other than the one they came in.
- **Always use gloves** to protect your hands.

To prevent... Fires

- Don't hang curtains near hobs, boilers or stoves.
- Keep products containing alcohol and triethylene glycol in a safe place.
- Don't come close to stoves when wearing loose clothing or if it is made of synthetic fibers (e.g. nylon).
- Put a fire guard in front of any fireplaces.
- Don't cover light fittings with paper or cloth.
- Unplug the TV aerial from the socket during thunderstorms.
- Turn off the TV at the mains, not just using the remote control.
- Don't put the TV near flammable furniture, and don't install it in a cupboard.
- Don't smoke in bed, in an armchair or on the sofa; you might fall asleep.
- If possible, consider having a fire extinguisher at home.





To find out more

All Local Health Authorities have their own representative of the *regional campaign for the prevention of accidents in the home*. For their contact details, get in touch with the Public Relations Office at your Local Health Authority.



every working day from 8:30 a.m. to 6 p.m.
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