

Make your home safe for infants and young children

The National Film Board of Canada and Consumer and Corporate Affairs Canada present a companion home-safety guide for the film

EVERY DOG'S GUIDE TO COMPLETE HOME SAFETY



FOR:

- Young parents & newlyweds planning to have children
- Babysitters & babysitters-in-training
- Daycare centres
- Family members who occasionally care for your children in your home or theirs
- Elementary school teachers & the children they teach (K-4)

Note: This brochure on accident-prevention in the home can be used on its own, or with the animation film that inspired it.

CONTENTS

Introduction: Ensuring you child's safety in the home	3	Making bath and bedtime safe	8
Home maintenance prevents accidents	4	Keeping yourself accident-free so you can care for your children	8
Electricity and your child	5	A few miscellaneous safety pointers	9
Don't let appliances harm your child	5	Keeping your child safe in your car	9
Doors, tables and safety	6	A safety checklist for babysitters	10
Never leave a baby unattended in a dangerous place	6	Film-use ideas for babysitter trainers and elementary school teachers	11
Household objects that can harm your child	7	About the film, <i>Every Dog's Guide to Complete Home Safety</i>	12

More copies of this guide to safety in the home can be obtained from your nearest NFB office. This guide can be used on its own, or with the animated film that inspired it. See the back of this brochure to find out how and where you can obtain the film, *Every Dog's Guide to Complete Home Safety*.

KEEP EMERGENCY NUMBERS HANDY

Accidents happen suddenly! The first step in home safety is to keep a list of emergency numbers by the phone. Does your Emergency List include:

☐ POLICE

☐ FIRE

☐ AMBULANCE

☐ DOCTOR

☐ Close relative and/or friend

☐ For a babysitter, you should add the number where you can be reached.

☐ FIRST-AID KIT

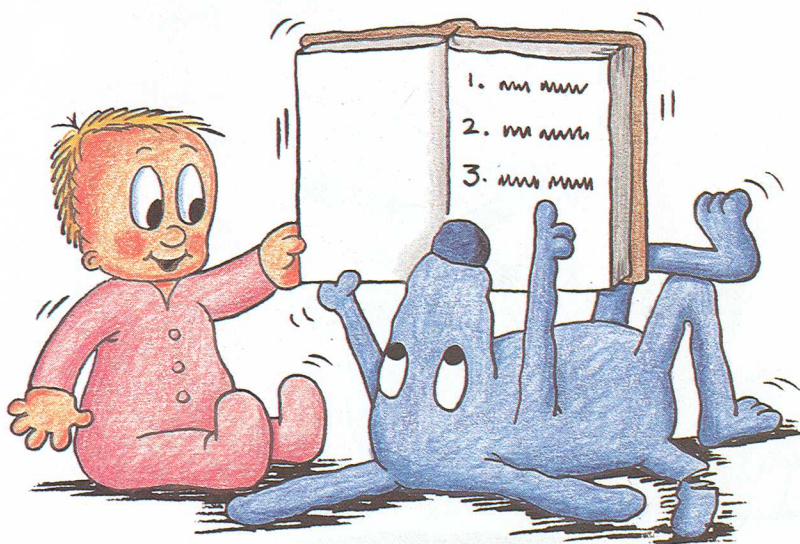
No matter how safety-conscious you are, accidents may happen. Keep a basic first-aid kit for less serious injuries.

INTRODUCTION

Ensuring your child's safety in the home

Statistics show that the majority of accidents involving infants and very young children happen in the home. The most common injuries occur when children fall from tables, changing areas or other heights, or down staircases. Bumps and blows from doors and furniture are another frequent cause of injuries. As well, babies and young children often hurt themselves by touching hot objects or by playing with sharp objects. Many also swallow pills, paints or other household supplies. Most of these accidents can be avoided if simple precautions are taken.

This guide to safety in the home lists some of the most common mishaps that can befall infants and young children and suggests steps that you can take to prevent them. This guide can help you make sure that your children get the care they deserve.



SAFETY TIPS

Home maintenance prevents accidents

A loose bannister or floorboard can cause nasty falls. As well, chandeliers have been known to fall on children.

Check your home for these common hazards:

- Loose railings/bannisters
- Loose stairs
- Loose floorboards
- Faulty light fixtures
- Loose or broken windows
- Do doors leading to the basement close securely?
- Do windows stay open properly, and are the screen guards adequate?
- Are doors that should stay locked child-proof?
- Are bathroom fixtures secure?
- Are bath taps clearly marked to distinguished hot and cold?
- Are rugs on smooth or polished floor areas firmly secured, or thick enough not to slip?



SAFETY TIPS

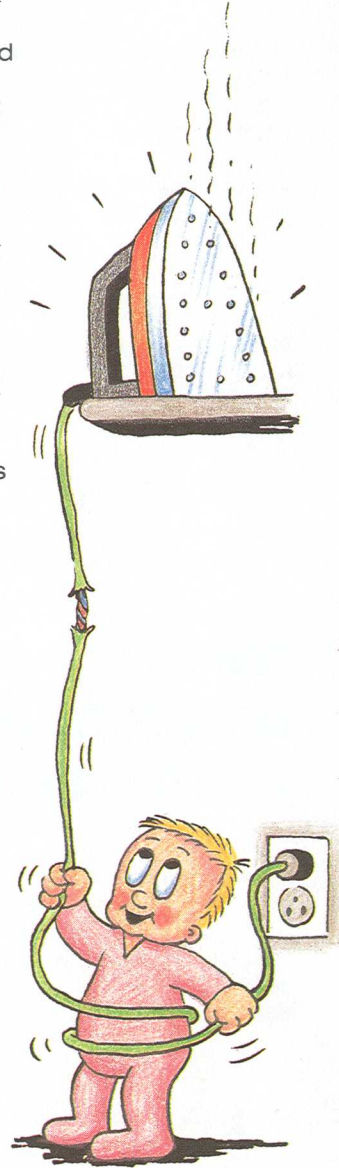
Electricity and your child

Infants, toddlers and young children are fascinated by electrical outlets. Pins, nails, scissors and fingers are some of the common objects children try to insert in them. To protect your child from electrical shocks, buy and insert caps into all the outlets in areas used by children.

Don't let appliances harm your child

Both children and adults can trip over unstored appliance cords, or be burned by an iron that has been left out. The following are precautions you can take:

- Turn iron off
- Put iron and ironing board away
- Store appliance cords (e.g., vacuum cleaner, frying pans)
- Do not keep a radio or other electrical appliances in the bathroom. (Electricity and water don't mix!)
- Turn handles of hot pots on the stove away from children's reach.
- Infants and toddlers can burn themselves on hot ovens. Know where your child is.
- Toddlers and young children have been known to crawl into dryers, refrigerators, and other large appliances. Don't leave your child alone in laundry and kitchen areas.



SAFETY TIPS

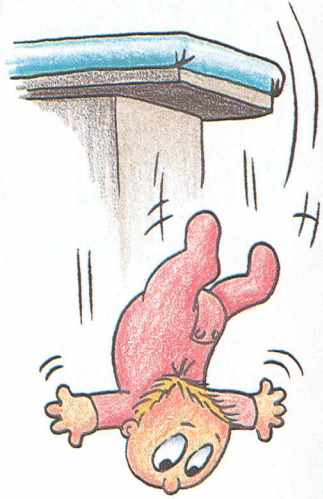
Doors, tables and safety

A child in the home means special care with doors. Open all doors carefully, and don't stand behind them. Your young child is very curious and moves quickly.

Take special care to make sure doors leading to other levels are securely closed. A child that crawls or uses a walker is just as mobile as one who walks and runs. Any mobile child can take a bad tumble down an unguarded staircase.

With very young children, use special gates at the tops of stairs. Another gate at the bottom will prevent ambitious crawlers and toddlers from attempting climbs before they can do so safely.

Children also frequently bump into tables (especially coffee tables), other furniture and radiators. Where possible, keep centre areas of rooms free of low tables and other furniture.



Never leave a baby unattended in a dangerous place

Don't leave a baby alone on a changing table or other high place, or in a room with dangerous objects. Phone calls can wait, or, take the baby with you. Babies have suffered severe accidents falling out of windows, or off a table or balcony when the caretaker's absence was "just for a minute."



SAFETY TIPS

Household objects that can harm your child

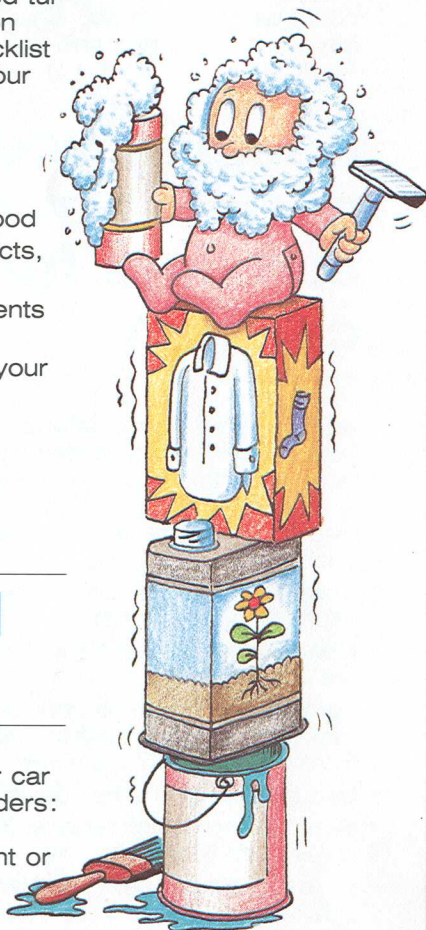
The lively curiosity of infants and young children sometimes attracts them to common objects that can harm them. Children have eaten poisonous plants, overdosed on vitamin supplements, stabbed themselves with scissors, swallowed turpentine, and ingested prescription pills left on tables or in open purses. The following checklist will help you protect the life of the child in your care:

- Store sharp objects out of reach
- Place poisonous plants out of reach
- Don't store drugs, alcohol or poisons with food
- Place detergents, household cleaning products, and spray cans out of reach
- Place aspirin products and vitamin supplements out of reach
- Lock up pills and drugs. If you carry pills in your purse, keep it out of reach
- Lock up paints, turpentine and poisons (e.g., ant/roach poison)
- Keep perfumes, shaving lotions and hair products out of reach

Keeping your child safe in your car

A child deserves as much protection in your car as in your home. Check the following reminders:

- Do you have a child's car seat for each infant or toddler?
- Are children's seat belts securely fastened?
- Are the doors next to children locked?
- Is your car well-serviced and maintained?
- Do other adults as well as children know that they should not distract the driver?



SAFETY TIPS

Making bath and bedtime safe

A scalding bath can burn your child. Run and test the bathwater beforehand to ensure bathtime is enjoyable for your child. Make sure there are no electrical appliances near the bath area.

Make sure that the crib sides are securely locked in place and remove any large toys that your child could use to climb out. Ensure that bunk beds have proper railings and safe ladders.

Keeping yourself accident-free so you can care for your children

Keeping your home safe for your children means keeping yourself safe too! Here are some important safety tips adults and teenagers can follow:

- Unplug and store vacuum cleaner cords after each clean-up.
- Make repairs as soon as you notice faults in furniture or house structure.
- Make sure your ladder and working equipment are in good order.
- Turn off the power to your work site when making electrical repairs. This step can save you from contact with live wires.
- Use ladders and other equipment carefully.
- When doing major repairs, keep young children away from the work area.
- Be extra careful using power saws and other power tools. Make sure the tool's cord is free of the actual tool.
- Do not tape the trigger of a power tool into a frozen "open" position. Your tool can run away and do irreparable damage.



SAFETY TIPS

- Use correct fuses in your fuse box.
- Make sure that *all* power tools are unplugged before you change a fuse or that an adult is attending the tool.
- Unplug and store tools when not in use.
- Lock all carpentry and maintenance equipment in a closet or tool room when you are not using them.
- Keep a working flashlight, with extra batteries, in an easily accessible place.

A few miscellaneous safety pointers

- If you use cloth diapers, make sure you place safety pins in the diaper, not in the baby.
- Do not use tablecloths unless you keep your baby or toddler out of the room where a table is set with one.
- Don't pull or jerk your small child's arm suddenly, or lift your baby by one arm.
- Keep plastic bags out of children's reach.
- Never leave your child alone in a room with a gas or electric burner on, or with a fire in a fire-place.
- Make sure fire exits are not blocked. It is wise, as well, to have portable emergency ladders, kept in an easily accessible place.

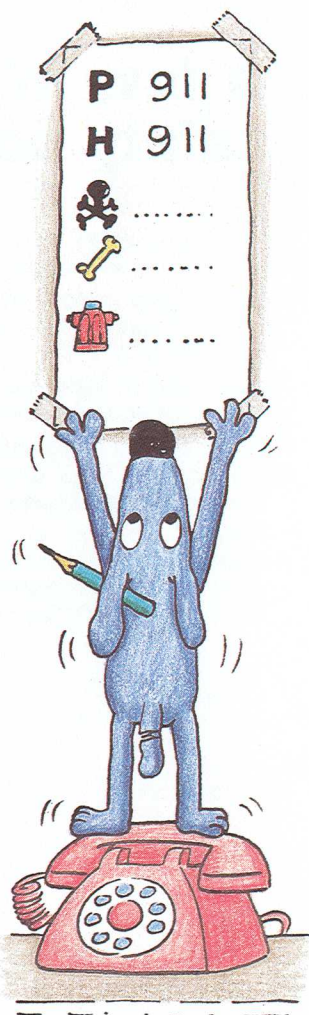


SAFETY TIPS

A safety checklist for babysitters

- Have the parents/caretakers left telephone numbers where they can be reached?
- Have they placed a legible list of emergency numbers by the telephone? If not, ask them to make one. If necessary, consult the phone book and make your own.
- Have the parents or caretakers shown you where diapers, children's pyjamas and other necessary supplies are kept?
- If you have to bathe a child, make sure the bath area is clear of electrical appliances. Running cold water first, then adding the hot until the water is comfortable will prevent scalding a child.
- Do you know where fire exits and emergency ladders are?
- Do you know where a working flashlight is?
- Never leave a baby or young child unattended in a situation where it may come to harm.
- When you put a child to bed, make sure that the sleeping area is safe. Crib bars should be raised and secured, and toys put away.
- Re-read this booklet and add your own safety reminders that apply to the home in which you are babysitting:

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____



A few film-use ideas for babysitter trainers and for elementary school teachers

Pre-Screening Suggestions

Ask your students if they have ever had, or seen, an accident in the home. Once a few accidents have been described, ask students for suggestions on how each might have been prevented.

With young children (K-4), provide, as well, a vocabulary list. For example, "accident," "safety," "protection," "prevention."

Introduce the film *Every Dog's Guide to Complete Home Safety* — about a dog who is specially trained in guarding young children, a baby who needs care, and adults who don't follow safety rules. Ask students to watch for the accidents.

Post-Screening Suggestions

1. Who is your favorite character in the film? Why?
2. What are some of the accidents you spotted? If you had been there, what could you have done beforehand to prevent them?
3. What safety rules are useful to have in any home?
4. Accidents sometimes do happen, no matter how safety-conscious we are. What first-aid measures should we have in a home in case of an accident?

ACTIVITIES

FOR YOUNG CHILDREN:

1. Draw your favorite character or scene.
2. Write about the safety rules you feel are most important.
3. Write about an accident you have had, or that you saw. What might have prevented this accident?

FOR BABYSITTER TRAINEES:

1. Study this booklet again. Add safety rules you feel should be included.
2. Discuss alternative things you can do if you ever have to babysit in a home where the caretakers are not safety-conscious.

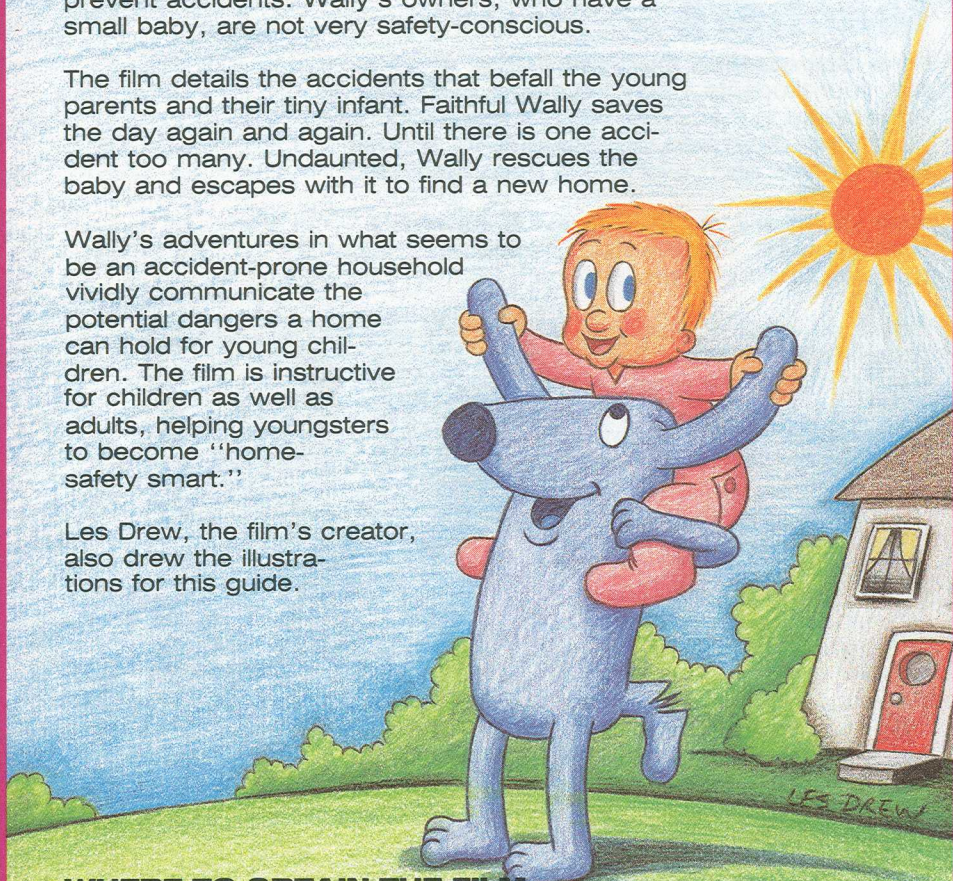
EVERY DOG'S GUIDE TO COMPLETE HOME SAFETY

In just ten minutes, this very funny animation film teaches you approximately fifty safety tips for the home. The film's hero is a dog called Wally, who has been specially trained to guard children and prevent accidents. Wally's owners, who have a small baby, are not very safety-conscious.

The film details the accidents that befall the young parents and their tiny infant. Faithful Wally saves the day again and again. Until there is one accident too many. Undaunted, Wally rescues the baby and escapes with it to find a new home.

Wally's adventures in what seems to be an accident-prone household vividly communicate the potential dangers a home can hold for young children. The film is instructive for children as well as adults, helping youngsters to become "home-safety smart."

Les Drew, the film's creator, also drew the illustrations for this guide.



WHERE TO OBTAIN THE FILM:

Every Dog's Guide to Complete Home Safety may be borrowed free of charge in 16 mm film or rented for \$2 in any video format (U-matic, VHS or Beta). Contact the National Film Board office nearest you for further information.



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