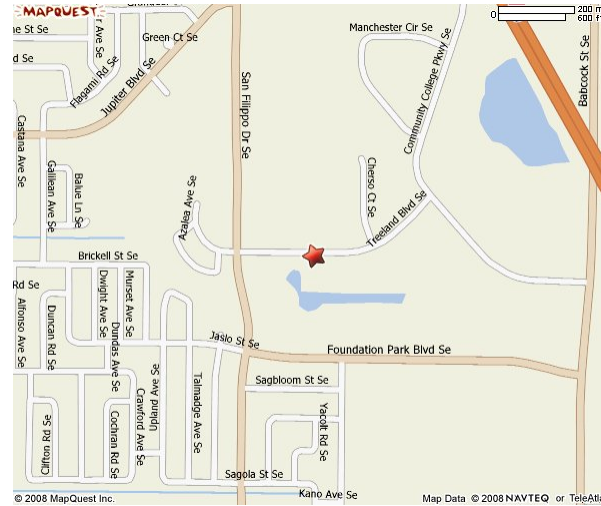
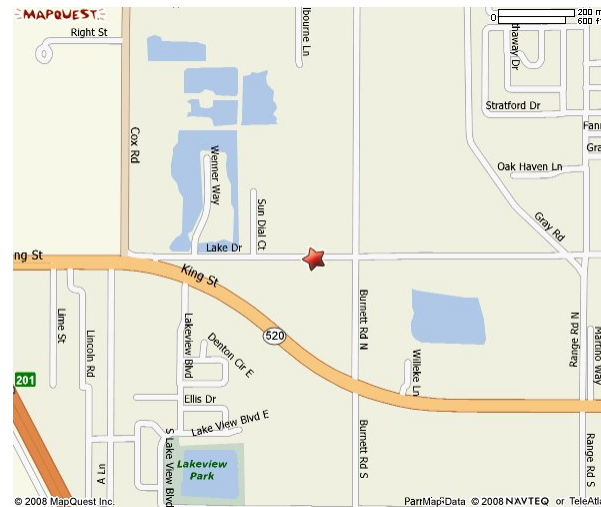


Information about your local Brevard County Extension Office:

University of Florida—IFAS Brevard County Extension has two convenient locations that offer classes. Our classes range from gardening, pesticide licensing, aquatic (fishing, boating), nutrition, and finance. For more information about our classes or to see our schedule please check our website at <http://brevard.ifas.ufl.edu/> or call the office closest to you.



Palm Bay Extension Office
1455 Treeland Blvd. SE
Palm Bay, FL 32909-2258
321-952-4536



Cocoa Extension Office
3695 Lake Dr.
Cocoa, FL 32926
321-633-1702

The Childproof Home

A Guide to Preventing & Responding to Common Childhood Injuries



*Gayle Whitworth,
University of Florida—
IFAS, Brevard County
Extension Office*



In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 286.26, F.S., persons needing accommodations or an interpreter to participate in the proceeding should notify the University of Florida Brevard County Extension Service no later than 48 hours prior to the meeting at 321-633-1702 or fax 321-633-1890.

Protecting Your Child From Harm in and around the Home

According to the National Center for Health Statistics, unintentional injuries are the leading cause of death for children ages 1 – 14 and the fifth leading cause of death for children less than one year old. Motor vehicle crashes, drowning, airway obstructions, fires/burns, poisoning, and pedestrian/bicycle accidents are all common causes for unintentional injuries and deaths to children. There are steps that parents can take to help prevent injuries and deaths,



both in the home and in the car. To help make sure your children are safe at home, check your home at least once a year for basic safety precautions. Use the information provided to help protect your child against three of the common home hazards.

Poison Prevention

In the U.S. in 2006, there were over 2 million calls to Poison Control centers. Of these calls, over 92% of the poisoning concerns happened in the home and over 50% to occurred children under 6 years old (AAPCC 2006 Annual Report of the NPDS).

Poisons are anything that can make you sick or hurt you if used the wrong way and come in the form of liquids, solids, sprays and gases. Opportunities for accidental poisonings can be as simple as the plant that you have growing in your living room to the household cleaners used to sanitize and deodorize your bathrooms, to the medicine you have in your medicine cabinet.

Preventing contact with poisons will always be a parents' first means of attack. Keep all potential poisons up and out of reach of children and locked whenever possible. This includes medicines, household cleaning, personal care products, and pesticides. Follow directions when administering medications or when using household cleaning products or pesticides. Also, be aware of the types of plants that are in and around your home. There are at least 50 common indoor and outdoor plants that can cause skin and/or nasal irritations or that can

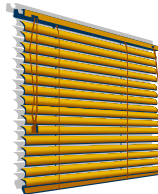
be toxic if eaten. Purchase non-toxic plants and teach children to never put any part of a plant in their mouths. Finally, remind children never to touch insects or animals that are unfamiliar to them. Several insects and animals bite, sting or even spit, which can cause reactions that range from irritation to the skin or eye to paralysis or even death.



Keep the National Poison Control Center's number posted on or beside all phones in the home or commit it to memory. This number will connect you to your local Poison Control Center anywhere in the country. Call this number any time a child (or adult) comes in contact with a poisonous substance through ingestion, inhalation, or contact with the skin or eyes. Be prepared to give as much information as possible regarding the poisonous substance. If a child is choking or is having trouble breathing, call 911.

Airway Obstructions

Airway obstructions can occur when children 1) choke on an object that is blocking the airway, 2) suffocate on items that block or cover the airways, or 3) strangle themselves with items that become wrapped around their necks. Every year in US, more than 700 children die from accidental suffocation or strangulation and almost 170 die due to foreign-body airway obstruction (choking). In fact, airway obstructions are the leading cause of unintentional injury-related deaths in children under the age of one and the second leading cause of death for children 1—14. As with poisonings, prevention is the key to keeping your child safe from airway obstructions. Choking can be prevented, in part, by keeping small objects out of the reach of children (anything that can pass through a toilet paper tube (1.25 inches) can cause a young child to choke), by cutting food into bite-sized pieces and requiring children to sit down while eating, and by paying close attention to the toys your child plays with. Suffocation can be prevented, in part, by placing infants on their backs to sleep, keeping plastic bags out of the reach of children and teaching them to never put them over their heads, and by using toy chests that either don't have a lid or that use safety latches that allow them to stay open. Strangulation can be prevented, in part, by cutting the loops on window blind cords and placing them out of the reach of children, by using cribs that have slats not more than 2-3/8 inches apart, and by removing hood cords and drawstrings on children's clothes.



If you don't already know how to, it's important to learn the Heimlich maneuver and to know CPR. Explore your home at a child's level. This may require crawling on your hands and knees. Look for potential hazards and take the appropriate safety precautions.

Fire and Burns

Fire and burn injuries are another common home safety hazard. Young children are at an especially high risk for burns because they have thinner skin that burns at lower temperatures and more deeply than older children and adults. Children with disabilities are also at high risk of burn-related deaths and injuries, especially from scalding and contact burns (Safe Kids Worldwide).



Scald burn injuries, caused by hot liquids or steam, are the most common type of burn-related injuries among young children. To avoid scald burn injuries, set your water heater at or below 120 degrees F. Temperatures above this can burn a young child's skin in less than three seconds – enough so to require surgery. In addition, keep foods and hot liquids away from the edge of counters and stoves and out of the reach of children, never leave cooking food unattended, and keep pot and pan handles turned to the inside of the stove.

Flame burns, caused by direct contact with fire, are more prevalent among older children. Keep flammable materials away from heating appliances, and keep matches and other fire ignition sources up and out of the reach of children.

Children are also at risk for contact, electrical and chemical burns. To prevent these types of burns, teach children never to touch stoves and ovens and keep iron cords and irons up and out of the reach of children. Check for frayed electrical wires, cover any unused electrical outlets, and make sure ground fault circuit interrupters (GFCIs) are installed in all locations where water is present. Keep all chemicals, inside and outside of the home, in locked cabinets or out of the reach of children, and if using chemicals while near children, never leave them unattended.