safe in their hands?

a safety guide for parents to give to grandparents, relatives and friends
Most parents leave their young children with relatives or friends at some time, whether it's for regular childcare while they are at work or for social visits.

But how safe are your children in someone else's home? If relatives or friends are not used to having young children around, their home is probably not geared up for them.

This leaflet contains reminders about the things relatives and friends should do before a child arrives and things to be aware of and watch out for while they are staying. If they're looking after your children regularly it may be worth them buying some items of safety equipment.

Give this leaflet to friends and family who look after your children – they can use it as a check list and it might prevent an accident – but remind them – nothing replaces adult supervision.

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**Halls and stairs**

**During a visit**

- keep the front door and gate shut to prevent children from running out unattended
- make sure that stairs are free from clutter to avoid trips and falls
- take children with you when you answer the door or phone – it takes just seconds for an accident to happen.

**Safety equipment worth buying**

- smoke alarm
- safety gates to put at the top and bottom of the stairs.
Living room

Before a visit
- put matches, lighters, cigarettes and alcohol out of reach
- secure windows and move furniture away from windows to prevent a child from climbing out
- move sharp or breakable ornaments out of children’s reach.

During a visit
- if you don’t have a secure fireguard avoid lighting fires or using heating equipment
- never hold a child if you have a hot drink or hot food in your hand
- keep the floor clear of clutter to avoid trips and falls
- encourage children to put their toys away. If you don’t have safety gates, keep the living room door shut to keep children in the room with you.

Safety equipment worth buying
- fireguard
- socket covers
- safety catches for windows – particularly upstairs and in flats.

Kitchen

Before a visit
- move all cleaning materials to a locked cupboard or to high shelves out of reach
- move knives and scissors out of reach.
During a visit
- keep children away from hot appliances like oven doors, toasters and kettles to avoid burns
- when cooking use the rings on the back of the cooker and turn saucepan handles towards the back so that children cannot reach and pull them down
- keep kettles at the back of the worktop
- supervise small children while they’re eating to make sure that they don’t choke.

Safety equipment worth buying
- safety catches for low cupboards.

Bedrooms

Before a visit
- cosmetics and perfumes can be poisonous if swallowed so keep them out of reach
- lock all medicines away to avoid confusion with sweets
- ensure that windows are secure
- do not use pillows or duvets for children under one as they can suffocate
- try to ensure that a child’s bed is in a safe place, preferably not under a window so that it can be used to climb out and not next to a radiator that may burn.

During a visit
- keep your bedroom door shut

Safety equipment worth buying
- cot made to British Standard BS 1753 for babies
Bathroom

Before a visit

- lock razors, scissors and medicines away or move them out of reach
- move cleaning materials and toiletries out of reach as they can be dangerous if swallowed.

During a visit

- never leave a child under five in the bath alone as small children can drown in as little as 5cm (2”) of water
- test the temperature of the bath water with your elbow before allowing a child to get in to avoid scalds
- empty the bath immediately when finished.

Safety equipment worth buying

- lockable medicine cabinet
Garden or balcony

Before a visit

- lock away chemicals such as weed killer or fertiliser
- lock away garden tools in a shed or garage when not in use
- check pathways and steps to make sure that they are clear and well maintained to avoid falls
- fill in or cover garden ponds.

During a visit

- make sure the back gate is always closed
- keep children away from hot barbeques.

capt is a charity committed to reducing childhood injury.

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