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[Safe and Healthy Homes Program](#)

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[EPA's Lead in your home, a Parent's Reference Guide](#)

[Tobacco Free Allegheny](#)

[The PA Free Quitline](#)



Safe At Home

The *Safe at Home* newsletter is produced by the Safe and Healthy Homes Program of the Allegheny County Health Department. Quarterly we will be addressing relevant and timely home health and safety issues pertinent to our community partners and the populations they serve. Feel free to print and distribute any information from our newsletter that is relevant to your staff and clients.

Please let us know if there are any particular issues that may be of interest, and we will do our best to accommodate these requests.

We look forward to working with you and your families to make their homes safer and healthier. As always, we encourage you to refer any families that may desire to learn more about their home and the hazards which exist.



Kids and Guns in the Home

In an area where the first day of deer hunting season is a school holiday, it is no secret that there are a lot of gun owners. What we do not know is how many of them are stored safely. Every year we hear about accidents involving guns and too often those accidents result in death. Approximately one quarter of unintentional firearm injuries are to those between the ages of 15 to 24 years old and nearly 90% are male! Children of all ages are intrigued by guns and even those that are taught to respect them are drawn to them.

There are a number of ways to safely store firearms. First, regardless of where you store them, always have them unloaded with the ammunition secured in a separate location. Second, make use of a lock on the firearm itself such as a trigger lock or a cable lock. Third, secure the gun in a locked location such as a lockbox or safe. Fourth, keep any keys or combinations for locks hidden and/or out of reach. It may even be possible to get a free gun lock from your local police department through Project Child Safe.

Even if you do not have firearms in your home, teach your children about guns, repeatedly! Make sure that they know never to pick one up without your supervision and to tell an adult if they see one. Train the children to always treat guns as if they were loaded. Never point a gun in the direction of a person or pet and keep your finger off of the trigger. Emphasize that guns are not toys or props like on television, they are dangerous.

Talk to friends and family about their firearms if your child spends time in their home. Are they taking similar precautions to those above? Think about any other children that might come to your home. Do they have education or training like your child does?

For further reading or more information check out the links below:

Project Childsafe

<http://www.projectchildsafe.org/news/ten-tips-firearm-safety-your-home>

Safe Kids Worldwide

<https://www.safekids.org/tip/gun-safety-tips>

American Academy of Pediatrics

<https://www.healthychildren.org/English/safety-prevention/at-home/Pages/Handguns-in-the-Home.aspx>

Tip-Over Hazards in the Home

Tis the season when the weather gets colder and snowier, leading us to spend more time indoors where it's warm. This also includes children spending most of their play time in the home. One type hazard to be mindful of when children are playing in the home is the tip over hazard. When compared to other locations, the home is the most likely place for tip-over incidents to occur.

Children tend to be adventurous and like to climb on furniture. Sometimes these pieces of furniture can tip over, causing children to become injured or trapped underneath. Items such as televisions, dressers, and bookcases are some of the most common objects to tip over in the home. According to a 2018 report by the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC), there were an estimated annual average of 28,300 emergency department treated injuries due to tip-over incidents between 2015 and 2017. The same CPSC report also states that there were 542 reported fatalities associated with tip-over incidents between 2000 and 2017.

The age group most affected by tip-over injuries and fatalities is young children, specifically age five and under. According to the CPSC's "Anchor It" campaign, two-thirds of television and furniture tip-over fatalities involve toddlers. In addition, CPSC reports that 37% of television tip-over injuries involve children 2 to 3 years of age and 42% of furniture tip-over injuries involve children 1 to 2 years of age.

Here are some ways to prevent tip-over accidents in the home:

- Install anti-tip devices such as metal cables, brackets, or wall straps to secure furniture to the wall or floor
- Mount flat panel televisions to the wall or to sturdy pieces of furniture
- Use sturdy and appropriate furniture such as television stands and media centers designed specifically for televisions of certain types/sizes
- Follow manufacturer's instructions for installing and securing televisions and furniture
- Use multipurpose latches to prevent children from opening drawers, cabinets, or oven doors
- Remove tempting objects like toys and remote controls from high places so that children are less likely to climb furniture to reach them
- Actively supervise children at all times, especially in rooms with televisions and heavy furniture
- Place older box style televisions on sturdy, low bases and push them as far back as possible
- Store heavier objects on lower shelves or in lower drawers

For more information on tip-over hazards, please check out the links below to learn more:

Consumer Product Safety Commission's "Anchor It" campaign

<https://www.anchorit.gov/> and <https://www.cpsc.gov/Safety-Education/Safety-Education-Centers/Tipover-Information-Center/>

American Academy of Pediatrics

<https://www.healthychildren.org/English/safety-prevention/at-home/Pages/Preventing-Furniture-and-TV-Tip-Overs.aspx>





3190 Sassafras Way
Pittsburgh, PA 15201

Contact Us

Allegheny County Health
Department's Safe and
Healthy Homes Program

3190 Sassafras Way
Pittsburgh, PA 15201

412.350.4048
412.350.2792 (fax)

[Find Us Online](#)

