

ILLUSTRATION BY CARLOS APONTE/ART DEPARTMENT

Answers

Choices talked to Dorothy Drago, author of *From Crib to Kindergarten: The Essential Child Safety Guide*, for this article. Her comments are in the answers below.

HAZARD

1 Open window. Kids love to climb and are often curious about what's going on outside, but they can get hurt falling out a window. The solution: Close windows enough so that kids can't fall out or get stuck. An even better solution: Make sure kids aren't near windows by themselves.



HAZARD

2 Sofa cushions can suffocate. "Soft chairs and sofas are comfortable for sitting, but don't put a baby to sleep on them," Drago says. "The soft surface can be a suffocation hazard. When babies need a nap, put them in their crib."

HAZARD

3 Vase near the table edge. Anything fragile can hurt someone if it's broken. The solution: Move objects away from the edges of tables and counters, and if possible, remove them altogether and store them in a closet.

HAZARD

4 Board game pieces left out. Infants will put anything in their mouths. Why? It's part of how they learn about their environment. But babies and small kids can choke on dice and small game pieces. Legos and small action figures are also choking hazards. The solution: Put away board games and toys when



they're not being played with.

HAZARD

5 The table has sharp edges on which kids could injure themselves.

The solution: Put protective caps on the edges. If caps aren't available, try a seat cushion.



HAZARD

6 Video game console wires pose a hazard. Someone could trip over them or several tugs on them could pull the console out. A baby could chew on the wires too. The solution: Disconnect video game consoles that aren't being used.

HAZARD

7 Electrical outlets are exposed.

Curious kids can shove paper clips, bobby pins, and pencil tips into outlets, putting themselves at risk of suffering an electrical shock. The solution: Put covers on outlets. If covers aren't available, put a pillow in front of the outlet.



HAZARD

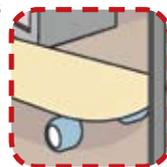
8 The bookcase isn't securely attached to the wall.

"If a bookcase isn't secured to a wall, it can fall over when a child attempts to climb it," Drago says. The solution: Ask parents to ensure that bookcases are firmly attached to a wall or adequately stabilized by other means.

HAZARD

9 Outdoor toys and sports equipment are inside.

Playing with balls, bats, skateboards, and jump ropes can lead to an injury. The solution: Keep them outside.



HAZARD

10 Unguarded staircase.

Babies and toddlers can hurt themselves climbing on stairs. Even older kids can get injured when goofing off on stairs. The solution: Put up gates to prevent small kids from climbing stairs and, if older kids want to jump around, send them outdoors.



Other Hazards

- Unlocked liquor cabinet
- Plants with long branches that can be pulled
- Leftover food that's out in the open
- TV on an unstable table or stand: "A child can pull the TV down and be seriously injured or killed," Drago says.
- Art supplies like scissors, pencils and pens being left out
- Dangling cords from blinds

