

HOME SAFETY CHECKLIST FOR GRANDPARENTS OF CHILDREN 0-4 YEARS OF AGE

Did you know that in Australia, childhood injuries are a leading cause of death and reason for admission to hospital? More children die from unintentional injuries (36%) than cancer (19%) and diseases of the nervous system (11%) combined (ABS 2006). The main causes of unintentional childhood deaths from injuries are vehicle accidents, drowning and accidental suffocation (mainly from unsafe sleeping environments). The main types of injuries requiring hospital admission are from falls (usually from furniture and play equipment); scalds (usually from hot water, drinks and food); and accidental poisonings (usually from medications, cleaning products and alcohol). Children 0-4 years generally, but particularly children 1-2 years of age, are vulnerable to injuries as they begin to explore their environment, but are unable to recognise danger, or take action to keep themselves safe. Nearly 60% of injuries in children 0-4 years happen in the home and backyard. Young children are vulnerable in homes because homes are designed for adults. Heights, space, and structures are built for adult use and comfort, but these often present hazards to children

There are positive steps that you as a grandparent can take to make sure your home is safer for your young grandchildren. By choosing to undertake this simple home safety audit, you are on your way to identifying and addressing many common safety hazards around your home and outdoor areas. Most childhood injuries can be prevented; they are not accidents, chance events, or an inevitable part of growing up. By making changes to your home, buying safer products and providing effective adult supervision, you can reduce the risk of your grandchildren being injured. If you cannot afford to make the necessary changes to your home, you should talk to your grandchild's parents. For more information on how to make your home safer, please contact **Kidsafe SA** on 08 8161 6318 or www.kidsafesa.com.au. In addition, many grandparents have said that the best thing they ever did to help them be more confident in caring for their young grandchild is a basic first aid course. You can contact St John or Red Cross for information about these types of courses.

How to use this Checklist:

- Take the checklist and a pen with you, and walk from room to room in your home, as well as the outdoor areas. As you go, answer the questions.
- **REMEMBER** to look at your home from the eye level of your young grandchildren. You will be amazed at how different it looks from their level and perspective!
- The following checklist is a general guide only. Every home is different, so some items may not apply.



GENERAL SAFETY

	YES	NO
Is there an electrical safety switch (circuit breaker) to prevent electric shock?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you have working smoke alarms fitted in the house?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are safety plugs fitted in unused power points?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are appliances, and plugs in good condition? (No frayed cords or damaged plugs)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have long cords been bound with twist ties, or extra cord hidden?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are there barrier gates on steps, stairs, and changes in floor levels to prevent falls?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are all railings/balustrade free of footholds that your grandchild can climb?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you have a home fire escape plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

GENERAL SAFETY (CONTINUED)

- | | YES | NO |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Are all mouse and rat traps/baits inaccessible to your young grandchild? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Do you have a dog? If so, do you always supervise your dog with your grandchild?
(If you can not supervise, then it is important to separate your dog from your grandchild. Never leave a child alone with a dog, no matter how friendly it is) | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |



KITCHEN

- | | YES | NO |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Do your appliances have short cords that do not dangle over the bench? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Do you use the back hot plates and turn pot handles around to prevent pots being pulled from the hot plate, or do you have a stove guard? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Do you have a child-resistant lock on your oven door? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Are matches, lighters, knives, scissors, and other dangerous objects stored in a place where your grandchild cannot reach them? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Are plastic bags kept out of reach, or tied in the middle? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Is the kettle/jug out of your grandchild's reach? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Do you have locks on cupboard doors and drawers where dangerous household goods (e.g. cleaning products) are kept or do you store them out of reach? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Is the high chair stable and does it have a 5 point harness to restrain your grandchild safely? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Do you have a fire blanket and a fire extinguisher located near an exit? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Are all medications stored safely i.e. do you have a locked medicine cupboard, a lock on the fridge door or a lockable storage box in the fridge? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Is the microwave positioned out of reach of your grandchild? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Do you use placements, rather than tablecloths? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Are cups of hot tea/coffee kept out of reach of your grandchild? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Do you keep the dishwasher closed at all times? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |



BATHROOM

- | | YES | NO |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Are medicines and razors kept in a locked cupboard, or out of reach? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Are the shampoos, soaps, and cosmetics kept out of reach? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Are hair dryers and electric razors unplugged when not in use? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Is your grandchild constantly supervised by an adult when in the bathroom? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Is there a child-resistant lock on the toilet or bathroom door? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Have you removed all chemicals from the toilet and bathroom floor? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Is the hot water delivery temperature for your bathroom at a maximum of 50°C, or do you have tap protectors fitted? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Does the bath have a non-slip surface or non-slip mats? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Is the bath water temperature always "tested" before putting your grandchild in (start with cold, then hot, then finish with cold)? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Is the bath always kept empty when not in use? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |



LAUNDRY

YES NO

Are cleaners, bleaches, and detergents stored out of reach, or in a lockable cupboard?

Are all buckets, the sink and washing machine empty when not in use?

Does the top loading washing machine switch off when the machine is opened?

Are front loading washing machines and dryer doors securely closed to prevent your grandchild opening them and climbing in?



GRANDCHILD'S/ SPARE BEDROOM

YES NO

Is your grandchild's bed/cot safe? (children under 9 years should not sleep in bunk beds, and cots need to meet Australian Standards. Check the cot rails are between 50 mm and 95 mm apart to avoid entrapment of their head)

Does the cot mattress fit snugly to avoid your grandchild becoming wedged?

Is the cot free of soft toys, bumpers, and pillows?

Is the cot away from the window and power points?

Are electrical appliances and their cords out of reach of your grandchild?

Are curtain and blind cords secured out of reach of your grandchild?

Is everything needed close to the baby change table, as it is important never to leave a baby unattended on a change table?

Are the toys suitable for your grandchild's age? (e.g. no loose small parts that could pose a choking hazard)

Are toys kept where your grandchild can reach them without climbing on furniture?

Is all top heavy furniture, such as bookcases and tall-boy drawers, secured to the wall to prevent them from tipping over, if your grandchild climbs on them?



LIVING AREAS

YES NO

Are sharp edges on tables and furniture covered?

Are blind and curtain cords secured out of reach of your grandchild?

Are glass doors protected by safety film, colourful stickers, or made of safety glass?

Is alcohol stored in a lockable cupboard, or stored out of reach?

Are cigarettes, ashtrays, matches, and lighters out of reach?

Are hot drinks placed well out of reach of your grandchild?

Are there child resistant fire screens attached to the wall around fire places, fuel stoves, and heaters?

Are heaters kept at least 1 metre away from curtains, furniture, or other flammable material?

LIVING AREAS (CONTINUED)

Are large televisions secured to prevent toppling over onto your grandchild?

YES NO

Are all breakable items removed, or moved so they are out of reach of your grandchild?



BACKYARD

YES NO

Is your young grandchild supervised at all times while playing outside?

Is your grandchild's play area separated from the driveway, and is access to the driveway and the street/road restricted?

Are the ignition keys removed from all vehicles, and the vehicles locked?

Do you have the correct child restraints in your car?

Do you use the child-proof locks on the car doors?

Is the swimming pool or spa fully enclosed by a safety fence with a functioning self latching gate, and with nothing near the fence that could be used to climb on?

Is the backyard free of drowning hazards? e.g. uncovered ponds, pet's water containers, buckets, tanks, troughs, dams etc.

(*note that young children can drown in as little as 5 cm water)

Is the play equipment stable, secured, and in good condition?

Is there a soft surface under play equipment to cushion falls? e.g. not located on surfaces such as concrete, pavers or gravel

Does your grandchild wear a helmet and protective gear when riding bikes, scooters, skates, skateboards or rollerblades?

Can the shed/garage/workshop be locked?

Are all garden tools, mowers, chainsaws and other dangerous tools locked away?

Do you make sure that your grandchildren are well away from the lawn mower when mowing the lawns to prevent them being struck by flying stones and other objects?

Are pesticides, paints, chemicals and other poisons stored in tightly covered & labelled original containers out of reach of your grandchild?

Are ladders stored safely so that your grandchild cannot climb them?

Are rain water tanks sealed securely and any ladders removed?

Are garden statues and birdbaths cemented in to prevent a crushing hazard?



FARM YARD and RURAL SAFETY

Farms are a unique environment, and can be very exciting for young children. Farms are not only a place to live and a place to play, but they are also a workplace. Many children are seriously injured each year on farms. As grandparents, you have a special responsibility to keep your grandchild safe on your farm. Your grandchild relies on you for protection.

YES NO

Do you know where your grandchild is at all times?

Is there a safe playing space outside which is visible from the house?

FARM YARD and RURAL SAFETY (CONTINUED)**YES NO**

Do you have a fence around the house with a self-latching gate to keep your grandchild close to the house, and away from machinery and livestock?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you check outside for snakes before letting your grandchild into the yard?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you always stay with your grandchild when outside in a playpen?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have you removed old machinery, junk, tractor tyres, and woodpiles from where your grandchild plays?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are firearms stored unloaded and locked away in the gun safe?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are guns kept out of reach of your grandchild, and unloaded, when being transported in a vehicle?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are fuels tanks locked, and other highly flammable substances stored safely?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are agricultural chemicals stored in their original containers, correctly labelled and safely stored?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are silo doors locked, with ladders removed?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you let workers know when your grandchild is on the farm?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you check your grandchild is a safe distance away before starting a tractor or any other farm machinery or equipment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have you removed all keys from farm vehicles and machinery when not in use?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have you the correct child restraints in your farm utility/car?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are you able to lock sheds and workshops?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is a fitted helmet worn each time your grandchild goes horse riding, or rides a bicycle?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are water tanks sealed and ladders removed?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you keep your grandchild away from All Terrain Vehicles (ATV) and farm bikes? (Children under 8 years of age and these types of vehicles do not mix. Many burns and crush injuries result when these types of vehicles overturn on young riders or passengers)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are animal pens and stockyards inaccessible to your grandchild?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are working dogs kept securely away from your grandchild?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you always supervise your grandchild around any animal?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you ensure your grandchild is supervised at a safe distance from where hay is being cut, baled and stacked?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you always supervise your grandchild around water hazards? (This includes pool, ponds, dams, wells, tanks, animal troughs, irrigation channels, effluent ponds etc. Children should never be left alone unsupervised near water)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have you established a clear set of rules for your grandchild to follow and are you consistent in applying those rules?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Consider making changes to items that received a NO response for a safer home and farm!

**If you have any questions, call Kidsafe SA on (08) 8161 6318
between 9am and 4pm Monday to Friday
or go to our website www.kidsafesa.com.au**