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IS YOUR HOME SAFE FOR BABY?



effectivemommy.com
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Welcome!

Congratulations on becoming a new parent! Yes, whether you're already holding your baby in your arms, or your baby is just a tiny dot on an ultrasound, or anywhere in between - you ARE a parent.

I'm Dr. Victoria Nolasco, and I'm a developmental and behavioral pediatrician and a mom too. When I became a parent and started looking through parenting blogs and Instagram accounts, I was dumbfounded by all the products out there being marketed to parents that can be downright dangerous.

I also noticed that many parents are stressed creating the "perfect" nursery for babies. Pinterest and Instagram are full of photos of elegant nurseries that can make our own efforts feel like a toddler's first art project.

I want you to know that you don't need the perfect Pinterest-worthy nursery to be a good parent. YOU decide what's right for you and not anyone else. The important thing is creating a safe space for your baby and filling it with love. What makes your home perfect? It's you - your presence and your connection with your little one.

That's why I prepared this guide for you.

Let this help you as you lovingly prepare your home for your bundle of joy. Print out the checklists and keep them in the same place as your baby shopping lists, or have them handy on your phone.

Some of the tips here may feel "advanced" while you're preparing to welcome a newborn. *"Keep items out of reach? Isn't it a long time before my baby can reach for objects?"* Trust me - that time will go by in the blink of an eye! It's best to consider these now, before the sleepless nights and endless diaper changes get in the way.

Here's to the exciting times ahead!

With you in parenting,

Victoria



Babyproofing

Throughout the Home

- Are the floor coverings safe, with no tripping hazards?
- Are there barriers near stairs to stop falls?
- Are there safety plugs fitted in power points?
- Are heavy pieces of furniture secured (bookshelves, stove, TV, cabinet)?
- Have extra long cords been shortened and extra cords hidden?
- Is there a list of emergency numbers (police, fire station, poison control unit)?
- Do you have a home escape plan in case of calamities?
- Are there smoke detectors and carbon monoxide detectors and alarms?
- Other things I have noticed

Action Items

Babyproofing

Your Baby's Sleep and Changing Areas

- Are the slats on your baby's crib NOT more than 2 3/8 inches (6 cm) apart?
- Is the crib free of loose blankets, soft comforters, or pillows?
- Is the sleep surface a tight-fitting, firm mattress and fitted sheet, with no gaps between the mattress and the sides of the crib?
- If baby has a mobile, is it out of baby's reach, and are the strings shorter than 7 inches (18 cm)?
- Is the changing table sturdy, with a 2-inch (5-cm) guardrail around all sides?
- Are diapering supplies within reach of the changing table?
- Are curtains, drapes, and anything with cords kept away from baby's crib?
- Other things I have noticed

"Keep the baby's sleep area in the same room where you sleep for the first six months, or ideally, the first year." -American Academy of Pediatrics

Action Items

Babyproofing

Your Baby's Play Area

- Are toys kept in a box or basket without a lid (or a lid with hinges that do not pinch and that keep it open)?
- Are all toys large enough so they don't fit inside the cardboard tube of a toilet paper roll?
- Do stuffed toys have tight seams and secure edges?
- Are details in stuffed toys securely embroidered to avoid loose parts and choking hazards?
- Have all toys passed safety standards and labelled as "nontoxic"?
- Other things I have noticed

AVOID the following items:

- x baby walkers
- x "sensory" kits and "sensory" bins with choking hazards
- x beads, marbles and anything with small or loose parts
- x toys with button batteries and small magnets

Action Items

Babyproofing

Living Room, Dining Room, Family Room and other areas of the home

- Do the power points need cover?
- Has the furniture any sharp corners?
- Are the blind cords out of reach?
- Are the glass doors protected with safety film or color stickers?
- Are rugs and mats secured with non-slip backing and in good order?
- Are hot drinks placed well out of reach of children?
- Are matches, lighters and other flammable items out of reach?
- Other things I have noticed

Action Items

Babyproofing

Bathroom and Laundry

- Are poisons including cosmetics locked up, out of sight and out of reach?
- Are razors and hair dryers stored out of sight and out of reach?
- Are soap, shampoo, and lotion bottles tightly sealed and out of reach?
- Are all medicines locked up, out of sight and out of reach?
- Is the bath emptied immediately after use?
- Do the floor, bath, and shower have a non slip surface?
- Is home water temperature set to less than 120F?
- Other things I have noticed

Action Items

Safe Play

Contrary to what some may think, if you're conscious about safety, it will foster a child's independence and help make play more fun. Take care of safety basics, so you can worry less and focus on the enjoyable part.

- Childproof your home. There should be no hazards such as loose electrical cords in areas where your child is walking or playing. Read these very important articles from healthychildren.org on [baby safety](#) and on [childproofing your home](#). (If you are unable to click on these links, search for these topics in the healthychildren.org site.)
- Whether indoors or outdoors, provide a safe space to play. Play fences can be a sanity saver for the busy parent of an active baby or toddler. Use gates on stairways. Don't leave chairs next to a table or window. NEVER leave your child alone near water (even something like a pail of water), not even for a moment.
- Even during independent play, ALWAYS stay within sight and hearing distance of your child.
- Above all, use your instinct and common sense. When in doubt, discuss it with your pediatrician.

Do NOT use toys that are unsafe or that are choking hazards.

As a general rule, a toy is a choking hazard if it contains small parts, or if the toy is small enough for the child to swallow. You can use the cardboard tube in the middle of a toilet paper roll as a rough guide. If the toy or any of its parts will fit in the tube, it is a potential choking hazard. These are some examples of choking hazards. (This information is from [this article](#) in healthychildren.org.)

- small balls and marbles
- balloons
- small hair bows, barrettes, or rubber bands
- pen or marker caps
- button type batteries
- refrigerator magnets
- beads - and those that inflate in water are especially dangerous

Also, **do NOT use unsafe items like walkers and trampolines**. These have resulted in many injuries and even deaths. Your kids will develop skills even better without using these!

Next Steps

I'd love to continue guiding you through your baby's first few years! Here's what to do next:

- Continue watching for emails from Effective Mommy. I'll share my favorite parenting tips and stories and deliver them straight to your inbox.
- Check out Effective Mommy on Facebook and Instagram.
- Get our [Smart Happy Baby Kit](#), which includes a masterclass and guides for baby's first year. A group of us pediatricians got together and created this for you, to help you take the stress and guesswork out of being a new parent.

References:

From healthychildren.org by the American Academy of Pediatrics

[Make Baby's Room Safe: A Parent Checklist](#)

[How to Keep Your Sleeping Baby Safe](#)

[How to Buy Safe Toys](#)

[Safety for Your Child: Birth to Six Months](#)

[Bright Futures Pocket Guide](#)

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