

## Child Electrical Safety

Electricity is an essential technology in today's world. Without it, people get sick, food becomes unavailable, and hazards are presented to families when they go without electricity.

Electricity does not just make sure that your lights stay on, it runs the essence and heart of your home.

We can't live without it. But electricity can be very dangerous, particularly when there are small children around.

All of the things that encompass electrical appliances and items that require electricity are all very interesting and fascinating to little fingers and tiny mouths.

How do you protect your children from the electricity that you need to run your household?

There are a few basic things that you need to know, and implement in your home, to maximize child electrical safety in your home.



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### Child Safety Devices

Using child safety mechanisms is a great starting point when you are implementing electrical safety for your children in the home.

These can be purchased at any children's supply store or store that provides child safety items like Wal-Mart, Toys 'R Us, or Target.

You want to ensure that every outlet in your home is covered with a child safety plate so that interested fingers don't go wandering into those fascinating outlet holes and sockets.

You can purchase socket covers that will completely cover any socket that you are not using, or purchase sliding plate switches that only you can maneuver when you are plugging items in.

Other child safety devices to protect your child from electricity problems include pull-ropes that you can attach to a child's light switch in their bedroom.

This will give your child some freedom and independence when it comes to switching on or off their own light switches.

Using a pull-rope will allow your child this freedom while keeping them safe from the light switch itself.

You can also purchase bump lights that are lights that act as buttons that are battery operated.

Here your child simply needs to bump the light or press the button to turn on the light that they need without ever coming into contact with electricity.

Many come in a wide variety of fun selections that will even match your child's room theme.

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### Electric Baseboard Heaters

If you have an older home, you also need to consider the dangers of electric baseboard heaters when it comes to child electrical safety.

When children start crawling or moving around, these items are directly in both their line of vision and touch.

Unfortunately, there aren't any child proof safety products available to help you keep your child away from these hotbeds, but you can instill preventive safety measures.

Block the heaters as much as you can without blocking the pathway of heat.

Rearrange your furniture to hide the heaters and keep them out of sight and out of mind for your little ones.

You may also consider creating large playcenters in the middle of the room with their most interesting toys in the center of the rooms and away from the heaters.

The fortunate thing about baseboard heaters is that their fascination is only temporary. Once your child is able to walk they will find other things in the house much more interesting.

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## Safety Tips

Here are some child electrical safety tips you can implement in your home to maximize the safety of electrical issues in your house and to keep your children safe:

- All electrical outlets should have face plates and there should be no open outlets in your home. Go the extra step and attach sliding child safety plates for outlets that are in use frequently, and covers for those that are never used.
- Teach your children the basics of outlet safety. They should know not to put objects into the outlets and not to touch anything that has a cord attached. If you think your children need help learning this, post pictures by any item or appliance with a circle and a cross going through it to illustrate that these are "NO TOUCH" items!
- Make sure that all wire boxes and electrical boxes in your home are locked and that the key is in a secure location that only adults have access to.
- Electrical safety goes outdoors as well. Do not allow your children to climb trees that are close to power lines, towers, or utility poles. By the same token, do not allow your children to fly kites unsupervised or anywhere near power lines or electrical towers.
- Show your children how to unplug cords when they are old enough. They should know to pull the cord out by the plug, and not by the cord.
- Teach your children that the fun power tools that daddy plays with are not toys to play with. Keep them locked up and out of reach. If your child has a true fascination for these tools, buy play tools that match the ones at home so that they can play grownup fix-it things just like Daddy.
- Keep any electrical cords in the house tied up or out of sight in high traffic areas. Tripping on cords is a safety and electrical hazard, and there are tie-backs and clips that you can purchase to make sure these cords are out of sight, and out of mind.
- If you are using a space heater, keep the cords out of the way so that children can not pull or yank on them. Have the heater against the wall so that the cords do not interest your children.
- You should not have any damaged cords or electrical cords that are frayed in the house. Discard and replace any of these cords as soon as you notice them.
- Do not allow your children to attempt to replace light bulbs, even if they are older. If they are in their teen years, it will be safe for them to do so, but ensure they know not to change a light bulb until it is cool and that the lamp is physically turned off.
- Do not have night lights near curtains or bedding in your child's room. This not only represents a fun thing to touch, but it is also a fire hazard if your child's bedding catches onto the night light.
- Do not have appliances in the bathroom. Use curling irons, straighteners, and hair dryers in the adult bedrooms with mirrors. By the same token, you want to teach your children not to touch any appliances if their hands are wet. If this is a concern, again you can post pictures of dry hands, or pictures of wet hands crossed out near appliances that children may touch.
- Unplug all appliances when they are not being used. Appliances like hair dryers or even coffee makers are very interesting to children with all their colored buttons. Unplug them and keep cords out of reach.

It is our responsibility as parents to ensure our homes are fully equipped with child proofing of any safety hazards.

The most important principle about child electrical safety that we can instill is to teach our children properly.

Even young and small children can learn safety rules through the use of pictures, No-No, and phrases like “look, don’t touch!”.

Teaching our children these skills early will keep them safe and hazard free so that we won’t have to worry, and will also teach them valuable skills that they will take with them when they have their own home.

It is NEVER too early to start teaching our children about electrical safety, and it may just save their life.