



**FIG 11-12** Special plastic caps in electrical sockets prevent young fingers from exploring dangerous areas. (©2011 [Photos.com](#), a division of Getty Images. All rights reserved.)

Scald burns are the most common type of thermal injury in children. A scalding burn is often caused by high-temperature tap water, which children come in contact with as a result of turning on the hot-water faucet, falling into a bathtub of hot water, pulling hot pots onto themselves, or suffering deliberate abuse. Limiting household water temperatures to less than 49° C (120° F) is highly recommended. At this temperature, it takes 10 minutes of exposure to the water to cause a full-thickness burn. Conversely, water temperatures of 54° C (130° F), the usual setting of most water heaters, expose household members to the risk of full-thickness burns within 30 seconds. Nurses can help prevent such burns by advising parents of this common household danger and recommending that they readjust their water heaters to a safe temperature (see burns, [Chapter 13](#)).

Sunburns are a year-round concern in certain regions. Children spend a large amount of time outdoors, and their increased mobility makes it difficult to prevent sun exposure. Sunburn can be prevented by applying a sunscreen with a sun protection factor (SPF) of 15 or greater, dressing in protective clothing (wide-brimmed hat, protective cotton clothing with a tight weave), and avoiding sun exposure between 10 AM and 2 PM.