

# The Wellness Family

Dr. Baric Keeps You Informed

## Childproofing Your Life

When asked if your home is "childproofed" you will more than likely consider the basics: safety plugs in the outlets, bumpers on the corners of tables and safety latches on the cabinets; but there is so much more to childproofing your home.

### *The Necessity*

Children are natural born explorers, and while every little bump and bruise may not seem like a big deal, they are all repetitive stress injuries that can add up to an adult spinal problem. Of course, we can set aside the Chiropractic facts but it doesn't change the truth: we need to be childproofing our homes.

In the past ten years the leading cause of death for children age 1 to 18 has been unintentional or accidental injury, totaling well over 10,000 deaths per year. No other cause of death even comes close to the numbers caused by accidents. If we want to protect our children we need to take preventative measures.

### *Childproofing Your Home*

When it comes to making your home a safe place for your toddler, you usually follow the basics:

1. Safety plugs/covers in outlets
2. Bumpers on the table corners and fireplaces
3. Safety latches on cabinets
4. Baby gates at stairs – regardless of whether it's two stairs or a flight of ten, a baby gate is a necessity since every fall your child takes is another minor injury to their still developing spine
5. Door knob covers or door locks – keep toddlers out of rooms that haven't been childproofed (example: bedrooms of parents and older siblings)

These are just the basics; childproofing our home takes more than just a couple dollars worth of plastic and a few baby gates.

The first step to really childproofing your home is to get on your hands and knees and look at your environment from your child's viewpoint. Crawl around the living areas of your home and look for potential hazards.

- In the living room, look for low corners, cords that can be tugged on, vases or decorative glassware items that are within reach as these can break and cause serious lacerations, unsteady bookshelves or tables and unstable TV carts that can be knocked over causing serious injury, etc.

- In the kitchen, small pieces of food that can be choked on (most often found in corners by sinks and stoves), cabinets that can be opened, cleaning supplies, etc.
- In the bathrooms, look for shampoos, soaps, toothpaste, makeup, vitamins, lotions, and other like items that can be swallowed by a curious child. Many vitamins look like candy, and shampoos are being made that smell like fruit smoothies, but can be deadly to a toddler if swallowed

It's important to consider your child's reach and be sure to keep unsafe objects beyond it. Never think that



*"The leading cause of death for children age 1 to 18 is unintentional or accidental injury..."*

something will "taste bad" or that your child "knows better"; this is a mistake that will risk your child's safety.

### *Childproofing Bath Time*

Some children absolutely love bath time: warm water, toys in the tub and bubbles galore; but is this safe for your child? Studies have shown that the over-usage of bubble bath can lead to yeast infections in young girls. The dyes and perfumes in the liquid can cause a fluctuation in the acidic balance of the vagina causing the fungus candida albicans to grow.

The toys in the tub are also a potential problem. Many water toys are made with openings to allow them to be soft, pliable and squeezable; however, these openings are also a way for water to get inside the toy that cannot be easily expelled. If left, this can cause mold to grow inside the toy. To avoid this problem, be sure to wash your child's bath toys with vinegar and water regularly and let them air dry completely before storing.

When choosing a bath soap for your child, remember that anti-bacterial isn't the best choice. Our bodies have  
*continued on page 2*

### INSIDE THIS ISSUE

**Page 1** Childproofing Your Life

good-bacteria that protect us and anti-bacterial soaps wash away the good with the bad. Instead consider shopping at your local health food store where you can find better alternatives. Soaps are now being made using pure plant and seed oils that contain gentle ingredients to nourish and cleanse without drying the skin.

### ***Childproofing Your Environment***

Today there are more than 80,000 chemicals registered for commercial use and an estimated 2,000 new ones are introduced every year. We must consider what this is doing to our kids since there is no pre-market safety testing required under any federal law and of the 15,000 most commonly used chemicals, more than 80% haven't been tested for potential health effects on children. Even fewer have been tested for their health effects when they interact with each other, but that's how our children are being exposed to them.

We really don't know what effect this is having but we do know that childhood disease and disabilities that have links to toxic exposures are on the rise. Consider how many children are suffering from learning and behavioral disorders, asthma, allergies and even cancer. The fact is, our health is the result of many factors but toxic exposure should be taken into special consideration since it's preventable.

### ***Childproofing Your Floors***

Chemicals are everywhere, not just under the kitchen counter. Synthetic carpeting has chemicals in its adhesives, glue strips, padding and mothproofing. Many of the chemicals used in carpets are volatile organic compounds (VOCs), which vaporize or "offgas" easily into the air. Some VOCs found in carpets include benzene, styrene, toluene, xylene and formaldehyde.

Consider the risks carefully before putting new carpet in a home with a crawling child. While the "offgassing" from

carpets decreases significantly several months after installation, carpets can emit these fumes for as long as five years. Floors made of wood, ceramic tile, cork and other materials will be your best choice but, when necessary, look for carpets made with natural fibers such as organically grown wool, cotton, hemp or jute. These will be free of synthetic chemicals.

### ***Childproofing Your Plants***

Many young parents don't realize that children will typically put anything in their mouths once. It doesn't even have to look appetizing. Therefore, one of the most important steps of childproofing a home is making sure that all plants are out of your child's reach.

While plants are beautiful, many are poisonous and should be kept out of your child's reach; including falling leaves, blossoms and petals.

Another danger associated with plants is fertilizer and potting soil. Fertilizers contain chemicals that when ingested can cause illness or even death and potting soil will typically contain rocks and pebbles that create a choking hazard. The wisest decision, for your child's safety, is to keep plants at least five feet off the ground or not in the house at all.

### ***In Summary***

While it's not possible to safe guard your child against all dangers, an ounce of prevention is truly worth a pound of cure. Speak with your Family Wellness Chiropractor to learn more about childproofing your life.

---

Find out what toxic chemicals are in your local environment by visiting [www.scorecard.org](http://www.scorecard.org). Type in your zip code and find right-to-know data on toxic releases in the air, water and soil.

For a list of poisonous plants with pictures visit [www.poison.org/prevent/plants.asp](http://www.poison.org/prevent/plants.asp).

For more information on the facts included in this newsletter visit [healthychild.org/resources/article](http://healthychild.org/resources/article)

---

*Dear Parent,*

*Dr. Baric is dedicated to providing you with the absolute best in family wellness care. Take a moment today to ask your Family Wellness Chiropractor any questions you may have regarding making your home a safe environment for your children.*

This newsletter is provided to you by:

***The Chiropractic Offices of  
Dr. Robert Baric  
at 270 101 Cornerstone Dr.  
Cary, NC 27519  
919.461.0046***