



EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE  
PROGRAM (EAP)

## Keeping Kids and Adults Safe at Home (1 min read)



### WorkLife Services Newsletter October 2022

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Children have fun exploring, and you can keep them safe by controlling the household terrain.

#### **Fire**

Practice two escape routes from your home.

Install smoke detectors. Test them once a month and replace the batteries at least once a year.

## **Drownings**

When a young child is in the tub, stay in the room. If the phone rings, take the child with you.

When you are mopping, empty the bucket as soon as you are finished.

## **Poisonings**

Store poisonous cleaners and medicine out of children's reach. Some products that are safe for adults are hazardous to children.

Post the number of your local poison control center near your phone.

## **Falls**

Stay close when babies are on furniture, including beds and sofas.

Use safety gates at the top and bottom of stairs.

Move furniture away from windows.

## **Choking**

Keep small objects out of the reach of young children. Round and hard foods are especially hazardous for children under 4.

## **Hot water**

To prevent scalding your child, set your water heater's temperature at 120 degrees. Gas water heaters built since 1990 have a mark or arrow indicating this setting on the thermostat dial. On older gas heaters, this generally is the lowest, or "energy-conserving," setting. Refer to the owner's manual.

The thermostat on most electric water heaters is inside the unit and should be set by the electric company or a repair person.

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## **Basics of Home Safety for Aging Relatives**

Opening your home to an aging parent is one of the most beautiful loving things you can do for them. It may not be the best option for everyone, but if you find yourself taking that route, there are a few things you'll need to take care of to decrease their risk of falls or other injuries in your home. Again, it is advised to spend some real time researching this as well as assessing bigger questions about the construction of your house, such as: Are your doorways wide enough for a walker or wheelchair to fit through? Or will you need to install a ramp or two if stairs are an issue? It may warrant more help than what you can do on your own. If this is the case, you can get help from a Certified Aging in Place Specialist.

But there are many simple steps you can take. Consider these 2 basic areas as a starting point for reducing risk in your home:

### **1. Fall Prevention**

The biggest risk of injury at home in seniors is falling. You can take these steps to reduce those risks:

- Declutter all pathways, in every room. Break habits of dropping clothes, piling up shoes, etc. in walkways. Avoid plants, decorative display tables in hallways, etc. Always keep floors as clear as possible.
- Remove rugs, especially those that are thin and have little traction.
- Use strips of brightly colored tape to mark areas where the floor may change from tile to carpet, carpet to wood, etc.
- Improve the lighting in your home. Things that you can see clearly may go unnoticed to them and pose fall risks.

### **2. Make bathroom and kitchen more accessible and safer.**

- Install an accessible shower or tub that does not have to be stepped over. Also install rails and support bars (or have a professional help you if you're unsure how).

- Make sure all the pertinent contents of the bathroom or kitchen cabinets/drawers are clearly marked so they don't have trouble reading the labels and use the wrong items by mistake.
- Also make sure your faucets are clearly marked with "hot" and "cold" labels to avoid scalding.