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**Childproofing Your Home.**

**By Willie Reynolds**

There comes a time in the life of every parent when the relatively easy period of the newborn times

makes way for the harder work as the baby becomes mobile. At this stage, it will no longer be possible to lay your child down on a blanket on the floor surrounded by her toys and be assured that she will remain safe. Her advanced abilities ensure that she is now well able to get into situations unforeseen a few short months before, and the consequence is that it is time to child proof your house.

Childproofing can occur in several stages, depending on the mobility of your little one. Most babies will start out there movement phase by rolling from location to location. This offers more reaction time for the parent, but do not be deceived into thinking that the next move on your baby's part will be easily anticipated. Even this limited form of mobility can be deceptive in its range and speed. You will want to make sure that any stairways are closed through the use of some kind of barrier. Gates that lock into place, attached to the wall by hinges, are the safest route to go. Do not rely on gate brands that lock into place by a lever and push themselves into the wall; an active child will have no trouble in pushing it over eventually, and the period when they are developing the strength to do this will inevitably lull the parent into a state of false security.

During the initial stages of movement, you will also want to make sure that you frequently vacuum and check your floor for small objects that could present a choking hazard. Babies in this stage rely on taste as perhaps their main sense, so any object they find is liable to go straight into the mouth.

As your baby starts to crawl, you will want to take further measures in childproofing your home. Your baby will now be able to cover ground with increased speed, so it is best not to take any items that you usually would just leave on the floor for granted, even if it is just for the second it takes to grab the phone. The added height your child receives from this point will also mean that it is time to raise any house plants to a higher level. You can also count of the baby to figure out a way to open most lower cupboard doors, so make sure to buy child locks that prevent her from swinging them open.

Remember that with the crawling phase near, it will not be long until your baby is hauling herself up onto other objects. Make sure that ay hard surfaces such as fireplace mantle edges are well covered to avoid head injuries. Corners on coffee tables and other furniture should also be padded in order to

## Childproofing Your Home.

prevent a bad bump.

Childproofing your house is essential in protecting both your baby and your belongings from harm. Remember, if your baby can get into it, the odds are pretty good that she will get into it. Curiosity is a natural part of development, and it is your responsibility to make sure your child develops in the safest environment possible.

Willie Reynolds is a parent, and runs a website for parents at:

<http://parentingstation.com>

### **Childproofing Your Home**

#### **By Sarah Veda**

One of the most important steps you can take to prepare for a baby is childproofing your home. Little hands will get into things you never even thought of, so being prepared is critical to your child's safety. Here are some areas of your home that need attention to get you started on your childproofing project.

- Electrical Outlets - You can buy inexpensive covers to keep little fingers out of your outlets, or simply put a piece of furniture in front of them.
- Cords - Be they electrical cords or cords for blinds or draperies, they are a risk. Cords from blinds or draperies are a choking hazard, and electrical cords can cause a shock, or can cause baby to pull something heavy (such as the lamp at the other end of that cord) down on top of them
- Rickety furniture - Be certain that you don't have unstable furniture around. When your baby begins pulling up, he could pull the furniture right down on top of him. Sometimes it's necessary to attach furniture, such as top heavy bookcases to the wall.
- Plants - Some houseplants are poisonous, so be certain to keep plants out of baby's reach.
- Radiators - If you live in an older home with radiators, you will need to put barriers in front of them or radiator covers over them during winter months.
- Fireplace - Be certain your fireplace is equipped with a grill or glass doors to protect your child's little fingers.
- Stairs - Install baby gates to keep your little one from tumbling down the stairs.
- Cabinet doors and drawers - Install childproof latches so that your baby is unable to open drawers and doors, particularly those where you store sharp objects or cleaning supplies.
- Railings - Be certain that any railings in your home, such as those on your stairs, have no more than a five inch gap between any vertical posts. You'd be amazed at how easily a baby's head can get

stuck.

All of these are important steps to readying your home for those days when baby starts crawling around. But, probably the most important thing you can do is to learn to keep your everyday things put away. Items that adults use regularly, like scissors, pins, coins, buttons and letter openers can all be very hazardous to a baby. It's going to take some getting used to, but with some preparation, you can organize your life so that your everyday activities don't put your baby at risk.

Sarah is a 41 year old wife and mother of two boys and one girl. She spent many years as a manager in the corporate world, and gave it up to be a stay at home mom. Go to

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