



Safety Tips for Children With Vision Loss

These tips can help you keep your child safe and add to general safety advice for your child's stage of development. Adapt these tips to meet the needs of your child and family. What works now may change as your child grows and develops.

Tips for Using This Flyer:

- Give a copy to the people who care for your child. Mark tips that may help them.
- Talk with your child's care team including your child's health care provider, school nurse, principal, teacher, school staff and other caregivers.
- Involve your child. Talk about the steps you'll take. Ask your child "what if" questions to help them learn to problem solve.

Fall Safety

- Are home and play spaces well lit with lighting in hallways that is bright and even?
- Do pathways provide clear access throughout the home? Are they cleared of throw rugs, worn carpet, low tables, and electric cords? (Electric cords can be taped to the floor).
- Using High contrast colors and shapes in your home may increase the visibility of key objects for your child. Choose colors that your child can see well. White or bright yellow against a black background often provides the strongest color contrast.
- Is there a nonskid mat or no-slip strips and grab bars in the bathtub?
- Are there hand rails on any raised platforms and stairways?

Fire and Burn Safety

- Take steps to prevent your child from contact with fire hazards in the home such as space heaters, grills and fireplaces.
- Do all electric outlets have covers in them? (For very young children).
- Do you have a fire escape plan for your home? Talk about and practice a fire escape with your whole family. Plan for places such as school, places of worship, theaters, and stores. Review your child's school fire escape plan to make certain help is planned for your child.
- Include a special meeting place outside your home in your plan where all family members can meet in case of fire. Choose a spot that is easy to find with points of reference for your child.

- Teach all family members and other caregivers how to help your child escape in a fire.
- If your child is not able to see to any degree, teach your child to exit your home by using their hand or foot to follow along a wall or crawl along the floor. Practice this.
- Teach your child to dial 911 and to provide information for emergency services.
- Do all adults and older children know where the fire extinguisher is and how to use it?

Water Safety

- Always watch your child or have an adult closely watch your child in all water activities even if there is a lifeguard on duty. A brightly colored swimsuit will make your child easy to spot.
- Tell the lifeguard that your child is blind or has vision loss.
- Have your child wear a life vest in a boat, on a dock and near open water like lakes or rivers.

Pedestrian Safety

- Work with your community to assess the need for audible signals to be installed at busy or complex intersections. Ask for safety signs to be posted in your neighborhood that informs drivers that a child with vision loss plays and lives in the area.

For More Information:

- Keeping Children with Special Needs Safe in the Home* from Safe Kids and the MetLife Foundation. A series of safety videos highlighting how you can take precautions in your home to help prevent injuries to children with physical, developmental or cognitive disabilities
<http://www.safekids.org/safety-basics/special-needs/>

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