Safe Sleep

**DO**
- Do put infants to sleep alone on their backs in a crib or on another firm surface with a tight-fitting bottom sheet.
- Do dress the infant lightly and control the room temperature.
- Do use pacifiers as it may lower the risk of sudden death.
- Do supervise infants closely at all times.

**DON'T**
- Don't put an infant to sleep with blankets, pillows, stuffed animals, or bumper pads.
- Don't swaddle an infant.
- Don't cover an infant’s face or let the infant cover its face with anything.
- Don't allow an infant to sleep in a restrictive device or equipment not intended for infant sleeping such as bouncers, car seats, rockers, infant swings, sofas, futons or bean bags.
- Don't put infants to sleep on soft beds such as pillow-tops, water beds, or memory foam. If the infant leaves a dent, it's too soft.
- Don't add mattresses or supplemental padding to pack-n-plays. Use only as directed per manufacturer instructions.
- Don’t expose babies to smoke or e-cigarette emissions.
- Don’t allow an infant to sleep for extended periods of time without checking on them frequently.

Choking Prevention

- Pay close attention to what your child is eating and what your child puts in his or her mouth.
- The way food is prepared may increase the risk for choking.

**Common Foods that May Cause Choking and Should NOT be fed to Children under 4:**
- Firm, smooth, or slippery foods that slide down the throat before chewing, such as:
  - Whole grapes, cherries, berries, melon balls;
  - Whole pieces of canned fruit
  - Hot dog shaped foods (sausages, meat sticks, cheese sticks)
  - Hard or round candy, jelly beans
- Small, dry, or hard foods that are difficult to chew or swallow whole, such as:
  - Popcorn
  - Raw vegetables or fruit
  - Hard pretzels
- Sticky foods that do not break apart and are hard to remove from the airway, such as:
  - Spoonful of peanut butter
  - Tough or large chunks of meat
  - String cheese
  - Marshmallows
  - Chewy fruit snacks

The key to prevention is **Supervision**

Tips for Serving Table Food to Young Children

- Cook foods until soft enough to pierce easily with a fork.
- Cut soft food into thin slices or small pieces no larger than ½ inch. Cut foods like hot dogs and string cheese into short strips instead of round pieces.
- Cut grapes, cherries, berries, and melon balls in half lengthwise and then cut into smaller pieces.
- Spread peanut butter thinly.
Water Safety

Outside the house

Never leave children alone around water whether it is in a pool, wading pool, drainage ditch, creek, pond, or lake.

Constantly watch children who are swimming or playing in water they need an attentive adult or certified lifeguard watching and within reach.

Secure access to swimming pools. Use fences, self-closing and latching gates, and water surface alarms.

Store water toys away from the water when not in use so they don’t attract a small child.

Don’t assume young children will use good judgment and caution around water.

Be ready for emergencies. Keep emergency telephone numbers handy and know CPR.

Inside the house

Never leave small children alone near any container of water. This includes toilets, tubs, aquariums, or mop buckets.

Never leave a baby alone in a bath for any reason.

Keep bathroom doors closed and secure toilet lids with lid locks.

Make sure small children cannot leave the house through pet doors or unlocked doors to access pools or hot tubs.

TV and Furniture Safety

Secure TV’s so they cannot tip over.

If you have a box TV, put it on furniture that is low, stable, and designed for the size and weight of the TV.

Mount flat TV’s to the wall so they can’t be pulled down.

Use brackets, braces, or wall straps to secure furniture to the wall.

Car Safety

Always use car and booster seats. The law says you must put kids, under the age of two, in a car seat that faces backward and is installed in the back seat of the car. Older kids must be in booster seats or car seats until they are 8 years old or reach 4-foot, 9-inches tall.

Make sure that kids’ arms, legs, fingers, and toes are safely inside before closing doors.

Never leave children unattended in the car.

Never leave your car keys where children can get them.

Keep car doors and trunks locked at all times, even in the garage or driveway.

Use reminders that a child is in the back seat. Leave something you need in the back seat, like your purse or phone or leave a stuffed animal or toy in the front seat.

Talk to children about the dangers of playing around cars and watch them closely when they’re around cars.

Additional Resources

http://www.txchildcaresearch.org
http://www.helpandhope.org/Safe_Sleep/
http://www.helpandhope.org/Water_Safety/default.asp
https://www.kidsandcars.org/
https://www.safekids.org/
https://www.fns.usda.gov/tn
https://www.dps.texas.gov/director_staff/public_information/carseat.htm