



# Essentials of Community Risk Reduction

## From a Child's View - Parent/Caregiver Activity

### Learning Activity for Parents and Caregivers

Capture a parent's attention - Let them see the world through a child's eyes. Show images or actual items that illustrate the appeal of some household poisons. Medicines may look like candy and household cleaners may look like soda or juice.

### Objective:

Parents and caregivers of young children will recognize:

1. The importance of keeping items that can be poisonous locked away and out of the reach of children.
2. The importance of keeping children within their sight at all times.
3. The importance of never leaving children unattended.

### Materials

- Two sets of common items found at home that look similar but one is safe and the other is poisonous. (or photos of "look-alike" items)
  - One set has labels
  - One set has labels and warnings removed
- Suggested common items found in the home
  - Brightly colored sports drinks and window cleaner (both blue)
  - Round candies and aspirin or ibuprofen
  - Larger candies and antacids
  - Whipped cream and shaving cream
  - Can of cheese (easy cheese) and hair mouse
  - Pudding and lotions
- Examples of child resistant cabinet locks

### Instruction Outline

1. Show actual look-alike items or the photos.
  - a. Allow time for the group to look closely at the items.
  - b. Ask the participants to point out similarities that make the poisonous items attractive to a child.
2. Tell the story of Judy and her daughter Carol.

Judy's 18-month-old and 5-year-old daughters were asleep when she stepped into the shower to get ready for work. But within 2-minutes she heard 18-month old Carol. Judy rushed into her bedroom to find Carol with a bottle of prenatal vitamins open on the floor and pink stuff on her



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hands and face. After Carol was born Judy forgot about the high-potency vitamins that were on her closet shelf.

Frightened and unsure what affect prenatal vitamins would have on a young child, Judy made the call to her Poison Control Center. The Poison Center expert asked Judy how much her daughter weighed. Then, Judy counted out how many pills were left in the bottle. The Poison Center expert calculated the amount of iron in the missing pills and compared it to Carol's weight, then assured Judy that Carol would be OK. Later on, the Poison Center called Judy back to see how Carol was feeling and to answer any questions.

There are many common items in our homes that can be poisons. It is up to parents and caregivers to keep all items that are poison out of the reach of children.

3. Ask how the adults recognize an item that can be poisonous.
  - a. Responses will include reading the label, seeing a warning sign, judgment from experience, or another way.
4. Ask how their children know which things are okay to taste, eat, or drink and which things are not.
5. Ask if anyone or someone they know has had a close call like Judy.
6. Show the items side by side without labels. Ask, "Without experience and the ability to read well, which of these items would your child choose?"
7. Ask, "What must you do to protect your children from poisoning?"

Responses:

  - Lock poisons in a high cabinet where children cannot get to them.
  - Don't leave poisons open when children are present.
  - Return dangerous items immediately after use.
  - Keep items in their original containers.
  - Supervise children at all times.
8. Demonstrate how child locks for cabinets work. Provide several examples for demonstration. Ask your local hardware or baby store to provide samples for you.
9. Ask: "What can you teach your children as they learn and grow?"

Responses:

  - Don't taste, eat, or drink anything unless a grownup says it is okay.
10. Provide handouts
  - a. Laundry packets factsheet
  - b. FDA drug disposal resource page
  - c. Other information about CO or other poisoning risks for children