



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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## **Focus on Medication Safety During Poison Prevention Week (March 20-26)**

Safe Kids Pennsylvania is Reminding People of the Surprising Ways Kids are Getting into Medicine  
And What Caregivers Can Do to Protect Them

**Mechanicsburg, Pa.** –Every day, kids surprise their families by getting into everything, including medicine. Unfortunately, there are more than 47,000 children under age 6 seen in emergency rooms every year for medicine poisoning - that's 5 children every hour. Safe Kids Pennsylvania is working to raise awareness of medication safety this National Poison Prevention Week.

### **Five Things Caregivers Need to Know to Keep Kids Safe Around Medicine**

Most families know to store medicine out of reach of children, but many caregivers are surprised to discover they need to think about medicine safety in new or different ways.

1. **Child-Resistant vs. Child-Proof.** While a child-resistant medicine container can slow down a child working to open it, it is not childproof. Families are often surprised by how quickly their little one can get into a child-resistant container.
2. **Where Medicine is Stored vs. Where Medicine is Kept.** Most families have a safe place in the home where they store medicine they don't use every day, but they may keep often-used medicine easily accessible -for both themselves, and their children. Kids are getting into medicine in purses, in nightstands, on counters, in drawers – places kids are drawn to explore.
3. **What You Think Your Kid Can Do vs. What Your Kid Can Do.** Every caregiver knows that "oh!" moment when their child does something for the first time. It may be a proud moment, or it may be a frightening wakeup call. Stories about kids getting into medicine often start with that moment of surprise, "I didn't know my child could reach up there!"
4. **Candy vs. Medicine.** To a little explorer, candy and medicine can look alike, so it is especially important to keep all medicines and vitamins out of children's reach and sight.
5. **Your Home vs. Their Home.** Now that you have your household medicines stored safely, be on the alert for medicines visitors bring in, or medicines in homes you are visiting.

### **Simple Steps to Prevent Kids from Getting into Medicine**

We know that taking care of children is a lot of work, and it can feel overwhelming to have another thing to think about. To make it easy, we've compiled some simple steps you can take today to better protect the children in your life.

1. **Keep all medicine up and away, out of children's reach and sight, even medicine you take every day.** Kids are naturally curious and can easily get into things, like medicine, if they are kept in places within their reach.
2. **Choose child-resistant packaging whenever possible.** If someone in your home is using pill boxes or other containers that are not child-resistant, it's even more important to store these out of children's reach and sight.
3. **Use reminder tools to help keep track of medicine.** Instead of keeping medicine on the counter or a nightstand, set a reminder in your phone or use a medicine schedule to remember when to give and take medicine.
4. **Keep medicine safety on your child-proofing checklist.** As your child learns new skills and becomes more mobile, anticipate that you may need to continue to assess and change where you keep medicine to avoid alarming surprises.
5. **Save the Poison Help number into your phone and post it visibly in your home for caregivers: 1-800-222-1222.** Specialists at poison control centers provide free, confidential, expert medical advice 24 hours a day. They help with poison emergencies and can also answer questions about medicine safety.

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**Safe Kids Pennsylvania (SKPA)** is part of Safe Kids Worldwide's global network dedicated to keeping kids safe from preventable childhood injury, which is the number one cause of death among children ages 1 to 19. These injuries range from accidental falls, to poisonings, car crashes, drownings, and many more. SKPA promotes and supports childhood injury prevention activities through education, collaboration, and advocacy throughout Pennsylvania. Safe Kids Pennsylvania is one of many statewide coalitions under Safe Kids Worldwide, and is led by the American Trauma Society, PA Division. For more information on Safe Kids PA, visit our website at <https://www.pasafekids.org/> or on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/safekidspa/>.