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Child Safety

Jimmy, a chubby one year old, had just started taking his first independent steps. His proud parents could not stop talking about his achievements. If you were to listen to them, you might think that Jimmy had been to the moon and back, all by himself.

Then one day Lisa, his mom, planned to scrub the floors - to have them clean and shiny for the holidays. She left little Jimmy playing on the floor near the bucket while she went to get the mop. As she was looking through the broom closet for mops, bleach knee pads etc. she heard a loud clutter from the kitchen. She ran back as fast as she could - only to find Jimmy's legs hanging over the sides of the bucket and his head completely drowned in the water! She panicked!

After pulling Jimmy out, clumsily performing CPR with shaking hands, getting on the phone with 911, transporting him to the nearest E.R. via ambulance, Lisa stood outside the double doors of the trauma room while the doctors resuscitated her only child, wondering why she had made such a stupid mistake.

She is not alone, because so many of us take our children's safety for granted. Not all of us are as lucky as Lisa though - because her child survived and did well, whereas accidents are the most common cause of death in children of all age groups.

All parents and caretakers of children should be aware of the basic safety rules at home, in the car, on the street etc.

At home:

- Put all knives and matches up
- Always use the back burners on the stove
- Keep all medicines, chemicals, detergents etc. in a high or locked cabinet -
Small objects like coins, buttons, toys with small parts, peanuts, etc. should be kept out of reach of young children.
- Always watch a child when near a full bathtub, swimming pool, buckets of water etc.- even if they know how to swim.
- Put away electric cords, looped strings on blinds, drapes etc. - as they can be a choking hazard.
- Plug up electric outlets with child safety devices.
- Never smoke in the house.
- Put babies to sleep on their backs or sides.
- Check the temperature on the water heater and turn it down to less than 120 degrees.
- Keep the phone number of the nearest E.R. and poison control center handy.
- Syrup of Ipecac is no longer a recommended treatment for accidental ingestions.
 - Walkers are discouraged by pediatricians- but if you must use them , keep them away from uneven surfaces.
- Learn C.P.R.

CAR SAFETY :

- Always use rear facing car seats for infants less than 20 pounds and less than 1 year; forward facing car seats for children between 20 and 40 pounds and older than 1yr; A booster seat with a seat belt for children above 40 pounds or 4 years.

Children have to be taller than 4'9'' before they can come out of booster seats.

- Do not smoke in the car.
- Avoid very high or very low temperatures in the car.
- Never leave your child unattended - even if leaving for a minute! - Drive carefully!

Not any amount of care is enough around a child. There's never a better time to be safe rather than sorry, than now. So let's learn from Lisa's mistake and make our world a safer place for our kids.