



It's the time of year when families start thinking about spring cleaning and organization, which also makes it the perfect time to think about and review family safety planning. Emergencies can happen anytime, so it's important to spend some time preparing, and to make sure everyone in your family knows what to do in an emergency.

Meet and discuss

- Talk about the what-if scenarios: What if there is an emergency at home/at school/outside the home? What do you want your kids to do, and whom should they call for help?
- Make sure everyone knows how and when to call 911 for help. You should only call 911 when there is a life-threatening emergency.
- Does your child know how to contact you when you are not together? Does he or she have your home and cell phone numbers memorized?
- Discuss and establish an out-of-area family contact that everyone in your family can check in with in the event of a disaster.

Make a plan

General emergency and communication: Create a paper copy of the contact information for your family and other important people/offices, such as doctors, schools, or service providers. Have your kids carry this information in their backpacks, keep it in your purse/wallet/office, and post it in a prominent location in your home. Make sure your out-of-area contact has that same information.

Fire escape plan: Every family should have a fire escape plan, but studies shows that nearly half do not. In the event of a fire, you may have less than three minutes to escape. Teach your children to get low and go. Decide on a meeting place outside the home. Know two exits out of every room (especially bedrooms). Call 911 from outside the home. Does your child know your address?

Poison emergency plan: Do you and your kids know what to do in a poison emergency? The number is the same anywhere in the United States — 1-800-222-1222 — toll-free, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Post this number prominently on your refrigerator and memorize it.

Practice

Have your children practice calling and texting emergency contacts. They should say where they are, and that they are OK. Quiz your kids to recite your address and phone numbers from memory. Go over home fire plans often and hold home fire drills.

Resources

The Kohl's Cares Grow Safe & Healthy Program has free family safety planning resources in the website at [KohlsSafeandHealthy.com/news/familysafety](https://www.kohls.com/news/familysafety). *The Kohl's Cares Grow Safe & Healthy Program is a partnership of Children's Hospital of Wisconsin and Kohl's Cares.*