



Safe Practices When Using Chemicals Around Children

Prepared by the Health Consultant Team at Child Care Aware® of North Dakota

Concerns about stopping the spread of germs and illness should not override the need to be careful with chemicals, including household cleaning products and hand sanitizer, around children.

It is important to protect children when using chemicals

Children are more at risk for exposure and poisoning from chemicals because their bodies are still developing and they have rapid metabolisms. Young children's natural behaviors - licking surfaces, putting items and fingers in their mouth, crawling and playing on the floor, etc. - also raise their risk of exposure to chemicals.

Guidelines when using chemicals around children:

- Keep all chemicals and hand sanitizers out of the reach of children.
- Read the chemical label before using them; Use them according to manufacturer's guidelines.
- Be very careful when using a chemical on any surface or item that is mouthed or used for food (toys, highchair trays, counters, tables, etc.). Read the label to make sure it is approved for food contact, mouthed toys, etc. If you are unsure or don't have anything available, use soap and water to clean the item or surface.
- Move children away from surface, area, or item when spraying or applying chemicals.
- Avoid the use of aerosols if possible.
- Make sure items and surfaces are completely dry before children use them.
- Open windows and ventilate area whenever possible.
- Hand sanitizer is not recommended for children under 2 years of age.
- Closely supervise children if hand sanitizer is used to make sure they rub their hands completely dry, so they don't get it in their eyes or mouth, etc.
- Call Poison Control 800-222-1222 if needed.