Babies and young children are at a higher risk for burns and scalds compared to adults and older children. They have thinner skin which burns more quickly and at lower temperatures. Burns are a potential danger in any home, and send nearly 120,000 children to emergency rooms every year. Other health complications may arise in cases of serious burns, such as infections, respiratory problems, or gastrointestinal issues. Taking simple precautions to keep your home safe can help prevent both mild and serious burns.

**TYPES OF BURNS**

- **First-degree burns.** These are the mildest burns which only affect the top layer of the skin. They produce redness, pain, and minor swelling, and can take about 3 to 6 days to fully heal.
- **Second-degree burns.** These are more serious and affect both the top and lower layers of the skin. Symptoms and signs of second-degree burns include severe pain, redness, and blisters which may break open. The burned area appears shiny and wet with a pink or red color.
- **Third-degree burns.** These are the most serious burns which affect all layers of the skin and underlying tissue. The skin typically appears dry and leathery, with a brown, white, or black color. The area might feel numb or painless due to damaged nerve endings from the burn. Third degree burns should be evaluated immediately at an emergency department.

**STEPS FOR PREVENTING BURNS**

**1. WATER TEMPERATURE**

- Prevent accidental scalding by keeping your water heater at 120 degrees Fahrenheit or the manufacturer’s recommended setting. Test the water temperature after adjusting the settings.
- Always test the water temperature with your wrist or elbow before bathing a baby, toddler, or young child.
2. COOKING
- Keep children at least three feet away from cooking areas like stoves, grills, and ovens. Do not leave these hot areas unattended.
- Do not carry or hold a child while using the stove. Instead, move a highchair into the kitchen away from the stove where you can keep an eye on the child safely.
- Use back burners on the stove and keep pot handles and other hot items away from edges.
- Use caution opening containers after microwaving as the hot steam can cause burns or scalds in children.
- Heat baby formula by placing the bottle in a cup of warm water, and check the temperature before feeding your baby.
- Teach your children about microwave and cooking safety once they are old enough.

3. ELECTRICAL OUTLETS AND APPLIANCES
- Cover unused electrical outlets with outlet covers.
- Do not let children use electrical appliances without adult supervision.
- Never leave irons, hair dryers, hair straighteners, or other heat-producing appliances unattended.

4. FIRES
- Install smoke alarms on each level of your home near sleeping areas.
- Keep flammable materials away from space heaters and candles. Turn off space heaters and blow out candles before you leave the room or go to sleep.
- Keep matches, lighters, and other flammable materials out of your child’s reach. Set a good example for your children by not playing with these items.

IN THE EVENT OF A SERIOUS BURN, FOLLOW THESE STEPS:
- Cool the burn with running tap water for 20 minutes. Do not use ice, ointments, or butter. Remove any clothing or jewelry from the affected area.
- Call 911 if the burn covers a large area, your child has trouble breathing with a burn to the face, or if you think your child has a life-threatening emergency. Otherwise, contact your child’s primary care provider for follow-up instructions.

Activity: Home Fire Drill
A home fire happens every 86 seconds. Choose a day to practice a home fire drill with your family in case of an emergency.

Step 1—Know where to go
- Pick a safety spot near the home but a safe distance away. This is where everyone will meet during the drill or in the event of a real fire.

Step 2—Test your smoke alarms
- Test home smoke alarms with your children to make sure they work.
- Check that alarms are located on each level of your home.

Step 3—Do the drill
- Have children split up in the home to wait for the drill to begin. One adult will prepare a timer before starting and then sound the alarm.
- Everyone will head outside to the safety spot quickly and safely. Try to make it under two minutes!
- In a real fire, call 911 once you get to your safety spot and keep everyone close until firefighters arrive.

Recipe: Blueberry Oatmeal Squares

Ingredients:
- 1½ cups quick oats
- ½ cup whole-wheat flour
- ½ teaspoon baking soda
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- ½ cup fresh or frozen blueberries
- 1 egg
- 1 cup skim milk
- 3 tablespoons apple sauce
- ¼ cup brown sugar

Directions:
Preheat oven to 350°F. Coat 8x8-inch baking pan with cooking spray. Place all of the ingredients into a large bowl and mix until just combined. Pour into prepared pan and bake for 20 minutes or until a toothpick inserted into the center comes out clean. Allow to cool for 5 minutes and cut into squares.

This recipe makes 9 squares. Serving size: 1 square.

Sources: