

**Northbrook United Methodist Church
Child and Youth Protection Guidelines**

I. Purpose

- To promote a caring and secure environment for children and youth in all phases and activities at or sponsored by Northbrook United Methodist Church (NUMC), with appropriate adult supervision at all times, with the goal that NUMC will be a “safe haven” where all are protected from every form of child abuse.
- To provide guidelines for the early detection of instances of child abuse as well as the protection of staff and volunteers at NUMC against false charges of child abuse.
- To educate church members and staff of the Child and Youth Protection Guidelines and procedures.

II. Definitions

NUMC Youth & Child Protection Guidelines:

Age Levels – Children, Young Adults, Approved Mature Adults,

1. A “child” or “children” means those under 18 years of age.
2. Young children are children who are under age 12 who have not completed 5th grade.
3. Youth are children in 6th through 12th grades.
4. Young adults are persons between the ages of 18 and 22.
5. Mature adults are persons 23 years of age or older.

Approved Adult: Approved adults are persons 23 years of age or older, attending church 6 months or longer and have completed and passed church background checks.

Adult Floater. An approved mature adult who walks the south and west wings of the church on Sunday mornings checking in on the classrooms and nursery.

Child Abuse is defined as an act committed which is not accidental and which harms or threatens to harm a child’s physical or mental health or welfare. There are various forms of child abuse.

1. **Emotional abuse** is any action that damages a child’s self-esteem, such as ridicule, rejection, unfavorable comparison with others or ignoring a child.
2. **Physical Abuse** is the deliberate bodily injury of a child by a responsible person or peer or older child.
3. **Neglect** occurs if a child is not provided with food, clothing, shelter, medical care, education or supervision when it is possible to do so.
4. **Sexual abuse** occurs when an adult, peer, or older, more powerful, child uses his or her authority, position of trust, or physical superiority to involve a child in sexual activity. Sexual abuse includes any activity performed for the sexual satisfaction of the abuser, including indecent exposure, fondling, intercourse or violations of sexual privacy.

Two kinds of conditions present themselves in child abuse situations. The first is a **suspicion of child abuse** based on an allegation by a third party or the observance of an indicator of

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child abuse. The second is an **observed or known abuse**, such as excessive discipline or observed fondling.

III. Adult Supervision Requirements

1. **Supervision for Nursery through 5th Graders.** One approved mature adult who is with the children in a public space or an area that is always visible from the hallway. For example, the adult could be with the children in a room that has a clear glass window to the hallway so someone in the hallway may observe the room. It is encouraged that an Adult Floater be available in the hallways to observe and to assist with problems that may come up.
2. **Youth Activities.** Except as noted below, there should, in general, always be at least one approved adult and two youth present at all youth activities (or one approved adult, and one other adult, if only one youth is present). If only one approved adult and one youth are present at the NUMC church building, room doors must be left open unless the doors have a clear glass window. One other approved adult should be in the building (see subparagraph (c) below).
 - (a) **Overnight Events on and off-premises.** Recommended that two approved, non-related mature adults be present with a recommended ratio of one adult for every seven youth. If male and female youth are in attendance, both male and female approved adults are preferred when possible. All overnight functions require parental/guardian permission slip. Prior to any overnight youth activity, a parental medical treatment form must be completed (which may be part of the permission slip).
 - (b) **Events at Private Homes.** Must have at least one host parent or guardian and one approved mature adult present in the home, even if not participating in the meeting.
 - (c) **One-on-One Meetings.** Approved adult volunteers will be permitted to meet with a youth, one-on-one, in appropriate public places for the purpose of fellowship, relation-building, mentoring or counseling. At least one parent or guardian of the youth should be aware of the meeting.

There may be circumstances (crisis, depression, suicide, grief, etc.) where a youth may want to talk to an adult in a one-on-one, non-public, environment. **In these circumstances, it is preferable that a second mature adult be present; that person may be in a different location where the second adult can observe but cannot hear the conversation.**

IV. Release of Young Children from Sunday School

Nursery through 1st grade – These children stay in their classrooms with a supervising approved mature adult until picked up following Sunday School by their parent / guardian / or other authorized adult known by the supervising adult in charge of the classroom.

In the nursery, the parents must sign-in and sign-out their child(ren), providing a cell phone, and any medical concerns of the child(ren). Child(ren) will only be released to the parent or guardian who signed in the child unless indicated.

Children in grades 2 through 5 will be released from the classroom after Sunday School to join up with their parent or guardian.

V. No Child Left Alone After any NUMC Event

No child will be left alone at the church after any NUMC event. An approved adult and one other adult will stay with the child until the child's ride arrives. If the weather permits outdoor waiting, then only one approved adult is needed to wait with the child outdoors.

VI. Transportation

Drivers to and from off-site activities must be at least 23 years old, have completed a background check, including a check of their driving record and have auto insurance. Youth shall *not* be used as drivers, although a youth may drive himself and siblings to an event. At any time when NUMC owns vehicles, then age restrictions of the NUMC insurance carrier will be followed. *The driver shall be informed that the car does not start until all seatbelts are fastened. The driver will not be permitted to text or use a cell phone (including hands-free devices) while the car is in motion. In addition, we urge all drivers to have a passenger riding next to the driver who is responsible to keep the driver alert and focused.*

VII. Volunteer Positions

Within 30 days of the earlier of the adoption of the NUMC Guidelines or starting their volunteer activities, each volunteer must have reviewed the NUMC Child and Youth Protection Guidelines and signed a statement that he/she understands and agrees to abide by the guidelines. In addition, newcomers to NUMC must be a regular participant in the NUMC community for six (6) months before leading child or youth-related activities on their own. However they may participate in child and youth activities provided they are with other approved adult volunteers. Every volunteer who interacts with the children will go through a background screening. Additionally, each new chair of a committee shall be given a copy of the NUMC Guidelines.

VIII. Paid Positions

All applicants for paid positions at NUMC must have references checked, and their names / addresses must be cleared at the website for convicted sex offenders. Each paid staff person must, within 30 days of the earlier of the adoption of the NUMC Guidelines or starting as an employee of NUMC, have reviewed the NUMC Child and Youth Protection Guidelines and signed a statement that he/she understands and agrees to abide by the Guidelines. We recommend that a member of Staff Parish Relations Committee meet with each new hire within 30 days of the start of work to review the NUMC Child and Youth Protection Policies.

IX. Groups Using NUMC Facilities

The supervising leader of any group ("Group") that will be using the NUMC facilities (including but not limited to the Glenbrook Korean Congregation, and Cub Scout Troop) must, within 30 days of the earlier of the adoption of the NUMC Guidelines or the start of the usage of the NUMC facilities on a regular basis, have reviewed the NUMC Child and

Youth Protection Guidelines. In addition, he/she must sign a statement that he/she understands the Guidelines and agrees to educate the adult volunteers who regularly participate in the Group's activities on NUMC property about the NUMC Guidelines, and further agrees to abide by the Guidelines while using NUMC facilities, to the extent its provisions are applicable to the Group.

X. Picture Usage

Parents and Guardians must give written permission to NUMC for the church to use photos of themselves and their children in the church communications, social media, monthly newsletter and church website. Last names and identifying information will not be used with the photos of the children.

XI. Recommended Training

First Aid, CPR, and Child Protection training will be offered periodically (if not readily available in our community or via web site training), and shall be highly recommended for all volunteers who regularly use NUMC properties for activities involving children and youth. A periodic orientation of workers with children and youth and the chairs of all committees will be held for the purpose of reviewing:

- the NUMC Guidelines, including reporting procedures for an incident of abuse, suspected abuse, accident or improprieties, or any other matter requiring a report;
- indicators of potential child abuse;
- location and access to First Aid supplies in every classroom and in the kitchen.
- procedures in case of fire / or other crisis;

XII. Reporting Requirements

- A. Physical Injuries** Accidents involving a physical injury at any on-site event or any church-sponsored off-site event that requires medical treatment will be reported on an "Accident Report Form" and submitted to the Pastor or Church Secretary as soon as possible, and preferably within 24 hours of the incident. If appropriate, a phone call to "911" will be made for more urgent physical injuries. It is suggested that a First Aid Kit be available in an appropriate location at NUMC that will be secure from tampering. If a First Aid Kit is installed at NUMC, it is recommended that it have a check-list of suggested supplies and that it be checked periodically by the Director of Christian Education (or equivalent position) to see that it has the suggested supplies
- B. Unsafe Building Conditions** Staff, volunteers and any others using the NUMC premises shall report any observed unsafe building conditions to the chair of Trustees.
- C. Abuse Incident Reporting Procedure**

General Guidelines:

1. Every person using NUMC premises will take every allegation of emotional, physical, or sexual abuse or child neglect seriously and follow the procedures below to promptly report any of the foregoing behaviors that seem abusive or inappropriate, or any such incident reported to them by a child, adolescent, or adult.
2. NUMC staff, leaders and volunteers will be careful to safeguard the privacy and confidentiality of all involved.
3. In cooperation with the District Superintendent, NUMC will select a specific spokesperson for the church. This may either be a member of the church, a staff member, the pastor, or an individual designated by the District Superintendent. This person should be able to speak to the media and the congregation, as necessary, in a discrete, informed, and diplomatic way.
4. NUMC will always have an attorney present while answering any investigative questions from the police or social service agencies.
5. The Pastor is among those mandated by the Abused and Neglected Child Reporting Act [325 ILCS 5/4] to report suspected abuse or neglect of a child that is known to the Pastor in his/her professional or official capacity (except for certain instances of penitent clergy privilege) to the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services.
6. The Illinois Child Abuse/Neglect reporting hotline number is 1-800-228-7325. As more fully detailed below, the Pastor or another leading official of the Church (other than the person suspected of the misconduct) shall be notified and consulted before making such a call.
7. There is always the possibility that complaints may be mistaken or unfounded and those accused innocent. These Guidelines shall be administered with an awareness of this fact with sensitivity and discretion in dealing with the accused and interpreting events to others. Congregational healing steps will also be handled with caution and with due concern for not overstepping reasonable bounds in regard to disclosure, privacy and confidentiality.

If the allegation involves a volunteer or a staff member:

1. Allegations shall be reported directly to the Pastor and/or the chair of the Staff Parish Relations Committee (SPRC). Pastor and SPRC shall agree in writing (e-mail is acceptable) as to who is to do such tasks that either may perform.
2. The chair of SPRC and the Pastor will inform the other of the allegation.
3. The Pastor and/or the chair of SPRC will report the allegation to the District Superintendent.
4. The complainant and the Pastor and/or the chair of SPRC will fill out the incident report forms.
5. An attorney shall be contacted to represent NUMC and the person accused will be advised to consider obtaining his/her own attorney.
6. The accused volunteer/staff person will be informed in writing by the Pastor/SPRC chair that he/she may no longer participate in children's or youth ministry until the investigation into the allegation is completed.

7. A face-to-face meeting with the complainant and the Pastor and chair of SPRC (or other SPRC representative) should occur as soon as possible, with the recommendation that it be within three days of being informed of the complaint.
8. If the complainant is other than the parents/guardians, the parents/guardians shall be informed of the complaint as soon as possible.
9. Upon advice of an attorney for NUMC, the following may occur:
 - a) The Pastor and/or chair of SPRC shall report directly to the police department or Child and Family Services agency.
 - b) The Pastor and/or chair of SPRC shall report the incident to the insurance company.
10. Copies of the allegation and follow up forms will be put in the volunteer/staff person's confidential file.
11. If necessary, the Pastor and/or the chair of SPRC, after consulting with the District Superintendent, will see that classes, presentations, and healing worship services are provided to promote congregational healing.

If the allegation involves the Pastor:

1. Allegation of abuse by the Pastor should be reported to the chair of the Church Council and/or the chair of SPRC.
2. The chair of the Church Council and/or the chair of SPRC will immediately report the allegation to the District Superintendent and inform the other when done.
3. When an allegation of abuse is reported, a meeting with the complainant, the chair of the Church Council and the chair of SPRC shall occur promptly with the recommendation that it occur as soon as possible.
4. The complainant, the chair of the Church Council and the chair of SPRC will fill out the incident report forms.
5. If the complainant is other than the parents/guardians, the parents/guardians shall be contacted and a meeting held with the parents/guardians.
6. An attorney shall be contacted to represent NUMC and the person accused will be advised to consider obtaining his/her own attorney.
7. The chair of the Church Council, chair of SPRC, and the district superintendent will meet with the Pastor to discuss the allegation. The Pastor will be informed in writing that he/she may not participate in children's or youth ministry until the investigation into the allegation is completed. Upon the advice of the district superintendent, the Pastor may be instructed to take a leave of absence from some or all of his/her pastoral duties. Judicial procedures under the Book of Discipline may be activated.
8. Upon the advice of the attorney for NUMC or the District Superintendent, the chair of the Church Council and/or the chair of SPRC shall report directly to the police department or Child and Family Services agency.
9. The chair of the Church Council and/or the chair of SPRC shall report the incident to the insurance company and inform the other when done.
10. Copies of the allegation and follow up forms will be sent to the District Superintendent's office to become part of the Pastor's confidential file.

11. If necessary, the chair of the Church Council and/or the chair of SPRC, after consulting with the District Superintendent, will see that classes, presentations, and healing worship services are provided to promote congregational healing, subject to the cautionary provisions regarding restraint and protection of individual rights set forth in General Guidelines, Paragraph 7 above.
12. ANY STATUTORY MANDATES SHALL SUPERCEDE ALL OF THE ABOVE.

Northbrook United Methodist Church (NUMC) IT Safe e-Sanctuary Policy

The Scope of this policy applies to all users of digital NUMC-managed technology resources. NUMC managed technology owned or leased by NUMC for its official business, including, but not limited to the following: computers, printers, handheld device, mobile phone, digital cameras, etc. All persons requiring access to such resources must be required to read the Policy and sign the acknowledgement form.

Computer and digital resource use related to the Northbrook United Methodist Church activities are important tools for growing as Disciples of Christ, sharing the gospel, forming Christian community and facilitating both acts of mercy and the work of justice. Therefore, any activity that does not honor God is prohibited.

This policy is meant to create safe Internet space for use by minors, church members, and at-risk adults. Additionally, it protects the staff of NUMC, its pastor(s), the Annual Conference, and the General Conference of the United Methodist Church. For all of those parties, it seeks to protect privacy and intellectual property and establish a high standard of ethical conduct that values accountability and transparency. “Protection” is defined as keeping from a violation of trust.

Church Property Declaration

All Internet sites set up in the name of Northbrook United Methodist Church (NUMC) shall be property of the congregation. This includes, but is not limited to, websites, social networks, and blogs.

NUMC will strive to routinely update and maintain its known websites, including known social networking sites at least once per week. Any postings that contain perceived bullying, taunting, or inappropriate photos will be removed (this includes links to inappropriate photos). Determination of inappropriate photos is entirely at the discretion of NUMC. See the special section regarding children and youth for further delineation of inappropriate photos.

All documents, including e-mail traffic, created on NUMC computing resources are considered the property of NUMC, with the exception of intellectual property produced by the pastor such as, but not limited to, sermons, blog postings, and articles.

All software installed on NUMC-managed technology resources must comply with all federal and state laws, and the church’s rules and policies including:

*Software license agreements

*Laws of libel, privacy copyright, trademark, obscenity, pornography, child pornography, as well as the electronic Communications Privacy Act and the Computer Fraud and Abuse Act, which prohibited hacking, cracking, and similar activities.

While this list is not all encompassing, NUMC-managed technology resources are not to be used for:

- *Chain e-mail misuse (E.g., SPAM)
- *Derogatory or harassing e-mail or images
- *Sexually explicit, obscene, or pornographic materials
- *Any and all communication that is illegal or contrary to NUMC's policies, ministry, or business interests, gaining of unauthorized access to remote computers or networks.

All NUMC-managed software such as instant messaging, Internet relay chat and all other forms of internet-based chat are restricted to authorized adult users.

All electronic communications, documents, images, and software or NUMC-managed equipment may be subject to audit by appropriate authority so designated by NUMC Trustees. Additionally, the pastor-in-charge may consult with that appropriate authority to conduct an audit. Furthermore, the District Superintendent and/or Bishop may also consult with the pastor-in-charge and appropriate authority to conduct an audit.

Moreover, all users should be aware that no activity, including activity related to controlled information as described below, is private in any way, shape, or form and is subject to monitoring or audit at any time. The use of unauthorized encryption software or devices is strictly prohibited on NUMC computing resources.

It is considered a violation of church property and a violation of privacy for an unauthorized user to access controlled information. Additionally, it is a violation of privacy if an unauthorized user (including staff) accesses information stored on the device of personnel covered by privacy laws (such as a pastor).

Privacy

It is the goal of all NUMC-managed technology to not compromise the privacy of any person covered under the scope of this policy.

All users with access to NUMC-managed technology shall protect controlled information for persons covered under the scope of this agreement. Any NUMC document posted on the open Internet will not contain controlled information. Controlled information shall include the following:

1. Personal identifiers including date of birth, place of birth, and social security number
2. Any information provided in confidence to the NUMC Pastor or the other members acting in official NUMC capacity (e.g., Stephen Minister)
3. Financial giving information
4. Payroll information of staff of NUMC
5. Users IDs/ password credentials
6. Photographic likeness of children or youth without permission

Note: With user's one-time written permission, birthdays, graduation dates, and photographic likeness will be accessible via a log-in feature that is not accessible to the open Internet (e.g. accessible to anyone performing a Google search). This permission may be revoked at any time.

Access to any NUMC-managed technology that creates or stores controlled information shall be controlled by unique login ID/password credentials. Each login ID/password credential shall be assigned to a specific person. Shared role-based credentials (e.g., an admin account shared by multiple people) are not permitted if such accounts have access to controlled information. Controlled information stored in an encrypted format is deemed inaccessible if decryption requires a separate password.

For those who have access to church information via their role (staff or volunteer) within the life of the church, storage of controlled information on personal home computers is permitted as long as it is controlled by a unique login and has appropriate backup. Additionally, the security measures on those computers must meet or exceed the requirements for NUMC-managed technology.

Special Policy Section Regarding Children and Youth

Electronic Abuse Reporting Procedure:

The following procedure is to be followed if any sexually explicit, obscene, or pornographic image involving a minor (Under 18) is found on any NUMC-controlled technology. Additionally, the procedure applies if any such image is distributed to a person under 18 years of age from an NUMC-controlled technology.

1. The technology (including any physical device, such as a hand-held computing device) will be confiscated immediately
2. The technology will be immediately turned over to the police.
3. Notifications that do **NOT** contain the image will be sent to:
 - *Auditing authority designated by the Trustees
 - *Pastor-in-charge
 - *District Superintendent

In both cases, the auditing authority designated by the Trustees, the pastor-in-charge, and the District Superintendent will be notified but **Not sent the image**. This image is **NOT** forwarded electronically for any reason as this will constitute distribution of sexually explicit, obscene, or pornographic images under this policy. Additionally, distribution of that image may also violate state and federal laws governing pornography and distribution.

To Be Completed by Paid Staff and Volunteers with Youth:

I, _____, have read the NUMC Child and Youth Protection Guidelines set forth above, I understand the Guidelines and agree to observe and abide by them.

Date: _____

To Be Completed by Supervising Leader of a Group Using NUMC Facilities:

I, _____, have supervising responsibilities for _____, which uses the facilities of NUMC on a regular basis. I have read the NUMC Child and Youth Protection Guidelines set forth above. I understand the Guidelines, and I agree to educate the adult volunteers of my organization who regularly participate in the organization's activities on NUMC property regarding the NUMC Guidelines. To the extent the Guidelines apply to any of our activities on the NUMC property, I agree to observe and abide by them and encourage all regular adult volunteers of my organization to abide by them.

Date: _____

Northern Illinois Conference of Churches Inspection Checklist

You should survey your building regularly to make sure it remains a safe place for your children. Use this checklist to help you survey your surroundings.

Slips Trips and Falls

*Anti slip matting is in place at all entrances	Yes	No	N/A
*Hand railings are in place on all stairways	Yes	No	N/A
*Carpet is free of bubbling and frays	Yes	No	N/A
*Side walk is free from large cracks and holes	Yes	No	N/A
*Hallways/walkways are kept free of clutter and extension cords	Yes	No	N/A
*Sidewalks/Parking lots are kept free of snow and ice	Yes	No	N/A
* Wet floor signs are available for use	Yes	No	N/A

Fire Protection

*Fire extinguishers are available and inspected at least annually	Yes	No	N/A
*Fire extinguishers are available for use in the kitchen area	Yes	No	N/A
*Smoke detectors are available on all levels and buildings	Yes	No	N/A
*Battery operated smoke detectors are tested at least quarterly	Yes	No	N/A
*Exits are identified by exit lights and all lights are properly functioning	Yes	No	N/A
* Fire suppression systems are inspected and certification of the inspection is maintained	Yes	No	N/A
*Emergency lighting is in place and tested on a monthly basis	Yes	No	N/A

Electronic Safety

*Extension cords free from damages and groups pins are in place	Yes	No	N/A
*GFCI outlets are in place at sinks in kitchen and bathroom areas	Yes	No	N/A
*GCFI is available on all outdoors outlets	Yes	No	N/A
*3' of space is kept around all electronic panels	Yes	No	N/A
*Safety plugs are in outlets where children are present	Yes	No	N/A
*Electronic power strips are not plugged into one another	Yes	No	N/A

Building Exterior

*Windows are not broken	Yes	No	N/A
*Gutter and downspouts are clear from debris	Yes	No	N/A
*Trees are free of dead branches and do not overhang any buildings on the campus	Yes	No	N/A
*Lighting is in place and functioning	Yes	No	N/A
*Power lines are located and ladders are not utilized within 10' of power lines	Yes	No	N/A
*Plowing snow against the building is prohibited	Yes	No	N/A

Vehicles

*Background and MVR's have been checked for all drivers	Yes	No	N/A
*All drivers are at least 23 years of age	Yes	No	N/A
*Proper maintenance is performed and records are maintained	Yes	No	N/A
*First Aid Kits and Fire Extinguishers are available for use	Yes	No	N/A
*Seat belts are worn while operating	Yes	No	N/A

Additional Areas of Focus

*Certificates of insurance are obtained for all contractors and organizations on campus	Yes	No	N/A
*First Aid Kits are available for use	Yes	No	N/A
*Emergency evacuation maps are posted	Yes	No	N/A
*A severe weather meeting location has been identified	Yes	No	N/A
*All staff members are in compliance with the Safe Sanctuary program	Yes	No	N/A
*The boiler room is kept free of potential fire hazards	Yes	No	N/A
*Valuables are stored in a secure location	Yes	No	N/A
*A process is in place to ensure the campus is secured at the end of each day	Yes	No	N/A
*Radiators are kept free from storage of materials and other potential fire hazards	Yes	No	N/A

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Is worn while:

*Lawn mowing-safety glasses, hearing protection, closed toed shoes	Yes	No	N/A
*Working with chemicals-safety glasses/goggles, chemical resistant gloves	Yes	No	N/A
*Operating power tools-safety glasses	Yes	No	N/A
*Operating bench grinder-safety glasses, face shield	Yes	No	N/A
*Snow Blowing-safety glasses	Yes	No	N/A

Notes:

Name(printed):

Signature:

Date:

Nursery Safety Checklist

You should survey your nursery regularly to make sure it remains a safe place for your children. Experts recommend doing it at least twice a year. Use this checklist to help you survey your surroundings.

Cribs

- *Look for loose or missing slats.
- *Make sure slats are no more than 2 and 3/8 inches apart to prevent head entrapment.
- *Remove decorative knobs on corner posts that could entangle clothing.
- *Use a tight-fitting mattress. You should be able to fit only two fingers between the mattress and the crib side.
- *Tighten loose nuts, screws and bolts.
- *Make sure mattress supports are secure.

Playpens

- *Make sure the mesh netting has a fine weave so it won't clutch the buttons on children's clothing.
- *Inspect the mesh to make sure there are no tears, holes, or loose threads.
- *Place a warning label on drop-side mesh playpens reminding workers never to leave an infant in the pen with the drop-side down. An infant could roll into the space between the mattress and the side and suffocate.
- *Make sure slat spaces on a wooden playpen are no more than 2 and 3/8 apart.

High Chairs

- *Check to see that the high chairs have a wide, stable base that won't collapse easily.
- *Make sure it has a functional waist and crotch restraining straps.
- *Ensure that the high chair tray locks securely.
- *Firmly attach tubing caps or plugs that a child could pull off or swallow.

Toys

- *Make sure none of the toys in the room can cause children under age 3 to choke or suffocate. These include:
 - *Toys with small parts

- *Fuzzy stuffed animals or dolls.
- *Latex balloons (Uninflated, they pose a choking hazard)
- *Foam toys

Floors

- *Get on your hands and knees and survey the nursery area from a child's perspective.
- *Make sure the floor stays free of small objects a child could swallow, such as coins, paperclips or buttons.
- *Eliminate any falling or tripping hazards.

Doors

- *Place locks or latches on doors that children could reach or open.
- *Use half doors to prevent children from wandering off while providing visibility.

Walls

- *Remove tacks and pins from areas of bulletin boards children can reach.
- *Cover electrical outlets.
- *Repair peeling wallpaper or chipped paint.
- *Secure drapery or window-treatment cords.

Ceiling

- *Make sure ceiling tiles are firmly in place.
- *Remove any loose plaster from textured ceilings.

Furnishings

- *Don't stack furniture or toys so that a child would find them inviting to climb.
- *Install gates on stairwells accessible to children.
- *Make sure all electrical cords are out of reach, especially those attached to hot objects.
- *Secure shelves and furniture, so kids cannot pull them over.
- *Pad any sharp corners or edges.
- *Remove any poisonous plants. Place non-toxic plants out of reach.

Supplies

- *Store cleaning and diaper-changing supplies out of reach or in latched cabinets.
- *Use only non-toxic paint, crayons, and other art supplies.
- *Don't allow children to play on or around carts holding TVs or audiovisual equipment.

Emergency Safety

- *Make sure the room contains a stocked first aid kit.
- *Post important phone numbers, such as those for the local poison control center and nearest hospital emergency room, near the phone. If there's no phone in the room, provide the location of the nearest phone.
- *Install a smoke detector and a carbon monoxide detector.
- *Hang a fire extinguisher out of children's reach.

*Post a map to the nearest exit.