

Child Safety in the Kitchen

It's the holiday season, and families are coming together from near and far. Almost without fail, we all tend to congregate in the kitchen. Certainly, people are attracted to the wonderful smells and holiday treats, but it's more than that - the kitchen table instinctively seems to be a gathering place for friends and family.

It's also a fun place for kids. Sweets are often there for the taking, and it's fun for children to help out with cooking and baking projects. Cooking with Jane and Libby is one of my favourite activities to do together, and they are having fun learning a skill that they can enjoy for a lifetime (and they also get to taste the sugar). In addition to making our time in the kitchen fun, there are a few simple precautions that can keep them safe, as well. Go to the next page for a few tips on how to keep kids safe while they're in the kitchen.

Child safety tips for the kitchen:

- Keep the handle of pots on stove turned inwards. Scalding's from pots that are tipped over present the greatest danger of serious injuries in the kitchen. 65% of burn injuries to children under four who are hospitalized are the result of scalding. Toddlers and young children are naturally curious, and are unable to look out for their own safety. These accidents can happen in seconds, so make sure to develop the habit of turning pot handles inwards.
- Purchase a stove guard to prevent young hands from reaching up towards the stove.
- If children are standing on a chair or stool to help with a project, make sure they are far enough away from the stove so that they can't tip and fall onto it.
- If children are old enough to be working at the stove, make sure they do not wear clothing that is too loose fitting - be especially careful of sleeves that hang down.
- Keep knives stored safely out of reach of young children. When children do become old enough to responsibly use knives, teach them safe handling techniques. If you need a refresher course on how to safely handle and use kitchen knives, [click here](#).
- Practice and teach safe food handling techniques. Use different cutting boards (or separate sides of the same board) for meats and produce. After handling poultry, thoroughly wash your hands, any utensils that touched the meat, and all cutting boards.
- Finally, pick projects that are age appropriate. This tip is more for fun than for safety. Baking is probably more fun for young kids than cooking. The projects are fairly quick, and children can participate in simple ways, such as helping add ingredients that have already been measured. Kids also have fun tasting the finished product.

Good list of things to think about - and a good reminder for new grandparents! Thanks for this contribution to child welfare.

Thanks. The kitchen is a very dangerous place indeed. You've got fire/heat, sharp and pointed objects everywhere, yet it is also one of the places children and their parents can create lasting memories. Cooking is one of the greatest bonding activities a family can partake in