



home safety newsletter

helping you keep safe
at home this winter

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★ **Safety Net:** keeping children & young people safe

Helping you **keep safe** **at home** this winter

★ Who are Safety Net?

Safety Net is a children's safeguarding and wellbeing charity established in Brighton in 1995. We undertake 1:1, small group and whole class workshops in schools, deliver training and DBS checks for various organisations and run a Home Safety Equipment Scheme across the city of Brighton and Hove.

★ What is this newsletter about?

Winter can be a really exciting time - cosy nights in, festivities and family but the nights are drawing in, the temperature is dropping and we're facing a tricky winter ahead with the cost of living soaring too. We've put together lots of information to help you and your family stay safe and warm, so that it's even easier for you to enjoy your festive season.



Did you know...?

If you have a child under the age of five and live in Brighton and Hove, we can help you with home safety equipment.

Find out how on the back of this leaflet.



East Sussex Fire and Rescue Service
has launched a new safety drive:

#SaveSafely



East Sussex
Fire & Rescue Service

★ The fire service has gathered together a few ideas which you might want to consider. Not only could these save you a few pennies, they will help reduce the chances of a fire which in itself can be expensive, disruptive and distressing.



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★ Beat the energy vampires!

Did you know that a phone charger uses power even when it's not actually charging a phone? There may be a bit of debate over exactly how much you could save by unplugging devices which you aren't using, but we're still fans of the suggestion from a safety point of view.



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★ Heat individual rooms.

 If you're able to switch individual radiators off in your home, save money by turning off those in spaces that aren't often used, only keeping radiators switched on in the rooms you use most.

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★ Close doors.

 It's amazing how much heat can disappear out the door, and by keeping doors shut, you also reduce the chance of fires spreading from room to room.

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★ Pay to save.

 Getting your heating system serviced may cost a bit up front but it can also highlight problems which may be reducing its efficiency, costing you money and raising the risk of fire.

Find out more at www.esfrs.org/savesafely

COAT COMPRESSION IS DANGEROUS

Is your child safe in their car seat?



★ **Thick winter coats or snowsuits can keep your baby warm but they can compromise your child's car seat safety.** In order for car seats and boosters to function properly, the straps need to remain tight against the child's chest. Winter coats and snowsuits change the way a child fits into the car seat.

★ **When the car seat straps don't fit the child properly, there is a chance they will move more than they should during an accident.**

Their heads and other body parts will be more likely to hit hard parts of the car (like the seat in front, window, or doorframe), which causes an increased risk of injury.

★ **The car seat harness needs to stay close to the child's body at all times.**

Clothing will compress in a crash, but thicker winter coats and snowsuits could compress enough to create a lot of slack in the harness. The effect could be as though you never tightened the harness straps at all. Those loose straps may not be able to keep baby in the car seat if you brake suddenly, or even in the car in the event of an accident.

★ **Instead of keeping your child in their coat or snowsuit, try warming your car up before putting the baby in** - this will make it comfortable for all passengers too!

★ **If you are still worried about the temperature in the car, you could put a light blanket over the top of the harness straps, once baby is already securely inside.** This blanket should go over their lap and kept clear from the child's face. Remember to keep an eye on baby in the mirror or by sitting next to your child in the back seat, so the blanket can be removed if you think they're getting too warm.



heating your home top safety tips



Portable freestanding heaters

- ★ It's really important to make sure that these heaters **cannot topple or be pulled over**.
 - ★ If possible, **use a fire guard** which will stop your child accessing the grills and heating controls as children are likely to be very interested in a new item that has appeared.
 - ★ Babies and children **can get nasty burns by being too close to a heat source**, even if they aren't able to touch it.
 - ★ **Cables are a tripping hazard** so try and keep them close to the walls and out of the way.
 - ★ Children's toys and play areas should be **as far away as possible from any source of portable heating**.
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Calor gas heaters

- ★ Always **follow the manufacturers guidelines** and make sure these heaters are used in a well ventilated, spacious area and always with a guard around them.
 - ★ **Don't use them in small rooms or bedrooms** as there is a potential carbon monoxide risk.
 - ★ **Keep a 1 metre (at least) gap** between the heater and any furniture and curtains.
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Candles

- ★ **Never** leave unattended.
- ★ **Don't place near curtains or blinds** – they can set material alight if there's a draft.
- ★ Always make sure they're **in secure holders**.



festive fun

Keeping safe in your home this christmas season

★ **Toys** Make sure they're age appropriate, the intended age should be clearly marked. This can help prevent babies and toddlers swallowing or choking on small potentially harmful parts. If there are mixed age groups in the house, don't forget that older children's toys might not be appropriate for the younger ones, so keep those out of reach and separated.

make sure toys are age appropriate



★ Christmas dinner

The kitchen can be a hectic place on Christmas day and 1 in 10 children's accidents happen in the kitchen. To help prevent burns and scalds it's best to keep young children out of there while you're preparing Christmas dinner and all the trimmings.

keep children away while cooking



★ Tripping hazards

All those new electrical devices need charging, the fairy lights are on and that means lots of trailing wires! These can cause a nasty injury if a child trips and hits their head on another piece of furniture, or an adult carrying a small child trips. Keep wires out of the way from where you'd be walking; against walls is a good place to start.

watch out for trailing wires



check visitors store medicine safely



★ **Visitors** Make sure visitors don't leave medicine in places where children can find them, for example counted out on bedside tables. Medicines are the most common cause of accidental poisoning in children, with everyday painkillers a frequent culprit.

★ **Staying away** Bear in mind that safety items you might have at home, such as stairgates and cupboard locks, might not be available where you're staying. If you're staying with relatives or friends over Christmas, remember that the top bunk of bunk beds can be dangerous for children under 6 years.

bunk beds are dangerous for under 6's



blow out candles before bed



★ **Fire hazards** Remember to turn off fairy lights and blow out candles before heading to bed. Keep those candles well away from the Christmas tree - a dried out tree is the perfect fuel for a fire, so don't forget to check that your smoke alarms are working.

If you have a child under the age of five and live in Brighton and Hove, we may be able to help you with home safety equipment.



What is the Home Safety Scheme? The scheme aims to prevent accidents at home, which are the main cause of preventable injuries and death in children under the age of five years.



The scheme works with local families to reduce and prevent these risks by providing equipment, information and advice.

What can be provided? Equipment such as safety gates, fireguards, cupboard locks, door chains and other small items can be provided at low or no cost (depending on income and circumstances) - see below for eligibility.

Who is eligible? Families who live in Brighton and Hove and meet ANY of the following criteria are eligible:



- ★ Have a child under the age of two
- ★ Receive a means tested benefit
- ★ Are a young parent (under 20)
- ★ Have attended hospital with their child because of an unintentional injury at home
- ★ Their child is at higher risk of unintentional injury in the home

Any parent or professional working with eligible families can refer to the scheme.

How do I refer or find out more? For more information on our services, or to make a home safety referral, you can:

**email homesafety@safety-net.org.uk
or call us directly on 01273 411613**

Image adapted from Pixabay images 528887 baby,

www.safety-net.org.uk

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