



## Jackson County Department of Public Health

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### KEEP CHILDREN SAFE IN THE BATH

January is National Bath Safety Month and Safe Kids Jackson County is using this opportunity to remind our community what is needed to minimize the risk of injury and drowning in the bath.

Bath time is a part of our daily routine and it's not uncommon to forget to take proper precautions while in the bathroom. It is estimated that 87 children die each year from drownings at home. Two-thirds of these incidents take place in the bath. Parents, babysitters, and caregivers can prevent these incidents if they implement the American Academy of Pediatrics' five layers of protection at home.

1. **Supervision.** It doesn't take much water for a child to drown, so it's essential to never leave your little one alone in the bath. Always keep an eye on children while in the bath, keeping them supervised and not taking eyes off them, not even for a second. Have everything you will need during bath time on hand before you begin, and keep it at arm's length. Once bath time is over, drain the bathtub immediately. Never leave water in the bathtub when no one is using it.
2. **Slips and Falls.** Install non-slip mats or non-slip stickers on the floor of the bathtub or shower. Covering water faucets with cushioned covers will help prevent children from getting hurt should they slip and bump their head. The bathtub is not the only place where a small child can slip and fall in the bathroom. Ensure the bathroom floor has anti-slip rugs and that toilet lids are permanently shut and locked. A curious toddler can easily fall in if trying to play with the water in the bowl.
3. **Water Temperature.** The temperature of the water in a child's bath is important for several reasons:
  - **Safety:** water that is too hot can scald a child's skin, causing severe injury. It is crucial to test the temperature of the water before letting your child enter the tub to ensure it is not too hot.
  - **Comfort:** Water that is too cold can be uncomfortable and may discourage children from wanting to take a bath. On the other hand, water that is too hot can make children feel overwhelmed and anxious.
  - **Health:** Water that is too hot can strip the skin of its natural oils, leading to dryness and irritation. Water that is too cold can reduce circulation and lead to chills.



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It is generally recommended to keep the temperature for a child's bath water at around 100°F (35°C). To ensure the water is at a safe temperature, you can use a thermometer or test the water with your elbow or wrist.

4. **Medicine and Toiletry Storage.** Keeping medicine and toiletries out of reach of toddlers and small children will help keep them safe and prevent accidental poisonings or injuries. Store all medicine and toiletries in a locked cabinet or on a high shelf that is out of reach of children. Use child-resistant caps on all medications to make it more difficult for children to access them. Keep a close eye on your little ones in the bathroom, and ensure they do not have access to any potentially dangerous items. Parents and caregivers should also consider using toilet seat locks for keeping children safe in the bathroom. Toddlers are by nature very curious and may try to explore the toilet, which can be dangerous if they accidentally fall in or get stuck. Toilet seat locks can help prevent these accidents by keeping the toilet seat securely in place and making it more difficult for children to access.

5. **Electric Appliances.** Do not use any electrical appliances near the water. If you keep any electrical appliances in the bathroom, such as hairdryers and electric razors, keep them securely stored far away from the sink, tub, or shower. Do not use any appliances while in the tub or shower. Water and electricity do not mix, and using any devices while standing in water can be dangerous.

Minimize risk and keep children safe in the bath by following the bath safety tips provided. For more information on Safe Kids Jackson County call Martha Thomasson, Safe Kids Jackson County Coordinator, at 828-587-8257.

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