

Essential

LIVING SKILLS

ESSENTIAL HOME MAINTENANCE



K-STATE
Research and Extension

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Section 1

LEADER'S GUIDE

PRESENTATION GUIDE

The Essential Home Maintenance module uses the following fact sheets and skill sheets:

- House Cleaning and Clutter Control
- Frequency of Cleaning
- Suggestions for Household Cleaning Schedule
- Establishing a Household Work Schedule (A Chart to Be Filled in by Participant)
- Whose Job Is It? (A Chart to Be Filled in by Participant)
- Household Cleaning Products
- Cleaning Kitchen Surfaces
- Cleaning the Refrigerator
- Cleaning a Refrigerator That Isn't Self-cleaning
- Cleaning the Cooktop
- Cleaning a Conventional Oven
- Cleaning the Microwave Oven
- Cleaning Toilets
- Cleaning Tubs and Showers
- Bathroom Sinks and Counters
- Cleaning Floors
- Cleaning Windows and Mirrors
- Air Conditioner Maintenance
- Furnace Maintenance
- Controlling Clutter
- Controlling Clutter in Children's Rooms
- Controlling Closet Clutter
- Controlling Paper Clutter
- Maintaining a Clutter-free House

Evaluation instruments are included to measure progress toward the following objectives:

- A. Participants will become aware of their need for basic living skills related to home cleanliness.
- B. Participants will determine which of these essential skills they want to acquire or improve, and they will develop and implement a plan to achieve these skills.
- C. Participants will increase their competencies in maintaining their homes.
- D. Participants will report improvement in their home maintenance activities.

Administer the self-evaluation forms to determine teaching strategies and assess the results of the learning:

- Ask participants to fill out the two self-evaluation sheets headed “Evaluating My Need To Know More About Home Maintenance” and “An Assessment of How My Home Maintenance Activities Affect My Family’s Health and Well-Being.” These should be filled out before any lessons are implemented.
- Then ask the participants to fill out the self-evaluation sheets “My Plan for Improving My Skills” that relate to the areas they indicated they want to improve. For example, if a participant indicated on the first form that it was important for her to know more about keeping the bathroom clean, ask her to fill out the sheet called “Cleaning the Bathroom” and list goals and plans for achieving goals.
- If the participants indicate that they would attend workshops, use the lesson plans that follow to give the lessons most needed. Alternatively, give the participants the fact sheets to read on their own if they indicate that they prefer to use that learning strategy. Except for Lesson 1, the lessons do not need to be given in any particular order.
- Six months after the lessons, ask the participants to again fill out the form: “An Assessment of How My Home Maintenance Activities Affect My Family’s Health and Well-Being.” Compare the answers on this instrument to the answers the participants gave on this same instrument before the lessons. Report the differences in the two assessments.

Participants should return completed evaluations to their local extension agent or program facilitator.

Section 2

HOUSEHOLD CLEANING

OVERVIEW

PURPOSE OF THE LESSON

Discussion about suggested cleaning standards, frequency of cleaning, who cleans, and suggested cleaning products for use.

OBJECTIVES

These plans can be used before teaching about cleaning specific areas of the home.

- Make copies of the following fact sheets:
- Frequency of Cleaning
- Suggestions for a Household Cleaning Schedule
- Establishing a Household Work Schedule

Keeping a Home Clean and Orderly:

- Who does what task and when or how often must this task be performed?

Comments/Notes

LESSON ONE

HOUSEHOLD CLEANING PRODUCTS

DISCUSSION

Assemble the cleaning products suggested in the skill sheet *Household Cleaning Products*. Here are some suggestions to begin a discussion:

- How often would **you** clean a house or your living quarters?
- What are some reasons we clean our living quarters?
 - For healthful environments?
- What are some standards by which we keep our living quarters clean?
- How did you learn to clean your living quarters?
 - From your mothers, fathers or someone else?
 - What kind of standards did their parents have?
 - Does the house have to be spotless?
 - Can it be clean enough to be comfortable?
 - Are there any health concerns about cleanliness?
 - Is clutter acceptable?
 - Do things get lost because of the untidiness of the house?
 - Do family members have regularly assigned cleaning chores?
 - Are there times that there was a big push to clean up the house?
 - What are those times?
- Emphasize that there are differing standards for cleanliness in the home and there is not one “right” standard.
- Use the fact sheets titled *Frequency of Cleaning* and *Suggestions for a Household Cleaning Schedule*.
- Discuss what changes could be made in this schedule.
 - Using the chores in that chart, ask the participants to fill out the chart: *Establishing a Household Work Schedule*.
- Ask participants to be realistic about what chores can be tackled every day and every week.
- Emphasize that everyone’s charts will be different depending on personal standards, the number of people in the household, and the time constraints of household members.

- Discuss the division of cleaning chores among household members in their childhood homes or in their current homes.
 - Did one person do most of the cleaning?
 - Were children assigned regular chores? Were they paid to do them or were they expected to do them as part of their responsibility as a family member?
 - Did they get tired of doing the same chores?
 - How would it have worked to have rotated the chores among family members?
- If the participants are adults, have them think about their present households.
 - Who does the cleaning chores now?
 - Is there is more than one family member in the household where a division of labor might help?
 - How could the chores be divided up?
 - At what age is it appropriate for kids to start learning how to take on some of the cleaning responsibilities?
- What chores are appropriate for kids of different ages?
 - Use the worksheet: *Keeping a Home Clean and Orderly: Whose Job Is It?*
 - Suggest that they talk to other members of the household about the jobs that need to be done and assign tasks according to the time and abilities of the household members.
- Suggest they post this worksheet on the refrigerator or another visible place as a reminder.
- Suggest that household members can check when a task is completed.
- Children could put stickers on the chart when they have completed their tasks.
- Talk about household cleaning products, using the fact sheet, *Household Cleaning Products*.
 - Have examples of the various products.
 - An attempt has been made to recommend products that are low in cost and can be used for multiple purposes.
 - If participants ask about other products, recommend that they read the labels carefully and use them according to the label directions.
- Emphasize that cleaning products containing chlorine bleach should never be mixed with products containing ammonia — this results in a poisonous gas.
- Talk about storing the cleaning products so they will be convenient but remain out of the reach of children.

LESSON TWO

CLEANING THE BATHROOM

DISCUSSION

Make copies of the three skill sheets: *Cleaning Toilets*, *Cleaning Tubs and Showers*, and *Bathroom Sinks and Counters*.

- Discuss how frequently these bathroom fixtures need to be cleaned.
 - There will be different standards and ideas about how often bathrooms should be cleaned.
 - Do not give the impression that there is one “correct” standard, for example, every week.
 - Emphasize that there are health issues associated with having dirty bathroom fixtures.
- Bacteria and viruses can be spread from one person to another if bathroom fixtures have been contaminated.
- If someone in the household is ill, it may be prudent to clean the bathroom more frequently to prevent the spread of disease.
- Children learning to use the bathroom may “dribble” outside the toilet; in this case it is important to clean more often.
- Assemble the cleaning products that could be used to clean the bathroom.
 - They are listed on the fact sheets.
 - Talk about storing them in a convenient place so that they are readily available when someone is ready to clean.
 - A convenient container might be a plastic bucket to keep everything together.
 - If there are young children in the household, avoid storing cleaning products under the bathroom sink.
 - Although it might be helpful to demonstrate the cleaning techniques, it probably is not necessary.

Everyone is familiar with bathroom fixtures, so going over the main points in the fact sheets is probably sufficient.

- When talking about cleaning tubs and showers, emphasize techniques that prevent the growth of mold and mildew in the bathroom.
- Some ideas are to wipe down the tub or shower area after each use with a towel or sponge (mop, squeegee, large rag, etc.).

- Run an exhaust fan in the bathroom or open a window after showering to get rid of excess moisture.
- If mold or mildew is growing around the tub or shower fixtures, recommend using chlorine bleach mixed in water to kill the mold.

You could also use the fact sheet *Cleaning Windows and Mirrors* to talk about cleaning the bathroom mirror and the fact sheet *Cleaning Floors* to talk about cleaning bathroom floors.

If mold is identified as an issue in bathrooms, refer to the publication: *Controlling Mold Growth in the Home MF2141*.

LESSON THREE

CLEANING THE KITCHEN

DISCUSSION

Make copies of the skill sheets: *Cleaning Kitchen Surfaces*, *Cleaning the Microwave Oven*, *Cleaning a Conventional Oven*, *Cleaning the Cooktop*, *Cleaning the Refrigerator*, and *Cleaning a Refrigerator Freezer That Isn't Self-Defrosting*.

- Discuss again the different preferences for cleaning in the kitchen and how often participants think cleaning needs to happen.
- Emphasize that food safety issues are important — dirty surfaces in the kitchen contaminate food.
- Talk about how more frequent cleaning is generally easier than having to scrub dried-on or baked-on food residue.

Assemble the cleaning products needed for cleaning in the kitchen.

- Talk about where they would be stored and how they would be used.
- A box of baking soda stored near the sink is handy for sprinkling on a damp dishcloth and wiping up stubborn food residue and cleaning sinks.
- You can show how to make a scrubber out of nylon net — this is an activity that gives participants something to take home.
- Because many participants use microwave ovens daily, talk about how easy they are to clean if they are wiped out frequently.
 - Discuss cooking methods that will reduce splatters inside the ovens.
 - Cooktops and ovens can be difficult to clean if food residue is cooked on.
 - Use the fact sheets to discuss methods for preventing baked-on food residue.
 - Talk about the safe use of ammonia for cleaning ovens — do not mix with other cleaning products and ventilate the area well.
 - If you conduct the workshop in a kitchen, you could talk about different types of cooktops and ovens and the different methods and products that would be used for cleaning them.

Some participants may have self-defrosting refrigerators and others may have refrigerators or freezers that need to be defrosted.

- Discuss which kind they have and how often they need to be defrosted and cleaned.
- Using the fact sheets, talk about caring for the refrigerator regularly to prevent problems later — such as wiping off the rubber gasket on the door and keeping the coil free of dust and dirt.
- These cleaning techniques will also make the appliance more energy efficient.
- If you have a refrigerator in the room, show where the gasket, the coil, and drip pan are. Caution against using sharp objects to defrost refrigerators or freezers.
- Recommend safe procedures for storing refrigerated food while cleaning the refrigerator.
- If appropriate, use the fact sheet *Cleaning Floors* when you discuss cleaning the kitchen.
 - Find out if participants have other cleaning or maintenance issues in the kitchen.
 - Dishwashing or keeping a high chair clean could be issues. Pest control could be another issue.
 - Refer to the publications listed under Resources to help answer questions about pests.

Comments/Notes

LESSON FOUR

AIR CONDITIONER AND FURNACE MAINTENANCE

DISCUSSION

Make copies of the skill sheets *Air Conditioner Maintenance and Furnace Maintenance*.

- It would be best to have a workshop on these topics in a home or building where the participants can see the units.
- If you are uncomfortable demonstrating the cleaning methods described here, ask at a hardware store for the name of a handy man, or ask a heating and air conditioning service person to assist you.
- Emphasize that the air conditioner and the furnace run more efficiently and are less likely to have problems if they are kept clean.
- The furnace filter is designed to keep dust out of the furnace motor; therefore, the filter should be replaced when it gets dirty.
- Show the participants how to check the furnace filter and how to replace it.
- Purchase some furnace filters from the hardware store and emphasize that residents need to purchase the right size filter for their system.

Air conditioners can get debris in them, which causes them to run inefficiently or not at all.

- Show the participants how to remove the debris safely — turn off the unit or unplug it first.
- A window air conditioner has a filter that can be cleaned and replaced.
- A central air conditioner should have debris cleared from around the outside unit so air can circulate freely through the unit.
- The coils can be washed off with a garden hose — turn off the power to the unit before cleaning it.
- It is recommended that furnaces be checked by a service person at least every other year to ensure that they are working properly and safely.

You could also have a carbon monoxide detector and a smoke detector on hand to show the participants.

- The purpose of these detectors is to wake residents and provide a warning that carbon monoxide or smoke are in the house.

- One source of carbon monoxide may be a malfunctioning furnace.
- Recommend that these be installed in the sleeping areas of the house.
- If these detectors have batteries, recommend that they be changed twice a year.

Refer to *My Home Book* for more information about heating systems.

Comments/Notes

LESSON FIVE

GENERAL CLEANING OF LIVING AND BEDROOM AREAS

DISCUSSION

Make copies of the skill sheets *Cleaning Windows and Mirrors* and *Cleaning Floors*.

- You could also have on hand the extension publication *Cleaning the Home to Reduce Indoor Air Contamination*, MF2102. (This publication is available on the K-State Research and Extension bookstore website.)
- Also, you may want to refer to the Extension Publication: *Home*A* Syst: An Environmental Risk-Management Guide for the Home*. (www.bookstore.ksre.ksu.edu/Item.aspx?catId=361&pubId=360)

<http://www.bookstore.ksre.ksu.edu/pubs/HOMEASST.pdf>

Assemble the cleaning products needed to clean windows and floors. Discuss preferences for how often they need to be cleaned.

- Cleaning windows may be an aesthetic issue and the participants' ideas on frequency of cleaning will vary.
- Remember, cleaning floors is not only an aesthetic issue but also a health issue if there are children playing on the floor.

The issue of waxing or other floor products may come up when discussing hard-surface floors.

- It may be helpful to be ready with a variety of floor cleaning treatments so you can talk about following the label directions.
- Bring a vacuum cleaner and show how to empty or replace the bag that collects the dirt.
- If participants have family members who have allergies or asthma, you can recommend high efficiency vacuums with filters that collect nearly all the dust from the air.
- Also, you may talk about carpet versus tile, laminate, vinyl, or other non-carpet types of floor coverings that tend to attract fewer allergens.

There are other cleaning issues for people with allergies and asthma.

- Refer to the publication *Cleaning the Home to Reduce Indoor Air Contamination*, MF2102, for recommendations on cleaning in the bedrooms of people with these problems.
- If participants live in older dwellings, there may be issues related to lead dust in the home. MF2102 also has recommendations for cleaning up lead dust.

You may also wish to include some of the information from the following fact sheets:

- Controlling Clutter
- Maintaining a Clutter-Free House
- Controlling Paper Clutter
- Controlling Clutter in Children's Rooms, and
- Controlling Closet Clutter

See the recommendations in the next lesson for using these fact sheets.

Comments/Notes

LESSON SIX

CONTROLLING CLUTTER

DISCUSSION

Make copies of these fact sheets: *Controlling Clutter*, *Maintaining a Clutter-Free House*, *Controlling Paper Clutter*, *Controlling Clutter in Children's Rooms*, and *Controlling Closet Clutter*.

- Assemble some of the items listed on the Controlling Clutter fact sheet.
- You may also wish to purchase or borrow some decorative storage boxes from the hardware or discount store (like under-the-bed storage boxes, plastic storage boxes with lids)
- Also, you may want to get both large and small plastic units for filing papers, shoe storage containers, etc.

Discuss with the participants what type of clutter they find most frustrating.

- Is it the paper clutter that comes from newspapers, mail, catalogs, children's papers, or others?
- Is it toys and children's games and clothes?
- Is it clothes that don't get picked up and put away?
- Is it food containers that get left around the house instead of being returned to the kitchen?

Recommend that participants brainstorm about how to deal with the most frustrating type of clutter first.

- Maybe other participants can share their personal clutter management ideas.
- Suggest that there may be two important steps to managing clutter:
 - Establishing a place to keep things that are important to keep. This may include buying or finding some storage space or containers
 - Establishing a system or schedule for picking things up and either throwing them away or putting them away.
 - It will be necessary to gain the cooperation of everyone in the household so one person does not have to take on all of the responsibility.

Use the fact sheets to discuss some ideas for managing paper clutter, managing clutter in children's rooms, and managing closet space.

- Show appropriate storage boxes and items that could be used for each type of clutter.

- Suggest establishing a schedule for picking up toys and items in children's rooms, for dealing with mail and other papers, and for cleaning and organizing closets.

Go back to the worksheet Establishing a Household Work Schedule and talk about how to schedule these kinds of activities for controlling clutter.

- Go over the suggestions in the fact sheet Maintaining a Clutter-Free House.
- Remind the participants that people have preferences for cleanliness or tidiness of their homes.
- Not all family members may agree on how to maintain their space.
 - Some children may resent being told that they have to clean up their rooms. If these older children can be involved in purchasing items such as decorative storage units, they may be more willing to cooperate.
 - If the participants have small children, remind them that when children are taught to pick up their toys and clothes at a young age, it can become a habit that could stay with them as they get older.
 - Suggest that modeling the desired behavior can be essential to teaching children about expectations of being organized in their personal quarters.
- When children observe specific behaviors in parents, they are more likely to adopt such behavior.

REFERENCES

Facts & Information on Household Pests

Ants, MF2887

Attic Flies, MF2745

Bed Bugs, MF2926

Bees and Wasps, MF793

Boxelder and Red-shouldered Bugs, MF2580

Brown Recluse Spiders, MF3133

Carpenter Bees, MF2946

Carpet Beetles, EP119

Clothes Moths, EP122

Clover Mites, MF915

Cockroaches, MF2765

Common Spiders, EP125

Common Stored-Food Insect Pests, MF2271

Controlling Stored-Food Insects, MF2270

Crickets, MF749

Drain Flies LD315

False Chinch Bugs, MF3047

Fleas Infesting Pets and Homes, MF760

Hackberry Nipplegall Maker (Psyllids), MF957

Horsehair Worms LD313

Millipedes and Centipedes, EP121

Multicolored Asian Lady Beetle

Mosquitoes and West Nile Virus, MF2571

Pests Associated with Firewood, LD

Pillbugs and Sowbugs, EP120

Silverfish and Firebrats, EP123

Spiders and Scorpions, MF771

Springtails, EP124

Termites, MF722

Windscorpions, LD314

Western Flower Thrips, MF-2922

(Many of these Publications are in Adobe Acrobat PDF format. Versions of Adobe's Acrobat Reader are available for free for Macintosh, Windows, and other operating systems. PDF files can usually be viewed on smartphones, as well.)

OTHER RESOURCES:

If there are questions about controlling pests in the house, refer to these extension publications:

- MF2270 Controlling Stored-Food Insects: <http://www.bookstore.ksre.ksu.edu/pubs/MF2270.pdf>
- MF2115 Human Lice: Prevention and Control: <http://www.bookstore.ksre.ksu.edu/pubs/MF2115.pdf>
- MF1123 Controlling House Mice: <http://www.bookstore.ksre.ksu.edu/pubs/MF1123.pdf>

If there are questions about maintenance of the lawn, refer to these extension publications:

- MF1155 Mowing Your Lawn <http://www.bookstore.ksre.ksu.edu/pubs/mf1155.pdf>
- MF2059 Watering Your Lawn <http://bookstore.ksre.k-state.edu/pubs/MF2059.pdf>
- MF2132 Practical Tips for Home and Yard, <http://www.bookstore.ksre.ksu.edu/pubs/mf2132.pdf>
- MF2135 Lawn and Garden Pesticides <http://www.bookstore.ksre.ksu.edu/pubs/MF2135.pdf>
- MF2324 Fertilizing Kansas Lawns <http://www.bookstore.ksre.ksu.edu/pubs/MF2324.pdf>
- [f](#)
- C550 All About Pruning <http://bookstore.ksre.k-state.edu/pubs/C550.pdf>

Links to other web sites.

National Pest Control Association (<http://www.pestworld.org/>) - your one stop for pest management information

Terminix Pest Library - (<https://www.terminix.com/about/media-center/digital-content/>) information about termites, bed bugs, and other household pests

- There are extension resources about water sources used in the home and septic systems for disposing of waster water. Some of them are:
- MF871, Suggested Water Tests for Private Systems
- MF947 Septic Tank Maintenance

Extension publications about organizing household records include:

- L801 Organizing Household Records
- L776 Taking Inventory — Protecting Your Household Possessions
- MF685 Our Valuable Records

Comments/Notes

HOUSE CLEANING AND CLUTTER CONTROL

House cleaning and clutter control have several advantages for the family:

- There may be less chance for the spread of disease during cold and flu season.
- There may be fewer problems from pests such as cockroaches and mice.
- Family members with allergies and asthma may experience fewer problems.
- There may be less risk of food-safety problems.
- Appliances will likely run more efficiently.
- The family may experience fewer problems with the organization of their belongings.

Research shows that organized living, playing, and working spaces tend to be less stressful when our items of life, play, and work are easily accessible.

- Organized living and working spaces help us spend less time hunting for lost or misplaced items.
- We may find it easier to engage in leisure activities in well-organized living spaces.
- Living spaces are more likely to be healthful environments when kept free of excessive dirt, discarded food, and other bacteria and germ related debris.

To promote healthful living environments, we can follow a few basic cleaning guidelines.

- Keep kitchen appliances free of food spills.
- Keep refrigerators cleared of food that is older than is safe. See MF3130, *Safe Food Storage: The Refrigerator and Freezer*, for more information. (<http://www.bookstore.ksre.ksu.edu/pubs/MF3130.pdf>)
 - Appliances that are kept clean run more efficiently, saving energy and repair costs.

This group of lessons is about basic cleaning: why we should do it and what is the easiest, least expensive way to do it.

FREQUENCY OF CLEANING

The frequency of cleaning any one place in our living spaces depends on several factors:

- The number of people residing in one living space.
- Types of activities taking place in the living spaces.
- Personal preferences for organization and cleanliness in the living spaces.

Often one person in a household will have different preferences for organization and cleanliness in the living spaces than another person.

- Conflicts could arise about who should pick up and clean up and how often.

- Household members will need to work out these conflicts.
- A suggested cleaning schedule appears on page 25.
 - Use the charts called “Establishing a Household Work Schedule” and “Keeping a Home Clean and Orderly...Whose Job Is It?”
 - Talk to other household members about dividing the work in age-appropriate ways.
 - The schedule provides guidelines that help eliminate the problem of excess clutter so cleaning doesn’t become an overwhelming chore.
 - Your family may decide that some of these tasks should be done more frequently or less frequently than suggested here.

SUGGESTIONS FOR A HOUSEHOLD CLEANING SCHEDULE

DAILY TASKS	WEEKLY TASKS	OCCASIONAL CHORES	SEASONAL CHORES
KITCHEN			
Wash dishes	Dispose of leftover food	Clean drip pans on range	Clean cupboards
Wipe counter tops	Damp mop floor	Clean oven	Scrub floors
Wipe out sink	Clean garbage pail	Defrost and clean refrigerator	
Empty garbage	Wipe out microwave	Wash walls and woodwork	
Sweep floor			
BATHROOM			
Wipe out sink and tub	Wash floor	Wash throw rug	Clean closets
Replace soiled towels	Laundry towels	Wash walls and woodwork	
Empty waste baskets	Clean toilet bowl		
Put away grooming aids and products	Wipe tile surfaces		
	Clean toothbrush holder		
	Clean mirrors		
	Clean sink, shower and tub		
LIVING ROOM			
Clean ash trays	Vacuum rugs and furniture	Shampoo rugs and furniture	Clean closets
Dispose of papers	Vacuum or dust floors	Wipe light bulbs	Clean screens or storm windows
Straighten magazines, DVDs, CDs, and throw pillows	Dust furniture, lamps and accessories	Move and clean under furniture	Wax floors
		Wash windows and curtains	Wash walls and woodwork
		Dust books and pictures	Scrub floors
BEDROOMS			
Make beds	Laundry bed linens	Turn mattresses	Wash or dry clean blankets and spread
Put away clothes	Vacuum and dust	Wash mattress covers and pad	Organize closets
		Wash pillows	
		Wash walls and woodwork	

ESTABLISHING A HOUSEHOLD WORK SCHEDULE

LIVING AREAS	VERY FREQUENT CHORES (DAILY)	FREQUENT CHORES (WEEKLY)	OCCASIONAL CHORES (AS NEEDED)	SEASONAL CHORES (1-2 TIMES A YEAR)
KITCHEN				
BATHROOM				
LIVING ROOM				
DEN				
BEDROOM				
BASEMENT				
PATIO				
GARAGE				
ATTIC				
OTHER				

KEEPING A HOME CLEAN AND ORDERLY: WHOSE JOB IS IT?

List 15 jobs that should be done in your home on a regular basis. List who is to do them and check when the job is done. Post for all family members to see and check off their jobs.

JOB TO BE DONE	WHO DOES THE CHORE	WHEN TO DO IT	CHECK WHEN DONE
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			
6.			
7.			
8.			
9.			
10.			
11.			
12.			
13.			
14.			
15.			

HOUSEHOLD CLEANING PRODUCTS

There are many cleaning products on the market. However, we do not need to spend a lot of money on cleaning products. Here are a few relatively inexpensive basic products, and many of them can be used for a variety of surfaces.

Broom:	Use on hard surface floors, porches, and sidewalks.
Mop:	Use to damp mop hard surface floors. Choose one with a sponge that can be squeezed.
Plastic Bucket:	A 2- or 3-gallon bucket with a handle works well for many cleaning jobs.
Vacuum Cleaner:	Vacuum cleaners are used for cleaning carpets, upholstery, and even hard-surface floors.
Rags:	Worn out cotton clothing, diapers, torn sheets, worn towels and washcloths all make good rags.
Toothbrush:	An old toothbrush is a good tool for scrubbing hard-to-get-to areas.
Rubber Gloves:	Use to protect hands from strong chemicals such as chlorine bleach.
Liquid Dishwashing Detergent:	A detergent used for hand washing dishes makes a good all-purpose cleaner for many hard surfaces.
Chlorine Bleach:	Bleach used for bleaching white clothes can be added to water to disinfect surfaces.
Baking Soda:	Makes a good powdered cleanser that doesn't scratch surfaces. Baking soda can absorb smells in the refrigerator and is used to "freshen" sink drains Used in conjunction with toothpaste, it cleans and freshens teeth and gums. Hairstylists use baking soda with shampoo to cleanse the hair from product "build-up." Simply put about a tablespoon of baking powder in the palm of your hand with your favorite shampoo. Put the mixture in your hair, and shampoo as usual. Rinse well and condition as usual. Not recommended for color-treated hair.
Ammonia:	Liquid ammonia is a strong cleaner used to clean ovens and cut grease. When mixed with water it cleans windows.
Rubbing alcohol:	An excellent window and non-wood surface cleaner. It removes ink in some instances.
Vinegar:	White vinegar helps remove hard water deposits. It can also be mixed with water to wash windows.
Toilet Brush and Bowl Cleaner	A commercial toilet bowl cleaner cleans and disinfects.

GETTING ORGANIZED

- Store cleaners near the place where they will be used.
- Keep toxic chemicals/cleaners out of reach for young children and pets.
 - Safety must take precedence over convenience.
- Toilet bowl cleaner and the toilet brush will be handier if stored in the bathroom.
- Set aside a shelf in a closet or in the utility room to store cleaners, brushes, rags, etc.
- Small items can be stored in a small basket, plastic bag, plastic trash can, or in the scrub bucket.
- Find a convenient place for the broom, mop, and vacuum cleaner.
- The easier it is to get out and put away cleaning equipment, the more often it will be used.

CLEANING KITCHEN SURFACES

CLEANING PRODUCTS NEEDED:

- Rags
- Dishcloth or nylon net scrubber
- Baking soda or dishwashing detergent
- Rubber scraper or toothbrush
- Chlorine bleach
- Rubber gloves
- White vinegar

REGULAR CARE:

- It is important to keep kitchen surfaces free of discarded or old food to prevent food borne illness.
- This includes counters, sinks, cutting boards, and appliances.
- It is best practice to clean the kitchen sink daily or after each use.
- Cutting boards and counters must be cleaned after each use to avoid bacterial growth.
- Wipe down the outside of appliances when you have spills or other grime.
- Remove food particles from the sink strainer daily.

A SUGGESTED CLEANING ROUTINE:

- Wet a rag, dishcloth, or nylon net scrubber.
- Sprinkle with baking soda or other preferred cleansers. Scrub the sink, counter, or appliance.
- Use dishwashing detergent on a rag instead of baking soda.
- Dried-on food can be removed with a rubber scraper or toothbrush.
- Rinse the surface with a rag dipped in clear water. Rinse until all the soap or baking soda residue is gone.
- Mix one or two capfuls of chlorine bleach in a gallon of warm water.
- Wear rubber gloves. Dip your rag into bleach solution and wipe the sink and counters. This can help prevent the spread of bacteria that causes food poisoning.
- After cleaning appliances, wipe the outside with a dry, soft cloth to prevent streaks.
- If hard water spots form on faucets, pour white vinegar on a rag and wipe the faucets down. Then, wipe with a soft, dry rag.

GETTING ORGANIZED:

- Keep a box of baking soda near the kitchen sink so it is easy to pick up and sprinkle on a dishcloth to wipe down the sink and other surfaces.
- Keep white vinegar handy if hard water deposits are a problem on kitchen faucets.

CLEANING THE REFRIGERATOR

CLEANING PRODUCTS NEEDED:

- Rags
- Dry towels
- Dishwashing liquid
- Baking soda
- Chlorine bleach
- Vacuum cleaner

RECOMMENDED CARE:

- Wipe up spills immediately to prevent them from drying and becoming hard to remove.
- The rubber gasket on the doors of the refrigerator and freezer need to be kept clean so the door closes tightly and to prevent the rubber from deteriorating.
- When bad odors develop in the refrigerator, it usually means spoiled food. Hunt for the culprit and throw it away.
- Drip pans under refrigerators can become moldy if water sits in the pan. Clean the drip pan about every other month.
- The coil under or behind a refrigerator needs to be vacuumed twice a year to keep the appliance running efficiently.

TO CLEAN:

1. Turn off the refrigerator while cleaning it.
2. Remove food and containers from the refrigerator. Throw away food that is getting old. Using a clean, wet rag or dishcloth, wipe off sticky food containers. Temporarily store the food and containers in a picnic cooler or in another refrigerator while you are cleaning the refrigerator and freezer.
3. Remove the vegetable crispers and shelves. Put about a gallon of warm water in a crisper bin or a mixing bowl with some dishwashing detergent to make a sudsy solution.
4. Dip a rag or dishcloth in the solution and wipe down the inside of the refrigerator and freezer. Use a rubber scraper to remove dried on food. Baking soda sprinkled on the cloth makes a cleanser to help remove stubborn dirt.
5. Wipe down all the surfaces in the refrigerator including the walls, permanent shelves, floor of the freezer, under the crispers, racks on the doors, and gaskets on the doors. Wipe down the outside of the refrigerator and the top of the refrigerator.
6. Replace the soapy water with clear water and rinse the cloth in the clear water. Wipe down all surfaces with a clear water solution until the surfaces feel clean and smooth and free of soap or baking soda residue.
7. Dry off all surfaces with a clean towel.

8. Wash the crisper bins and shelves in the kitchen sink in hot soapy water. Rinse and dry.
9. Remove the drip pan from under the refrigerator and wash in hot soapy water. Rinse with a solution of chlorine bleach and water. Dry the drip pan before returning it under the refrigerator.
10. Using the vacuum hose attachment, vacuum under the refrigerator and vacuum the coils under or behind the refrigerator. If the vacuum hose will not fit or your vacuum does not have a hose, wrap a rag around a yardstick and dust coils. Wipe up spills on the floor under and around the refrigerator.
11. When the refrigerator and all components are clean and dry, replace the shelves and crisper bins, and replace the food in the refrigerator. Replace the refrigerator drip pan.
12. Turn the refrigerator on.
13. An open container of baking soda in a refrigerator helps remove odors.

CLEANING A REFRIGERATOR/FREEZER THAT ISN'T SELF-DEFROSTING

CLEANING PRODUCTS NEEDED:

- Rags
- Dry towels
- Dishwashing liquid
- Baking soda
- Chlorine bleach
- Vacuum cleaner

TO CLEAN:

1. Turn off the refrigerator while cleaning it.
2. Remove food and containers from the refrigerator.
 - Throw away food that is getting old. Using a clean, wet rag or dishcloth, wipe sticky food containers.
 - Temporarily store the food and containers in a picnic cooler or in another refrigerator while you are cleaning the refrigerator and freezer.
 - If ice has formed around the coils or on the walls of the refrigerator or freezer, put pans of hot water in the refrigerator to help melt the ice.
 - As the water cools, replace with hot water until all the ice melts.
 - Do not use an ice pick or knife to chip the ice — it could damage the coils or the walls of the refrigerator/freezer.
 - Use clean towels to wipe up the drips.
3. After the ice has melted, proceed with steps 3 through 13 from the *Cleaning the Refrigerator* skills sheet.

CLEANING THE ELECTRIC COOKTOP

CLEANING PRODUCTS NEEDED:

- Dishcloth
- Dishwashing liquid
- Baking soda
- Ammonia
- Plastic mesh pad

SUGGESTED CARE:

- Use pans large enough to hold cooking food to prevent food running over and cooking onto the burners.
- Reduce heat to the lowest temperature that allows continued cooking to prevent boil-over spills.
- If possible, cover cooking foods that tend to splatter.
- Wipe up spills immediately to prevent burning.
- Run the exhaust hood fan when using the range to remove grease and moisture from the kitchen.
- If your stovetop has reflector bowls, keep them free of food build-up. They are designed to reflect heat onto the bottom of the cooking pan. Do not line bowls with aluminum foil unless the appliance manual says it is okay. Use of abrasive scouring powders or pads will discolor the bowls over time, reducing their heat reflectance.
- Never use abrasive scouring powders or steel wool pads on any part of the cooktop, as they will scratch the surface.

TO CLEAN:

- If you have a glass or ceramic cooktop, follow the cleaning instructions in the manual.
 - Do not use scouring powder or steel wool pads on these surfaces.
 - Sprinkle baking soda on a wet dishcloth to make an effective cleaner on a cold cooktop.
 - Rinse well and dry.
 - Electric burners usually burn off the food spilled on them.
- Wipe heavy spills with a damp cloth when the burner is completely cold.
- Remove gas burners and grates for cleaning.
- Soak grates and burners in very hot water and detergent for about 30 minutes if very dirty.
- Then scrub with a brush, rinse, and dry.
- Add a small amount of ammonia to the soaking solution if grates and burners are very greasy. Do not use scouring powder or bleach.

- Keep the burners free of food by cleaning them occasionally. Carefully clean with a very fine wire brush. Do not use a toothpick — it could break off and clog the burner holes.
- Rinse burners in hot water and place them upside down to dry.
- Remove reflector bowls under burners and wash in hot suds. Soak to loosen heavy dirt or grease. Wipe off trim rings with a sudsy cloth. For stubborn spots on chrome bowls and rings, use a paste of baking soda and water with a plastic mesh pad — do not use scouring powder or stainless steel pads.
- Rinse and dry.
- Never put chrome reflector bowls in a dishwasher or self-cleaning oven. Stainless steel reflector bowls are well-suited to the dishwasher.
- The cooktop around the burners is made of porcelain enamel.
 - Wipe spills at once, taking care to avoid burns from heated burners.
 - Wet a dishcloth and lay on stubborn soil to soak it off.
 - Use a plastic mesh pad on stubborn spots.
 - A baking soda paste also helps remove stubborn spots.
 - Do not use abrasive pads or scouring powders as they can permanently scratch the surface.
 - Clean the sides and front of the range in the same way.
 - If possible, remove the control knobs and wash in warm suds with a cloth or brush. Rinse and dry.
 - Clean under the drip pans with warm suds. Rinse and dry.

CLEANING A CONVENTIONAL OVEN

CLEANING PRODUCTS NEEDED:

- Ammonia
- Rubber gloves
- Paper towels
- Newspapers

(Follow directions in the appliance manual for self-cleaning and continuous cleaning ovens.)

SUGGESTED CARE:

- Do not store items in the oven, as they may melt or burn if the oven is accidentally turned on with them inside.
- Use large-enough cooking pans to avoid spills.
- Wipe up spills promptly to avoid baked-on encrustations of foods and grease.
- Do not cover floor of oven or the oven racks with foil unless the appliance manual recommends it.

TO CLEAN:

- Remove broiler pans and racks and soak in a sink or pan of sudsy water to which a little ammonia has been added. Do not add chlorine bleach. Ammonia and bleach produce a toxic gas.
- Never soak aluminum in ammonia.
- If necessary, you can scour oven racks with steel wool soap pads to remove baked on grease or food.
- Rinse and dry broiler pans and racks.
- Fill a small glass bowl with 1 cup full strength ammonia, place in the oven and close the door — do NOT turn the oven on. (If the odor is irritating, open a window slightly or turn on the hood exhaust fan.) Let it stand overnight. Next, use a spatula to loosen and remove any large pieces or debris. Wipe loosened dirt with paper towels or newspapers. Wear rubber gloves.
- If necessary, rub surfaces with a suitable abrasive, such as a steel wool soap pad. Wipe off the soap with paper towels.
- Wash with warm, soapy water and rinse. Repeat the process if necessary.
- Commercial oven cleaners can be used if ovens are very soiled.
- Turn off the pilot light if using spray oven cleaners.
 - Protect the surfaces around the oven with several layers of newspaper.
 - Never spray cleaners in a hot oven.
 - Do not spray on the oven light, electric elements or pilot light.
 - Follow the directions on the can.
 - Rinse well.

CLEANING THE MICROWAVE OVEN

CLEANING PRODUCTS NEEDED:

- Dishwashing liquid
- Paper towels
- Dish cloth

REGULAR CARE:

- Avoid unnecessary splatters by covering dishes with lids, waxed paper, or paper towels.
- Wipe up spills at once.
- Never use abrasive pads or powders on a microwave oven.

TO CLEAN:

- If the microwave has a removable glass shelf, remove it and wash in warm, sudsy water.
 - Rinse and dry.
- Wash inside of oven with dishwashing liquid and water.
 - Rinse and wipe dry with paper towels or clean cloth.
- Especially clean around the edge of the door and the door opening to prevent soil build-up, which would prevent the door from closing tightly.
- If spills are dried on, boil water in a glass cup for a few minutes.
 - Steam should loosen the soil.
 - Leave in the oven 5 minutes.
 - Remove soil, wash and wipe dry.

SAFETY FIRST

- Don't use the microwave for deep-frying, canning, or heating baby bottles.
- Stay near when microwaving popcorn.
 - Heat buildup can cause a fire.
- Don't dry or disinfect clothing or other articles in the microwave because of the risk of fire.
- Use only microwave-safe utensils and containers.
- Don't use an oven if an object is caught in the door or if the door doesn't close firmly or is otherwise damaged.
- Be sure children who use the microwave can do so safely.

CLEANING TOILETS

CLEANING PRODUCTS NEEDED:

- Toilet brush
- Chlorine bleach
- Commercial toilet bowl cleaner
- Rag
- Rubber gloves

SUGGESTED CARE:

- It is important to clean the toilet regularly.
- Cleaning frequency depends on the number of people in the household.
 - Excessive splashing during use may require frequent cleaning.
- Keeping the toilet area clean prevents odors.
- It also helps stop the spread of disease, especially if you have young children.
- Frequent cleaning controls the growth of mildew and/or molds.
 - Excessive mildew and molds are known allergens for some people.
- Toilets and most sewers were meant for flushable toilet papers, only.
 - Do not flush cigarettes, condoms, disposable diapers, paper towels, clothing, baby wipes, or sanitary napkins.
 - Your toilet could become clogged and it may overflow.
- If you cannot clear the toilet of an immediate clog, you may have to call a plumber.
- A sluggish toilet may indicate tree roots in the sewer lines. Call a plumber for this problem, too.

TO CLEAN:

- Use commercial toilet bowl cleaner or measure $\frac{1}{2}$ cup bleach into the toilet (do not mix toilet bowl cleaner and bleach).
- Close the toilet lid and let the solution soak for 10 minutes.
 - Both toilet bowl cleaner and bleach are poisonous.
 - Do not leave the toilet bowl unattended while either of these cleaners are being used.
 - Children or pets who drink this water could be poisoned.
- Wear rubber gloves and scrub the inside of the toilet with a toilet brush.
- Be sure to scrub under the rim.
- Flush to rinse.
- Let the brush drip dry in a plastic container, such as plastic bleach or milk bottles cut at the top for wider access.
- Mix two capfuls of bleach in a gallon of water in a bucket.

- Wearing rubber gloves, use the solution and a rag to scrub the lid, seat, and the outside of the toilet.
- Rinse your rag often in the bleach water.
- Scrub the floor around the toilet to control mildew and clean up splatters.
- Be careful using a bleach mixture if you have carpet in the bathroom.
 - Even a small splatter will remove color from the rug.

SAFETY FIRST

- Store bleach and toilet bowl cleaner in a locked cupboard or on a high shelf where children cannot reach it.
- Close the lid on the toilet to prevent curious children from playing in the toilet bowl.
 - An open toilet can be a drowning risk for a small child.
 - Wear rubber gloves when using household bleach.

CLEANING TUBS AND SHOWERS

CLEANING PRODUCTS NEEDED:

- Baking soda or other non-abrasive cleanser
- Bleach
- Rags
- Toothbrush
- Rubber gloves

SUGGESTED CARE:

- Monthly cleaning will generally control odors, molds, and mildew.
- More frequent cleaning will be necessary if you take baths instead of showers.
- Removing hair from the drain after each use will keep the drain running freely.
- You can reduce the work of one person (yourself) when you have a house rule that requires each person who showers to wipe down the walls and floor of the shower.
 - For those who use the bathtub, clean and wipe tub to decrease likelihood of rings, molds, and mildew.
- A “squeegee” kept in the shower works very well for wiping down the walls.
 - If you do not have a squeegee, a bath towel works well, too.
 - Run an exhaust fan or open a window after bathing and showering to get rid of excess moisture.
 - Use a non-scratching (non-abrasive) cleanser on tubs and showers.
 - Some commercial powdered cleansers will scratch the surface.
 - Read cleaning product labels to determine suitability for your shower or tub.

TO CLEAN:

- Remove hair from the drain.
- Wet a rag or sponge with water and sprinkle lightly with a cleanser or baking soda.
- Scrub tub surfaces and rinse with cold water.
- To remove mildew, scrub with a mixture of $\frac{1}{4}$ cup liquid chlorine bleach in a gallon of water.
- Wear rubber gloves.
- If the shower wall is finished with tile and grout, mildew may grow on the grout.
- Dip an old toothbrush in the bleach and water solution and scrub the grout with the toothbrush.
- If there are rust stains on the tub, do NOT use chlorine bleach. Bleach sets

rust stains. It may be necessary to use a commercial rust remover. Follow label directions carefully.

- If the caulk around the edge of the tub is crumbled or broken, remove it carefully with a scraper. Clean and dry.
 - Squeeze new caulk into the crack between the tub and wall. Let it dry overnight before using the tub or shower.
 - If the showerhead is clogged with hard water deposits, soaking it in white vinegar helps to remove the deposits.
 - Put 1 or 2 cups of vinegar in a plastic bag.
 - Place the plastic bag around the showerhead so that it hangs in the vinegar.
 - Secure the bag to the showerhead with a rubber band, string, or tape.
 - Leave in place for 1 to 3 hours.
 - Remove the bag and run the shower.
 - You may need to use a toothbrush to remove the softened hard water particles from the shower head openings.

SAFETY FIRST

- Store rust remover and bleach in a locked cupboard or on a high shelf where children cannot reach them.
- Do not leave a bucket of water unattended. Curious children can pull it over or fall in head first and drown.

CLEANING BATHROOM SINKS AND COUNTERS

CLEANING PRODUCTS NEEDED:

- Rags
- Baking soda or other non-abrasive cleanser
- Toothbrush or nylon net scrubber
- Dishwashing detergent
- Rubber gloves
- Chlorine bleach

SUGGESTED CARE:

- Clean bathroom sinks at least once a week.
- Clean more often if needed to keep odors under control.
- Clean hair from the drain often.
- Remember that diapers and their contents can spread disease even if your child seems healthy.
- After bathing a baby in the sink or changing diapers on a counter, clean the sink and counter with detergent and water and follow with a bleach rinse.

TO CLEAN:

- Wet a rag or sponge. Sprinkle lightly with a non-abrasive cleanser, such as baking soda, and scrub the sink. Rinse.
- Dried-on toothpaste can be removed with a scraper, nylon net scrubber, or an old toothbrush. Scrub counters with a rag or sponge dampened with dishwashing detergent and water.
- Use a nylon net scrubber with detergent and water to remove most spots.
- Using rubber gloves, mix one or two capfuls of chlorine bleach in a gallon of warm water.
 - Using a rag or sponge, wipe the counters and sink.
 - Be careful about mixing dishwashing detergent with chlorine bleach.
 - Read the label. Some say, “Do not mix dishwashing liquid with chlorine bleach.”
 - Using a soft cloth to dry the sink, faucets, and counter helps prevent water spots.

CLEANING FLOORS

CLEANING PRODUCTS NEEDED:

- Dishwashing detergent
- Mop or rag
- Bucket
- Broom
- Vacuum

SUGGESTED CARE:

- Use a rug or mat for wiping off shoes when entering the house. Gritty soil tracked in on shoes, wet or dry, will scratch hard-surface floors and cause deterioration of carpet fibers.
- Vacuum or sweep regularly to remove dirt before it gets ground in. Even a carpet sweeper picks up dirt on the surface of a carpet if used before dirt is ground into the carpet.
- Wipe up spots and spills on floors immediately. On carpet, blot the spill, but do not rub.
- Treat stains on carpet immediately.

TO CLEAN HARD-SURFACE FLOORS:

Hard surface floors can be vinyl, linoleum, tile, laminate, or hardwood.

Check manufacturer's suggestions on cleaning laminate and tile flooring.

There are a variety of tile cleaners on the market. Check to see if that is right for your flooring.

Vacuum, dry mop, or sweep the floors to remove loose dirt.

- Use lukewarm water and dishwashing detergent to create a sudsy solution. Dip a mop or rag in the water and squeeze it out. Rub the floor only enough to remove dirt.
- Rinse the soap solution off by dipping the rag or mop in clean water and re-wiping the floor.
- If the floor has layers of wax buildup, it will look yellowed. Removing the wax requires harsher cleaning than ordinary cleaning and should be done no more than once a year.
- Commercial cleaners are available for removing wax. Follow the directions on the label.
- You can make a wax remover with $\frac{1}{2}$ cup ammonia and 1 cup laundry detergent in 1 gallon of warm water. Test in an inconspicuous area to see if it softens the wax film.
- Do not use wax or wax remover on vinyl no-wax floors if they still have the original finish on them.

TO CLEAN CARPET:

- Vacuum thoroughly and often to remove embedded dirt. Go over each section with the vacuum nozzle several times.

- Eventually, carpet needs some type of cleaning to remove soil that sticks to the fibers. There are a number of products available on the market: absorbent powder, foam, shampoos, and hot water or steam extraction. Each has its advantages and disadvantages. Before using a carpet cleaner, vacuum thoroughly.
- Test a product in an inconspicuous area before using. Check to make sure the test area has not changed color.
- Protect the carpet from rust stains by putting aluminum foil or plastic wrap under furniture legs until carpet is dry.
- Follow the cleaner and equipment instructions.
- Do not overwet the carpet. Remove all the cleaning product — residue left in the carpet makes it soil more quickly. Dry the carpet as quickly as possible.
- Keep mechanical action to a minimum to avoid carpet damage.

CLEANING WINDOWS AND MIRRORS

CLEANING PRODUCTS NEEDED:

- Commercial glass cleaner, rubbing alcohol, or ammonia (see recipes)
- Rags
- Paper towels
- Newspapers
- Spray bottle

TO CLEAN:

Commercial glass cleaners are available, but are more expensive than making your own cleaner. There are several recipes for making your own window cleaner:

- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup ammonia diluted in 2 quarts warm water is a good cleaner for soil and grease.
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup vinegar diluted in 2 quarts warm water helps remove hard water deposits.
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup ammonia and 2 cups rubbing alcohol mixed in 1 gallon of water makes a good heavy-duty glass cleaner. A spray bottle is handy for applying the solution.
- Rubbing alcohol works fine by itself, undiluted, for cleaning windows or other glass surfaces. Use in a spray bottle for best results.

Before washing the glass, wash the sills and cross pieces of the window first.

- Start at the top of the window or an upper pane so that the dirty solution does not drip on already-washed glass.
- Spray the window with one of the solutions above, or dip a rag into the solution and wash the window. Wipe dry with a lint-free cloth, paper towels, or crumpled newspapers.
- To prevent streaking, wash windows out of direct sunlight (the solution dries too quickly).
- When polishing, use up-and-down strokes on one side of the window and side-to-side strokes on the other side to show which side has streaks and needs additional polishing.

AIR CONDITIONER MAINTENANCE

WINDOW AIR CONDITIONERS

Window air conditioner filters should be cleaned at least once a year. The filter traps pollen, dust and dirt to keep them out of the air conditioning unit. If the filter gets clogged, you won't get maximum-cooling performance.

- Unplug the appliance and remove its front grill.
- Remove the filter and wash it thoroughly with warm soapy water. If the filter has deteriorated, replace it. Your local appliance or hardware store should be able to supply the exact size and type of replacement filter you need.

Make sure to seal the area where the window closes on top of the air conditioner. The gap left by an improper seal is energy inefficient and allows bugs into the house. Appliance stores sell kits called Air Conditioner Window Foam. These are foam strips with peel-and-stick backing.

Winterize your window air conditioner at the end of the summer. With stay-in-place units, close the vents to keep out cold air. If you leave it in the window, wrap it in plastic and seal with duct tape, or buy an air conditioner cover. If you take the appliance out of the window, be careful not to bend or damage the cooling fins on the back. Don't store the air conditioner on a garage floor — it could come into contact with corrosive de-icing salts that can drip off car tires.

CENTRAL AIR CONDITIONERS

Before using the central air conditioner in the spring, follow these simple maintenance tips to avoid unnecessary repairs and extend the life of the air conditioner:

- Turn the electrical switch to the OFF position.
- Remove leaves, sticks, and other debris that surround and cover the outside unit.
- Flush the coils clean with a garden hose. Direct the hose from the top of the unit and force the water outward toward the sides of the unit.
- Turn the electrical switch back to the ON position.

Any time during the cooling season that storms blow debris into the air conditioner unit, repeat these steps. Trim plants away from the unit that could block the flow of air around the unit.

FURNACE MAINTENANCE

SUGGESTED CARE:

Your furnace has one or two filters that clean the air that circulates through your home. When the filter gets dirty, less air can get through the filter and your furnace has to work harder. Changing the furnace filter lets the furnace run more efficiently. Families differ in the activities they engage in, the number of children in the household, whether they have pets, and the kinds of materials (such as carpet) they have in the home. All of these things affect how quickly the furnace filter gets dirty.

- Check the furnace filter once a month and change it when there is a visible accumulation of dirt and lint. You can get filters at hardware and building supply stores. Be sure to buy the right size (take an old one with you to make sure). Keep some extras on hand for convenience.
- To change the filter: Turn off the furnace or air conditioner at the thermostat.
- If there is a door to the unit, open it or remove it.
- Remove the dirty filter. Check for any clips that are holding the filter in place.
- Pull out the filter carefully, keeping the dirty side up.
- Replace the filter with one the same size.
- Replace any clips, close or replace the door to the unit, and turn the furnace system back on.

SAFETY FIRST!

- Have the furnace and air conditioning system checked by an HVAC contractor once a year. This check-up will help prevent a problem with carbon monoxide poisoning, will ensure that your furnace is running efficiently, and will detect any problems that need repair.
- If you smell gas in your house, leave the house immediately and call the gas company from a neighbor's home, or from your cell phone.
- Kansas requires a smoke detector in each rental unit. Install one or ask your landlord to install one on the ceiling next to the bedrooms. Test the unit every few months to make sure it is still working. If it has batteries, replace the batteries twice a year. You need to be able to hear the alarm from the smoke detector when you are asleep in a bedroom.
- A carbon monoxide detector is another safety feature to protect your family from carbon monoxide poisoning. Install one near the bedrooms (it does not need to be on the ceiling), so that the alarm will wake family members while sleeping.

CONTROLLING CLUTTER

When clutter gets out of control, you waste space, time and energy.

- How often do you waste time looking for things because you didn't put them away?
- Is your closet overflowing, but you can't find the item you want?
- Are your children's toys and hobby materials so jumbled that they can't enjoy them?
- Have you missed paying a bill on time because you lost it?

Getting control of clutter can seem like a huge task. However, many of us feel much more in control of our environment when we don't have to spend time looking for things that we know "are here somewhere." Breaking down the job of clearing the clutter into small tasks is easier to do than convincing yourself to take on the grueling job of sorting, putting away, and cleaning everything in one weekend. Clutter often accumulates because we don't have a place to store things. Or, maybe we have too many things. Controlling clutter requires that we make some decisions and get organized.

ITEMS YOU NEED FOR STARTING THE JOB:

- Boxes — both large and small
- Garbage bags
- Attractive bags, boxes, or baskets
- Files, folders, or large envelopes
- The commitment to start the job

CONTROLLING CLUTTER IN CHILDREN'S ROOMS

“Mom, where is my ball glove? I forgot my homework and got another detention. Do I have a clean uniform for the game today?” Helping children get organized and eliminate the clutter that keeps them from finding their possessions will help free up your time and energy.

IDEAS FOR ORGANIZING YOUR CHILDREN'S BEDROOMS AND PLAYROOMS AND REDUCING CLUTTER:

- You are the best model for the behavior you desire from your child. If you pick up after yourself, your child will learn to do so also. Teaching a child at the youngest possible age to maintain a neat and orderly room is the groundwork for many of the habits they will pick up in later years. It all starts with teaching them to put away a toy after its use.
- Storage for items such as toys, children’s school projects, hobbies, and sports equipment must be easy to use. Plan storage that is easy to reach. Large toy boxes and chests are not as easy to keep organized as other types of storage. Use many small stackable boxes — preferably transparent boxes for storing toys with small parts. Boxes that are not transparent can be color-coded for easy identification. For example, boxes with blue dots contain puzzles, green dots are for blocks, red dots for action figures, pink dots for dolls.
- Open storage or shelving is best for younger children. If their toys are in view, they will use and enjoy them more and can see where to put them away. Stacking storage cubes (simple boxes left open on one side) can be piled up against a wall. Plywood, particle board, plastic cubes, or wire baskets offer endless arrangement possibilities. Check thrift stores for inexpensive baskets for organizing.
- A brightly colored file cabinet in a child’s room or play room is a great place for storing school work, pictures, cards, awards and certificates, art projects, report cards, and other treasures.
- In the child’s closet, place closet rods low enough for the child to reach without climbing on a stool or chair. Rods that are approximately 30 inches from the floor are ideal for preschoolers. Large hooks are handy for coats and smocks.
- Consider shelves in the closet for storing folded clothes, rather than using dressers. Upper shelves can be used to store out-of-season clothes, items that should be used under supervision, out-of season sports equipment, and toys that are display items.
- If you use dressers, drawers should be within easy reach of children’s hands and equipped with stops so the drawer cannot be pulled out onto the child.

- Every few months, sort through toys with the child, letting him or her help decide what to keep in the room and what to put on an upper shelf in the closet for awhile. Then when the stored toy is brought out again in a few months, it will be like having a new toy.
- Pack up, give away, or sell toys that your children have outgrown.
- Make sure there is a wastebasket and a laundry basket or hamper in the child's room. Expect the child to use both of them and have him or her empty the wastebasket into the garbage can every week. You may also want to have your children bring their laundry to the laundry room on a designated day. Giving your children assigned chores teaches them responsibility.
- Designate a shelf or shoe rack for shoe storage. Let your child know what your expectations are for picking up his or her room. For example, no TV until clothes are put away and the bed is made. Then, make sure that it is easy to meet these expectations with convenient storage.

CONTROLLING CLOSET CLUTTER

Your closet is overflowing but you cannot find what you want to wear. Belts are jumbled together. Winter clothes are mixed with summer clothes. Shoes are in a heap on the floor. The chest of drawers is stuffed full. Dirty clothes are in a pile on the floor. What should you do?

- Bring several boxes or garbage bags with you to the bedroom.
- Empty the contents of the closet, shelves and chest of drawers.
- Sort the items into six piles:
 1. Things to keep and wear now.
 2. Things to keep and wear next season.
 3. Things to throw away (put in a garbage bag).
 4. Things to give away (put in a box or bag).
 5. Things to sell (put in a box or bag).
 6. Things to recycle (put in a box or bag).
- If you have not worn an item during the last year, it may be time to throw it away, give it away, or sell it.
- Make some money from items that are still useful. Take them to a consignment shop or have a yard sale. If you do not have enough of your own things to sell, ask a friend or neighbor if she/he has items to sell. It may pay to advertise bigger items (such as coats) in the newspaper or online.
- Some items can be recycled into rags for use at home — old t-shirts, underwear, torn items, etc.
- Give items you don't need to a charity so someone else can get some good out of them.
- Items that you will wear next season should be cleaned and put away in a dry place. Wash or dry clean these clothes and hang them in another closet (if available) or store them in a chest, boxes, or bags in an out-of-the-way space. Do not leave them in your closet.
- Organize hard-to-store items such as belts and scarves. Hangers made for storing belts can be purchased, or they may be stored in a shoebox on your closet shelf. Belts can also be hung on the same hanger with the pants or skirts you wear them with.
- See-through storage boxes make it easy to find the right scarf or accessory.
- Use shoe boxes or shoe storage bags so that pairs stay together and off the floor of the closet.
- Keep a laundry basket or hamper handy so you aren't tempted to throw dirty clothes on the floor of the closet.
- Put the clothes you are wearing this season back on hangers, shelves, or into the chest of drawers.

This organizing could help you to feel like you have more time since most items will be easier to find.

CONTROLLING PAPER CLUTTER

Every day the mail comes with ads, catalogs, bills . . . and sometimes letters. Kids bring school papers and projects home. Newspapers and magazines pile up. Before long, one or more tables or counters gets piled high with paper clutter.

SUGGESTIONS FOR TAKING CONTROL OF PAPER CLUTTER:

- Designate a file (such as an accordion file) or a computer file, a set of folders, or large envelopes to store paper items that you need to keep.
- Label one folder “bills to be paid this month.” Check it every week to make sure that bills due that week are paid. When they are paid, mark the stub with the date paid and move it to the next folder.
- Label the next folder as “receipts.” Store the stubs from paid bills in this folder.
- Another folder should be labeled “family records” for important credit card information, insurance policies, family health records, bank statements, a household inventory, and tax records. Keep it near the telephone.
- Another folder can be labeled “things to read.” This can contain items such as newsletters, letters, or invitations from friends. Make a commitment to read the items in this folder, take action on them (post dates from newsletters on your calendar, answer a letter, respond to an invitation, etc.), and then discard them.
- When you bring in the mail or when your children bring newsletters or notices home from school and club meetings, look at the items quickly if you don’t have time to read them carefully now. Do not put them down in a pile — put the items in the appropriate folders and commit to reading them later in the evening or the next day.
- Immediately throw away advertisements and junk mail you don’t want — do not put them in a pile for later consideration.
- Sort through old catalogs and magazines and throw them away, give them away, or recycle them. Catalogs and magazines that come in the mail can be put aside for reading later, but, for every catalog or magazine that you save, decide that an old catalog or magazine must be discarded — and do it!

Designate a box or garbage bag for collecting magazines and catalogs. Store the box in the garage, basement, or utility room. When the box is full, take the items to the recycling center, give to a friend or charity, or throw them away. Don’t let it overflow!

- Decide about children’s projects that are displayed on the refrigerator — for every new one that goes up, an old one comes down. Let your child help decide what comes down. If it’s a project that needs to be saved, put it in a storage box with other projects. This might be stored under the child’s bed or in a closet. Otherwise, throw the item away.

- Designate a space for homework or projects-in-progress. Enlist your child's help in choosing this space so that homework doesn't get lost, torn, or chewed on by the dog.
- Put newspapers in the recycle bin after reading them. Cut out coupons or articles you want to keep (if you're a coupon saver, make a folder or envelope for coupons). Unread newspapers more than two days old should also go into the recycle bin.

Congratulate yourself on getting organized and for the clean counter space that can now be used as space for activities rather than storage!

MAINTAINING A CLUTTER-FREE HOUSE

Now that you have eliminated all the clutter and organized the things you want to keep, you need a plan so clutter doesn't accumulate again.

- Deal with things when they are in your hand (throw them away or put them away) or keep a basket handy to hold things that need to go to another room. Do not put them in a pile.
- Spend a few minutes every day on a quick pick-up. Take a basket and go through the house quickly, picking up and dropping things off where they belong. Do not use this time to do heavy cleaning or you'll get bogged down.
- Set limits on things to keep. How many margarine tubs do you need? How many old magazines will you read again? Give away or recycle the extras.
- Keep a shopping bag in every closet for items that you are ready to get rid of. When the bag starts to get full, recycle, discard, sell, or give away the items.
- If some items need to be taken up or down stairs to store, do not let them pile up at the top or bottom of the stairs. Put a box or basket near the stairs for temporary storage and take the items with you when you go up or down.
- When you leave a room, take a quick look around to see if there are items that should be taken with you — an empty glass back to the kitchen, a magazine or toy to be stored elsewhere.
- Have your family help. Get them in the habit of picking up after themselves. Make it easy for them to put things away. You don't need to nag, but do be persistent.
- Create more storage space if that's what is needed. Install shelves in the utility room, basement, the closets, or the kids' bedrooms to make more storage space.
- Watch for sales on attractive storage boxes and bins. Use the space under beds to store seasonal or seldom-used items in an under-bed storage box. Buy see-through boxes for storing multiple items so that you can see what is inside.
- Label storage boxes, storage envelopes, and folders. This will help you get things into the right places quickly and eliminate having to look through items in an unlabeled box.

Section 3

HOME SAFETY

LEADER'S GUIDE: HOME SAFETY

GOAL

1. To practice safety measures in the home.
2. To child-proof the home.

PRESENTATION GUIDE

DISCUSSION

A family's home is thought to be a very safe place. However, every year many people die or are harmed as a result of accidents (unintentional injuries) in their homes. According to the National Safe Kids Campaign, more than 4.5 million kids are injured at home every year. Children under the age of 4 experience the greatest risk of accidental injury in the home because they spend most of their time there.

The most frequent accidents leading to the death of children under 4 years of age include: drowning, suffocation, choking, fire and burns, and falls. Many of these incidents can be avoided if family members recognize potential hazards. For example, never leave your child unattended while bathing, keep cleaning supplies out of reach, and have several smoke detectors located throughout the house.

There are several ways to make your home safer for you and your family members. During our time together, we'll discuss different hazards present in the various rooms of your home, and go through a few activities that will give you ideas for improving the safety of your home.

The Kitchen

The kitchen can be a potentially dangerous room. Here are a few suggestions to make the kitchen a safe environment. You may want to bring visual aids for the items noted. *

- Keep knives, plastic bags, lighters, and matches locked away from children. (Don't bring sharp knives.) *
- Never leave cooking food unattended; it can lead to fire. Turn pot handles to the back of the stove to avoid burns. Place hot food dishes on the center of the table or counter out of children's reach.
- Keep children away from hot water taps to prevent scalding.

Comments/Notes

MATERIALS NEEDED:

- Plan a fire escape route for the family
- Activity 1: Make copies of the fire escape plan
- Make a child safety list
- Activity 2: Make copies of the child safety checklist
- Copies of the evaluation
- Pencils
- Child safety devices — cupboard locks, safety devices, smoke detectors, carbon monoxide detectors, etc.

- Appliance cords should be unplugged and tied up when not in use. Frayed cords and wires should be replaced. *
- Children must be securely strapped into high chairs and swings to avoid falling.
- Never give young children hard, round foods such as hard candies, nuts, grapes, or carrots. These foods may get stuck in their throats and cause choking. *
- Child-proof drawers and cabinets within your child's reach by using child-safety locks. *

The Bathroom

The bathroom can be an unsafe place without careful planning. There are plenty of dangers present for small children. Ways to avoid accidents or injuries include:

- Lock away all medicines and vitamins to prevent poisonings. Be sure to include those with child-resistant packaging.
- Have syrup of ipecac on hand in case your child consumes something dangerous. Only use this at the recommendation of a poison control center or physician.
- Never leave a young child alone in the bathroom, especially in a bath.
- Always test the temperature of the water before you bathe your child.
- Set your water heater thermostat to 120° F or install anti-scald devices.
- Place nonslip surfaces or grab bars in bathtubs and showers to avoid falls.
- Always keep electrical appliances out of children's reach and away from water to avoid serious injury.
- Make sure children cannot lock the bathroom door. If you must have a lock, install a latch at your eye level.

The Bedroom

The next area of the house we're going to discuss is the bedroom. Because they do not contain cleaning products or kitchen utensils, bedrooms are not thought of as having very many dangers. Here are some safety tips to make sure your bedrooms are safe.

- Install smoke alarms outside bedrooms and on every level of the house.
- It is also wise to install smoke alarms in every bedroom.
- Change the batteries at least once a year (doing this on a your or a family member's birthday may make it easier to remember) and

- Test the alarm once a month to make sure it works properly.
- Design a fire escape route for your family and practice it.
- When putting your baby to sleep in the crib, follow your pediatrician's guidance regarding infant sleep positions. The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends placing healthy infants on their backs for sleep. (<https://www.healthychildren.org/English/ages-stages/baby/sleep/Pages/Sleep-Position-Why-Back-is-Best.aspx>)
- When choosing a crib, make sure it has a snug-fitting mattress and meets consumer product safety standards.
- Never use an electric blanket in the bed or crib of a small child or infant.
- Keep small toys, balloons, and small balls away from young children.
- If your child has a toy storage chest, make sure it has safety lid supports.
- Check age labels on toys to see if they are appropriate for your children.
- Avoid strings on children's toys and pacifiers, and keep tie strings on mini-blinds out of children's reach to prevent strangulation.
- To prevent carbon monoxide poisoning, install CO alarms outside bedrooms.
- Make sure a child's bedroom cannot be locked.

Patio and Yard

The patio and yard have potential for a variety of hazards. Several accidents and injuries can occur outside. Fortunately many of these possible dangers can be eliminated. Follow these simple steps to make your outdoor area safer.

- Make sure all exterior windows, doors, and sliding doors are locked at all times.
- Screen doors should have a self-closing mechanism.
- Front doors and back gates should always be locked.
- Make sure tables, chairs, or other outdoor furniture are away from pool fences.
- Children could easily use these to climb over.
- Spas and wading pools should be emptied and covered when not in use.
- A child can drown in 2 inches of water.
- Always supervise your children when outside or near water.
- Accidents and injuries may occur because parents are not watching their children.

Living Area

Consider ways to keep all living areas in your home safe. This is general information to assure that you understand and are aware of different safety aspects of your home.

- Eliminate sources of mold, dust, and insects — such as cockroaches — to prevent asthma attacks.
- If you have a pet, make sure it and its bedding are clean.
- Avoid smoking in the house, especially around children.
- Wood-burning stoves, fireplaces, furnaces, space heaters, and gas appliances should be properly vented and inspected annually.
- Use safety gates to block stairways (and other danger areas), safety plugs to cover electrical outlets, and safety latches for drawers and cabinets.
- Keep children (and furniture they can climb on) away from windows.
 - Install window guards on windows that are not fire emergency exits.
- To prevent falls, keep hallways and stairways well-lighted and use nonslip backing for area rugs.
- Cleaning solutions, pesticides, and other potentially dangerous substances should be kept in their original, labeled containers, which are out of children's reach.
- Homes built before 1978 may have lead paint. Call 1-888-865-3233 (KDHE) for a certified inspector. Also, ask your doctor or health department if you or your child should be tested for lead.
- Always store firearms and ammunition in separate containers and locked out of the reach of children.
- Learn first aid and cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR).
- Place an updated list of emergency telephone numbers in the front of your phone book. Important numbers should include: local poison control center, physician, and hospital emergency room.
- Make sure your home has been tested for radon. If levels are above the EPA's recommended level, call 1-800-557-2366 or check website www.epa.gov/radon to find out ways to reduce the levels.
- Be aware of what to do during a natural disaster. In an earthquake, drop to the floor and get under something sturdy for cover; during a tornado, take shelter in a basement or an interior room without windows. Have handy supplies of food, flashlights, and water.

We have two activities to finish this lesson. These activities are designed to increase your awareness of the improvements that could be made in your own home. Also, they will prepare you for different emergency situations.

The first activity is to design a fire escape plan. This is a relatively simple task that could save your family's life.

Our next activity is a take-home safety checklist. It is a checklist stressing some of the major ideas we have discussed. Use this checklist to make sure your home is a safe and healthy environment. Please make corrections immediately if you find problems. Take a minute now to fill out the evaluation.

Comments/Notes

Pass out the fact sheet, fire escape plan, and a pencil to each participant. Instruct participants to label or draw a floor plan resembling their home. (They may want to use the back of the fact sheet.) Their floor plan should include door, walls and furniture. It may be helpful to draw an example on the chalkboard or flip chart.

Next, ask participants to imagine a fire in the kitchen. Have them think about the safest way to exit their home, and repeat this procedure for every room in their home. Ask participants if they are experiencing any difficulty.

ACTIVITY: FIRE ESCAPE PLAN

The time to prepare for fire survival is before a fire — not after. It's one thing to know about fire safety and survival, it's another to perform under the stress of an actual fire.

Think of every possible fire situation and how you would escape. (That's a good habit to continue away from home, in hotels, theaters, and other buildings.)

Develop a fire escape plan for your family and teach it to everyone. Practice it over and over, and be sure babysitters know what to do in case of fire.

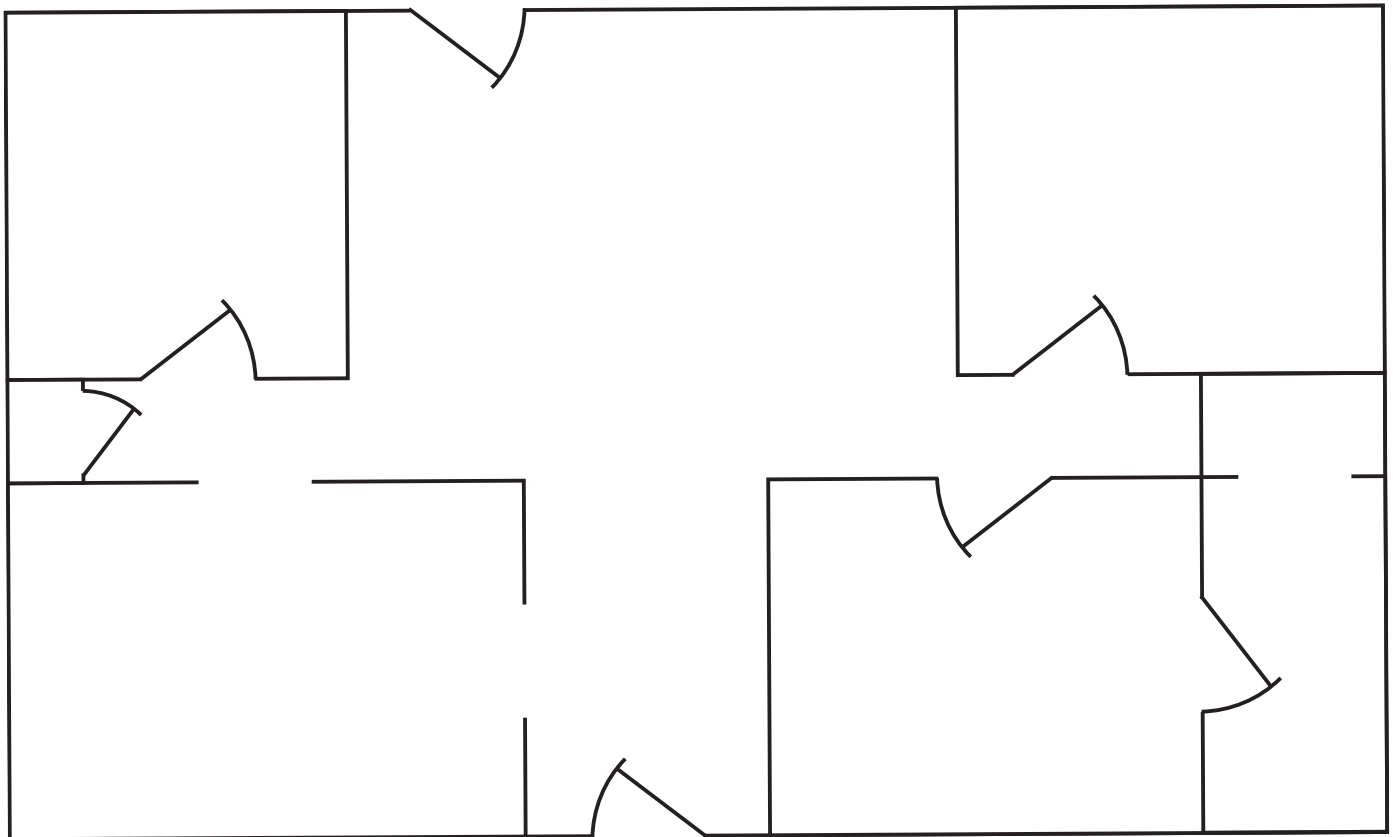
THINGS TO CONSIDER:

- Every bedroom should have two possible escape routes.
- Sleep with bedroom doors closed to keep out toxic smoke and gases.
- When the fire alarm sounds, or if fire is suspected in an other part of the house, feel the door. If the door is hot, don't open it. Use the window escape route.
- Teach your children to crawl close to the floor to escape smoke.
- Take short breaths and cover your nose and mouth with a damp cloth, if possible.
- Meet at the pre-planned point.
- Do not go back into the house except to save a life.
- Call the fire department from a neighbor's house.
- A good fire escape plan involves the use of certain equipment:
- Properly installed, functional smoke alarms
- Flashlight (one in the bedroom, too)
- Fire extinguishers for small fires

ACTIVITY: FIRE ESCAPE PLAN

This is a sample floor plan. Draw your own floor plan with escape routes for your family members. Indicate the location of existing smoke detectors, or where you plan to put smoke detectors.

Or, label the rooms as they are in your home in the diagram below and show the escape route and where smoke detectors would be located.



Material adapted from: The University of Georgia Cooperative Extension Service

ACTIVITY: CHILD SAFETY CHECKLIST

Dangers are always present in the home. Every year, serious injuries occur in homes because of carelessness. The home safety checklist below can help lower the number of accidents in your home. Take a few minutes to go through your house and check all of the safety tips that apply. For those spaces left blank, go back through your house and make adjustments. No one wants an accident to happen, and this checklist can help prevent one.

IN THE BEDROOM

- Smoke alarms are outside bedrooms and on every level of the home. For added protection, consider installing smoke alarms in each bedroom. Test them at least once a month and change batteries at least once a year.
- Family has practiced fire escape routes and identified an outside meeting place.
- Baby sleeps on his or her back in a crib with no pillows or soft bedding underneath.
- Crib meets national safety standards and has a snug-fitting mattress. Never use an electric blanket in the bed or crib of a small child or infant.
- Small toys, balloons, and small balls are kept away from young children.
- Checked age labels for appropriate toys. Toy storage chests have safety lid supports.
- Safety tassels are used for mini-blinds, and strings on children's toys and pacifiers are avoided.
- Carbon monoxide (CO) alarms are outside bedrooms to prevent CO poisoning.
- Child's bedroom cannot be locked.

IN THE BATHROOM

- All medicines and vitamins, even those with child-resistant packaging, are locked away.
- Syrup of ipecac is on hand. Use only at the recommendation of a poison control center or physician.
- Never leave a young child alone in the bathroom, especially in a bath. Bath water is always tested before bathing a child. Always test bath water with wrist or elbow to make sure it is not too hot.
- Water heater thermostat is set to 120° F or anti-scald devices have been installed.
- Bathtubs and showers have nonslip surfaces or grab bars.
- Electrical appliances, such as hair dryers and curling irons, are out of the reach of children and away from water.
- Children cannot lock themselves in the bathroom. If you must have a lock, install a latch at your eye level.

IN THE KITCHEN

- Knives, plastic bags, lighters, and matches are out of sight and locked away from children.
- Food is never left unattended, pot handles are turned to the back of the stove, and hot liquids and foods are away from the edges of tables and counters.
- You and your children know and have practiced the STOP, DROP, and ROLL procedure in case clothes catch on fire.
- Appliance cords are unplugged and tied up. Replace any frayed cords and wires.
- Young children are securely strapped into high chairs, swings, and other juvenile products.
- You do not give young children hard, round foods that can get stuck in their throats — for example, hard candies, nuts, grapes, popcorn, and carrots.
- Scald burns are avoided by keeping children away from the hot water taps on drinking water coolers.
- Child-proof locks have been placed on drawers and cabinets that are within your child's reach.
- Hot food items are placed in the center of the table or counter, out of a child's reach.

IN ALL LIVING AREAS

- To prevent asthma attacks, sources of mold, dust, and insects have been eliminated.
- If you have a pet, it and its bedding are clean and kept off the furniture.
- Do not smoke in the house and especially around children. Research has shown second-hand smoke as dangerous to those who do not smoke cigarettes as well. Furnaces, fireplaces, wood-burning stoves, space heaters, and gas appliances are vented properly and inspected annually.
- Safety gates are used to block stairways (and other danger areas), safety plugs cover electrical outlets, and safety latches are placed on drawers and cabinets.
- Children (and furniture they can climb on) are kept away from windows.
- Window guards have been installed on windows that are not fire emergency exits.
- Hallways and stairways are well-lit and nonslip backing is used for area rugs to prevent falls.
- Cleaning solutions, pesticides, and other potentially dangerous substances are kept in their original, labeled containers, and out of the reach of children.
- If your home was built before 1978, it has been tested for lead paint.
- Call 1-866-865-3233 for certified inspectors through the Kansas Department of Health and Environment.

- You have asked your doctor or health department if your child should be tested for lead.
- Firearms and ammunition are stored in separate containers and locked away out of the reach of children.
- You know first aid and cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR).
- An updated list of emergency telephone numbers, including your local poison control center, physician and hospital emergency room, is next to every phone in your home.
- Your home has been tested for radon. If levels are above EPA's recommended level, call 1-800-557-2366 or visit www.epa.gov/radon to find out ways to reduce the radon levels, or to learn more.
- Your family knows what to do during a natural disaster.
- In an earthquake, drop to the floor and get under something sturdy for cover.
- During a tornado, take shelter in a basement or an interior room without windows. Have handy supplies of food, flashlights, and water. If you do not have a basement, identify a safe place for you and your family in case of a tornado.

PATIO AND YARD SAFETY

- Exterior windows, doors, and sliding doors are locked at all times.
- Screen doors have a self-closing mechanism.
- Back gates and front doors are always locked.
- Tables, chairs or other outdoor furniture are away from pool fences.
- (Children may use these objects to climb over.)
- Wading pools are emptied, and spas are covered when not in use. (A child can drown in 2 inches of water.)

Section 4

EVALUATION

EVALUATION

Evaluation instruments are included to measure progress toward the following objectives:

- A. Participants will become aware of their families' need for home maintenance.
- B. Participants will determine which home maintenance skills they want to acquire or improve and develop and implement a plan to achieve these skills.

Participants may write NA in any blank if it is not applicable to their situation.

ESSENTIAL HOME MAINTENANCE

— Instrument to be administered before classes —

Please answer the following questions. Your name will not be attached to this piece of paper or to your answers in any way. Confidentiality will be respected at all times. The information you share with us will help us evaluate, develop and deliver Extension Family and Consumer Sciences programs more effectively.

Measurable Objective A: “Evaluating My Need to Know More About Home Maintenance”

Please use a ✓ or ✗ or fill in the best answer for each line.

	1	2	3	4	5
How important is it for me to know how to ...	Not Important At All	Not Important	Maybe	Important	Very Important
Keep the bathroom clean?					
Keep the kitchen clean?					
Keep the living areas and bedrooms clean?					
The impact of unspoken rules					
Reduce clutter throughout the house?					
Maintain furnace and air conditioner?					

EVALUATION: CLEANING AND MAINTAINING THE BATHROOM

— *Instrument to be administered before classes* —

Measurable Objective B: “My Plan for Improving My Skills”

1. During the next six months, I would like to improve my skills in *keeping the bathroom clean*

- Yes No

2. My goals for improvement in the area of cleaning the bathroom:

(please check all that apply)

- Learn cleaning techniques.
 Learn which cleaners to use.
 Learn how to make a schedule for cleaning.
 Learn how to teach my children how to clean the bathroom.
 Other *(please write in)* _____

3. Date I plan to achieve these goals: _____

4. My plan for achieving these goals includes:

- Attend classes or workshops.
 Read publications.
 Other *(please write in)* _____

5. My plan for implementing my goals for cleaning the bathroom includes:

- Make a cleaning schedule.
 Buy cleaning supplies.
 Set aside time each week to clean.
 Teach my children how to clean the bathroom.
 Other *(please write in)* _____

EVALUATION: CLEANING AND MAINTAINING THE KITCHEN

— Instrument to be administered before classes —

Measurable Objective B: “My Plan for Improving My Skills”

1. During the next six months, I would like to improve my skills in *keeping the kitchen clean*.

- Yes No

2. My goals for improvement in cleaning the kitchen:

(please check all that apply)

- Learn how to clean the sink.
- Learn how to clean the refrigerator.
- Learn how to clean the stove and oven.
- Learn how to clean the floors.
- Learn which cleaners to use.
- Learn how to make a schedule for cleaning.
- Other *(please write in)* _____

3. Date I plan to achieve these goals: _____

4. My plan for achieving these goals includes:

- Attending classes or workshops.
- Reading publications.
- Other *(please write in)* _____

5. My plan for implementing my goals for cleaning the kitchen includes:

- Making a cleaning schedule.
- Buy cleaning supplies.
- Set aside time each day for daily cleaning and each week for more thorough cleaning.
- Clean major appliances as needed.
- Other *(please write in)* _____

EVALUATION: CLEANING AND MAINTAINING LIVING AREA AND BEDROOMS

— Instrument to be administered before classes —

Measurable Objective B: “My Plan for Improving My Skills”

1. During the next six months, I would like to improve my skills in *cleaning living areas and bedrooms*.

- Yes No

2. My goals for improvement in cleaning the living areas and bedrooms:

(please check all that apply)

- Learn how to clean the floors.
 Learn how to clean windows and mirrors.
 Learn which cleaners to use.
 Learn how to make a schedule for cleaning.
 Other *(please write in)* _____

3. Date I plan to achieve these goals: _____

4. My plan for achieving these goals includes:

- Attending classes or workshops.
 Reading publications.
 Other *(please write in)* _____

5. My plan for implementing my goals for cleaning the living areas and bedrooms includes:

- Make a cleaning schedule.
 Buy cleaning supplies.
 Set aside time each week for cleaning.
 Other *(please write in)* _____

EVALUATION: CONTROLLING CLUTTER

— Instrument to be administered before classes —

Measurable Objective B: “My Plan for Improving My Skills”

1. During the next six months, I would like to improve my skills in *controlling clutter*.

- Yes No

2. My goals for improvement in the areas of controlling clutter are:

(please check all that apply)

- Learn how to control paper clutter (mail, children’s papers, important papers, catalogs and magazines).
- Learn how to control clutter in clothes closets.
- Learn how to control clutter in my children’s bedrooms and playrooms.
- Other *(please write in)* _____

3. Date I plan to achieve these goals: _____

4. My plan for achieving these goals includes:

- Attending classes or workshops.
- Reading publications.
- Other *(please write in)* _____

5. My plan for implementing my goals for controlling clutter includes

- Buy storage containers for storing out-of-season and unused items.
- Set up a system for dealing with mail, children’s papers, important papers, catalogs and magazines.
- Discard unneeded items by throwing them away, recycling them or giving them away.
- Go through closets twice a year to store out-of-season garments and make decisions about getting rid of unneeded items.
- Make/buy containers and shelves for children’s toys and supplies.
- Teach children how to pick up after themselves.
- Make storage of children’s clothes easy for the child to reach.
- Sort children’s possessions twice a year and get rid of outgrown and unused items.
- Other *(please write in)* _____

EVALUATION: MAINTAINING THE FURNACE AND AIR CONDITIONER

— *Instrument to be administered before classes* —

Measurable Objective B: “My Plan for Improving My Skills”

1. During the next six months, I would like to improve my skills in *maintaining the furnace and air conditioner*.

- Yes No

2. My goals for improvement in the areas of maintenance:

(please check all that apply)

- Learn how to change the furnace filter.
 Learn how to maintain the window air conditioner.
 Learn how to maintain the central air conditioner.
 Other *(please write in)* _____

3. Date I plan to achieve these goals: _____

4. My plan for achieving these goals includes:

- Attending classes and workshops.
 Reading publications.
 Other *(please write in)* _____

5. My plan for implementing my goals for cleaning the living areas and bedrooms includes:

- Replace furnace filters regularly.
 Clean the filter in the window air conditioner at the beginning of the summer.
 Store the window air conditioner properly during the winter.
 Clean the central air conditioning unit in the spring before turning it on for the summer.
 Every other year, call a maintenance person to check if these appliances are running properly.
 Other *(please write in)* _____

ESSENTIAL HOME MAINTENANCE EVALUATION

— Instrument to be administered following classes —

Please answer the following questions. Your name will not be attached to this piece of paper or to your answers. Confidentiality will be respected at all times.

Measurable Objectives C: “Evaluating My Progress Toward Meeting My Goals”

Please use a ✓ or ✗ or fill in the best answer for each line.

	1	2	3	4	5
Progress I have made toward accomplishing my goals in these areas ...	None	A Little Progress	Some Progress	Much Progress	Met My Goals
Managing my time to keep the house clean and/or maintained.					
Purchasing cleaners to use on surfaces in the house.					
Establishing a regular schedule for seasonal tasks such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • sorting clothes • washing windows • Establishing a system for keeping track of important papers • Reducing the volume of paper clutter 					
Creating convenient storage for children's toys and clothes.					
Helping my children establish good habits for cleaning/organizing their rooms.					
Maintaining my furnace and air conditioner to assure effective operation.					

ESSENTIAL HOME MAINTENANCE EVALUATION

— Instrument to be administered following classes and at 6- and 12-month follow-ups —

Please answer the following questions. Your name will not be attached to this piece of paper or to your answers. Confidentiality will be respected at all times.

Measurable Objective D: “An Assessment of How My Home Maintenance Activities Affect My Family’s Health and Well-Being”

Please use a ✓ or ✗ or fill in the best answer for each line.

	1	2	3	4	5
How often does the following occur per month/ week/year ...	Never	Sometimes	About Half of the Time	Often	Always
Our home is a clean and healthful environment for my family.					
Few things get lost in my home.					
I feel able to manage household cleaning chores.					
My children are picking up and cleaning up after themselves.					
My appliances, including the furnace and air conditioner, receive regular cleaning and maintenance.					

EVALUATION: HOME SAFETY

Evaluation instruments are included to measure progress toward the following objectives:

- A. To identify and correct hazards to child safety in various rooms of your living spaces.
- B. To recognize the most frequent types of home accidents leading to death.
- C. To plan and practice a fire escape strategy for the family.

Participants may write NA in any blank if it is not applicable to their situation.

HOME SAFETY

— Instrument to be administered before classes —

Please answer the following questions. Your name will not be attached to this piece of paper or to your answers in any way. Confidentiality will be respected at all times. The information you share with us will help us evaluate, develop and deliver Extension Family and Consumer Sciences programs more effectively.

Measurable Objective A: “Evaluating My Need to Know More Home Safety Topics”

Please use a ✓ or ✗ or fill in the best answer for each line.

	1	2	3	4	5
How important is it for me to know how to ...	Not Important At All	Not Important	Maybe	Important	Very Important
Identify hazards to child safety in various rooms of the home.					
How to recognize the most frequent types of home accidents leading to death.					
How to plan and practice a fire escape plan for the family.					
Conduct a room-by-room check for hazards to child safety in our home.					

EVALUATION: PLAN AND PRACTICE FIRE ESCAPE PROCEDURE

— *Instrument to be administered before classes* —

Measurable Objective B: “My Plan for Improving My Skills”

1. During the next six months, I would like to improve my skills in *planning and practicing a fire escape plan*.

- Yes No

2. My goals for for improvement in the area of designing a fire escape plan are:

(please check all that apply)

- To make the escape from the home automatic.
 To have all family members understand the safe routes from our home.
 Other *(please write in)* _____

3. Date I plan to achieve these goals: _____

4. My plan for achieving these goals includes:

- To have family members make a line drawing on paper of a fire escape route from each room of the home.
 Do a walk-through of each room of the home, having family members describe two escape routes from each room.
 Other *(please write in)* _____

5. My plan for putting these goals into action includes:

- Meet in family council on Sunday evening to work on the fire escape plan.
 Practice a timed fire escape drill each Sunday evening for two months.
 Other *(please write in)* _____

EVALUATION: HAZARDS TO CHILD SAFETY

— *Instrument to be administered before classes* —

Measurable Objective B: “My Plan for Improving My Skills”

1. During the next six months, I would like to improve my skills in *identifying hazards to child safety in various rooms of the home*.

- Yes No

2. My goals for improvement in the area of identifying hazards to child safety are:

(please check all that apply)

- Identify by means of a checklist each hazard to child safety in the home.
 Correct all identified hazards to child safety.
 Other *(please write in)* _____

3. Date I plan to achieve these goals: _____

4. My plan for achieving these goals includes:

- Walk from room to room, using a child safety checklist to identify hazards.
 Correct each hazard as it is found.
 Other *(please write in)* _____

5. My plan for putting these child safety goals into action includes:

- Walk through one room each week.
 Make correction for each hazard found.
 Other *(please write in)* _____

HOME SAFETY EVALUATION

— Instrument to be administered following classes —

Please answer the following questions. Your name will not be attached to this piece of paper or to your answers. Confidentiality will be respected at all times.

Measurable Objectives C: “Evaluating My Progress Toward Meeting My Goals”

Please use a ✓ or ✗ or fill in the best answer for each line.

	1	2	3	4	5
Progress I have made toward accomplishing my goals in these areas ...	None	A Little Progress	Some Progress	Much Progress	Met My Goals
Identify hazards to child safety in various rooms of the home.					
Recognize most frequent types of home accidents leading to death.					
Plan and practice a fire escape plan for the family.					
Conduct a room-by-room check for hazards to child safety in the home.					

HOME SAFETY EVALUATION

— Instrument to be administered following classes —

Please answer the following questions. Your name will not be attached to this piece of paper or to your answers. Confidentiality will be respected at all times.

Measurable Objective D: “An Assessment of My Home Safety Awareness”

Please use a ✓ or ✗ or fill in the best answer for each line.

	1	2	3	4	5
How often do you ...	Never	Sometimes	About Half of the Time	Often	Always
Think about Home Accidents Leading to Death? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Think about safety and your family. Take action to eliminate the possibility of serious injury or death to your family. 					
Fire Escape Plan					
Conduct a family fire escape drill.					
Room-by-Room Check					
Go room to room looking for hazards.					
Correct the hazards found in the home					

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