Keeping Kids Safe Around Medicine

**Medicine Use Increasing**

- **1980**
  - 1.4 billion prescriptions filled
  - $5.5 billion in over-the-counter sales

- **2014**
  - 4 billion prescriptions filled
  - $30.8 billion in over-the-counter sales
  - 125 prescriptions filled every second
  - $84 million in OTC sales every day

**More Grandparents Living with Children**

The number of children living in a household where a grandparent was the head of the household more than doubled between 1980 – 2014.

- **1980** 2.2 million
- **2014** 4.8 million

Today, 67% of grandparents live with or within 50 miles of at least one grandchild.

**Whose Medicine Are Kids Getting Into?**

2014 emergency room visits; of the 26 percent of cases where details were reported.

- 48% grandparent’s
- 38% parent’s
- 7% sibling’s

**Where Are Kids Finding Medicine?**

2014 emergency room visits; of the 17 percent of cases where details were reported.

- 23% pillbox
- 23% ground
- 19% purse or diaper bag
- 18% counter
- 8% reachable cabinet or refrigerator

**What Products Are Kids Getting into?**

- pain/fever remedies
- vitamins
- allergy medicine
- diaper rash products
- eye drops
- laxatives
- vapor rubs with camphor
Coinciding with increased prevention efforts, the number of children seen in ERs for medicine poisoning has decreased steadily since it peaked in 2010.

AND YET, each year more than 59,000 young children are seen at emergency rooms because they got into medicine.

That’s about four busloads of kids arriving at the ER each day.

95% of medicine-related ER visits among children under age 5 are due to a child getting into medicine when an adult wasn’t looking.

5% are due to dosing errors.

1 and 2 year olds make up the majority (7 out of 10) of ER visits for medicine poisoning.

Almost every minute of every day there is a call to a poison control center because a young child got into medicine.

What Families Can Do to Protect Kids

Look around the places where kids find medicine and move all medicine up and out of sight.

Remember to check for all products that may cause harm, even those you might not think about as medicine.

Use the dosing device that comes with the medicine.

Write clear instructions for other people who give your child medicine.

Save the Poison Help line in your phone: 1-800-222-1222.

For more medicine safety tips, visit www.safekids.org