KIDS and MEDICINE SAFETY
Convenience vs. Caution

THE PROBLEM
Each year, nearly 60,000 young children — or about four busloads per day — are seen at emergency departments (EDs) because they got into medicine.

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

THE DISCONNECT
9 IN 10 PARENTS AGREE
it is important to store all medicines out of sight and up high after every use.

HOWEVER,
nearly 7 in 10 parents report storing medicine within a child’s sight (on a shelf or surface at or above counter height).

9 IN 10 PARENTS AGREE
medicine should be kept in the original container.

HOWEVER,
more than 1 in 3 parents say they or someone in their household always or often uses a daily pill organizer or baggie that children can easily get into if it’s not stored out of sight and reach.

CONVENIENCE OVERRULES CAUTION
4 in 10 parents agree that it is okay to keep medicine they or a child takes every day on the kitchen counter or another visible location so it is handy.

And nearly 5 in 10 parents agree that when a child is sick, it is ok to keep the medicine on the kitchen counter or another visible location between doses so it is handy.

But, in 3 of 5 accidental medicine poisonings involving young children, the medicine wasn’t in its usual or “normal” storage location and was therefore accessible.
Nearly 3 in 5 parents think if medicine is out of reach, it’s in a safe place.

1 in 3 parents think if their child is being watched, it doesn’t matter as much where medicines are stored.

Half of parents think child-resistant packaging means a child won’t be able to get into medicine at all.

But, research indicates in about half of OTC poisoning cases, the child climbed on a chair, toy or other device to reach medicine.

But, parents frequently said in ED visits that they’d only turned their back for a minute.

But, research suggests 45-55% of accidental poisonings involved child-resistant packaging.

Convenience + Risk = 440,000 Poison Control Center calls in 2015 because a child got into medicine.

HOW TO HELP PROTECT YOUR KIDS

- Store all prescription and OTC medicines, vitamins and supplements up and away and out of sight and reach every time.
- Keep medicine in its original child-resistant packaging.
- Practice safe storage of medicine as soon as your first child is born.
- Put the Poison Help number – 1-800-222-1222 – into your phone and post it visibly at home.
- Instead of keeping medicine handy, use safe reminder tools to help you remember when to take and give doses.
  - Set alarms on your watch or cell phone.
  - Write a note to yourself and leave it somewhere you look often.
  - Combine taking daily medicines with a daily task, like brushing your teeth.
  - Use a medication schedule to make sure the right amount of medicine is given at the right time.

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