

## **POISON: KEY MESSAGES**

### **It doesn't take much to make a small child sick.**

- *Kids have faster metabolisms than adults and anything they ingest can be quickly absorbed into the bloodstream.*
- *Each year in the United States, Poison Centers answer 1.2 million calls about unintentional poisonings of children ages 5 and under.*
- *About 100,000 kids each year are treated in emergency rooms for poisonings and about 40 die.*

### **Most child poisonings occur in the home.**

- *About 3 out of 5 cases involve non-pharmaceutical products such as cosmetics, cleansers, personal care products, plants, pesticides, art supplies, alcohol and toys.*
- *Child-resistant packaging is credited with saving hundreds of children's lives each year since its introduction in the 1970s but it's still important to keep hazardous products out of reach — up high and in a locked cabinet.*
- *Child-resistant packaging is not childproof. Most two-year-olds can open a child-resistant container in 4 to 5 minutes.*
- *Never leave a child alone, even for a few seconds, with an open container within reach.*
- *The same appealing colors and fragrances that attracted you to buy a product could also attract your child to smell and swallow that product.*

### **Memorize the poison control hotline number, 1-800-222-1222.**

- *This number will connect you to the local Poison Center from anywhere in the United States. Keep the number by every phone. Place Mr. Yuk stickers on products to keep the number handy in an emergency.*
- *The Poison Center is open 24/7 – never closes, not even on holidays.*
- *Call 911, not the Poison Center, if a child is choking, having trouble breathing, or having a seizure.*

### **There may be invisible poisons in your home.**

- *Carbon monoxide is an invisible, odorless gas that builds up around fuel-burning appliances, behind motorboats and cars in garages, and is also present in tobacco smoke. It can make a child seriously ill in concentrations that would barely affect an adult. All homes should be equipped with carbon monoxide detectors.*
- *Kids inhale the dust of lead-based paint and can build up enough lead in their blood to affect intelligence, growth and development. Get your home tested for lead, especially if it was built before 1978.*

### **Be careful with medicines and dietary supplements.**

- *Follow dosage directions carefully and don't refer to medicine as candy.*
- *Keep medications and other potentially harmful substances in their original containers with their original labels, and flush expired medications down the toilet.*
- *Discuss these precautions with grandparents and relatives. Grandparents may have medications that could be very dangerous to children and their homes might not be as childproofed as yours.*

**For more information, call [your organization] or 1-800-222-1222 or visit [www.wapc.org](http://www.wapc.org).**