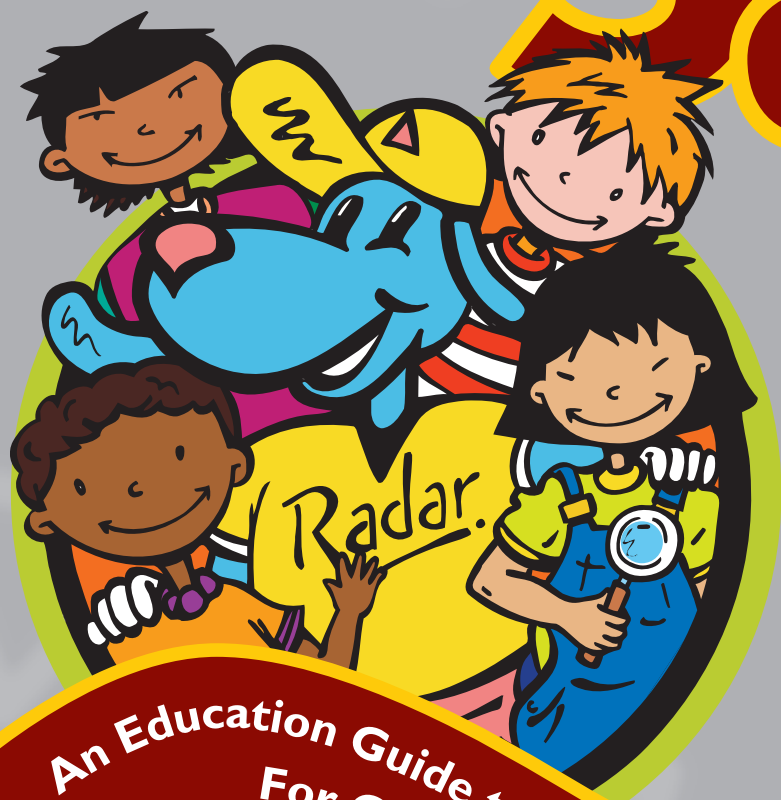




Health
Canada

Santé
Canada

Stay Safe



An Education Guide to Household Chemical Products
For Children 5 to 9 years of age

Canada

Policy for Use of the *Hazardous Products Act* Consumer Chemical Hazard Symbols

The consumer chemical hazard symbols are regulatory requirements set out in the *Consumer Chemicals and Containers Regulations, 2001*. These Regulations are issued under the authority of the *Hazardous Products Act*, which is administered by the Product Safety Programme of Health Canada. The hazard symbols are Official Marks of the Government of Canada and are protected under section 9 of the *Trade-marks Act*.

It is the policy of the Product Safety Programme that these symbols be widely used, in order to make them more recognizable and known to consumers. The symbols were designed to indicate the nature of the hazard that a chemical product may pose to a consumer if exposed during foreseeable use of the product. The symbols can be used free of charge in order to teach about their meaning and for poison-prevention education, as long as they are correctly depicted and explained.

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Our mission is to help the people of Canada
maintain and improve their health.

Health Canada

Published by authority of the Minister of Health

Également disponible en français sous le titre *SOYEZ EN SÉCURITÉ – Les produits chimiques à usage domestique : guide à l'intention des enseignants de la maternelle à la quatrième année*

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Message to Educators

home safety. As an educator you will be able to choose the most appropriate activities for your lessons.

Each year there are more than 50,000 incidents involving household chemical products – more than half of these involve children. These incidents can cause injuries and illnesses, temporary and permanent disabilities, and in some cases, death.

Children are most at risk. For the 5 year-old who is curious and interested in experimentation, household chemical products in colourful containers are something new to try. A 9 year-old who wants to show he or she is grown up, may try to open and use household chemical products without supervision.

The purpose of this guide is to provide educators with resources to teach children about safety regarding household chemical products.

The STAY SAFE program has activities for children ages 5 to 9 years (Kindergarten to Grade 4). Activities are grouped by levels with a corresponding age range and grade level, and are suitable for use in existing curriculum on general

GRADE LEVEL	AGE RANGE
Kindergarten	5 – 6 years
Grade 1	6 – 7 years
Grade 2	7 – 8 years
Grade 3	8 – 9 years
Grade 4	9+ years

At each age range, children display distinct learning characteristics that you may want to keep in mind as you plan your STAY SAFE program.

How can these injuries be prevented? Children need to learn to recognize the hazard symbols on household chemical products, and to STAY SAFE when they do see them. Like other safety programs, this information needs to be reinforced as children grow older, and as more products are introduced to the public.

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That's where STAY SAFE fits in. Educators who use this program can help the children in your community STAY SAFE – at home, at school and at play. That's the goal of this program. The STAY SAFE activities in this guide are intended to reinforce hazard symbol recognition and the related safety messages to children. The fact sheets provide additional information to assist adults in creating a safer home environment for children.

This school aged education program repeats and builds on the information and activities contained in the pre-school STAY SAFE program. Children who attended day cares or similar establishments may have been taught the first messages in the STAY SAFE progressive program that teaches young children about the hazard symbols and chemical safety in the home.

Let's all STAY SAFE!

Health Canada

Kindergarten – Age 5-6 years

- ▶▶ can follow simple, stepped instructions and make comparisons
- ▶▶ prefers manipulative materials
- ▶▶ likes to imitate adults or other authority figures

Grade 1 – Age 6-7 years

- ▶▶ can anticipate and make basic assessments
- ▶▶ follows instructions and reacts well to praise
- ▶▶ enjoys puzzles, sorting, matching, classifying

Grade 2 – Age 7-8 years

- ▶▶ follows simple, constructive, stepped feedback
- ▶▶ requires examples and reasons for directions
- ▶▶ interesting in improving and developing skills

Grade 3 – Age 8-9 years

- ▶▶ needs positive feedback to help develop competencies
- ▶▶ can recall and retell stories, information
- ▶▶ starting to enjoy more competitive activities

Grade 4 – Age 9+ years

- ▶▶ challenges authority; requires reasons; interested in exceptions
- ▶▶ greater attention span to work on more complex tasks
- ▶▶ abstract thought continues to improve, but still needs concrete examples

For a more detailed description of learner characteristics see Appendix F.

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A. About STAY SAFE

Did you know that, for 5 to 9 year-old children, more than 40% of injury-related emergency room visits are for injuries occurring at home? And of these, many are due to injuries from household chemical products?

Children, as they learn and develop, are eager to explore and take on new challenges. Inevitably this involves some risk – a risk we can help to minimize. Most injuries due to household chemical products can be prevented – first by storing hazardous products safely, and second by teaching children how to recognize hazardous products and *what to do* if they find these products, or if an emergency occurs. That's where you and the STAY SAFE program can make a difference.

STAY SAFE is an activity based awareness program suitable for 5 to 9 year-old children. Its purpose is to provide you, the educator/leader, with information and learning strategies that are easy to use in your program and at home. The activities are age appropriate, focusing on

recognition, assessment and safe actions – the key to **preventing injuries** related to household chemical products.

STAY SAFE provides grade specific, ready-to-use learning activities with support materials, props and ideas for easy integration into your program. It contains:

- ▶ the latest information on household chemical product labelling and safe storage;
- ▶ teacher reviewed learning activities;
- ▶ at home activities for families to complete together;
- ▶ prevention tips for parents and care givers – especially important since most injuries with hazardous products happen at home;
- ▶ an appealing mascot named RADAR to help reinforce key safety messages.

STAY SAFE will help you teach children to:

- ▶ recognize and relate the dangers associated with each of the four hazard symbols;
- ▶ recognize the hazard symbols on containers they find in their environment, assess the situation and act appropriately;

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- ▶▶ share this information with family and friends;
- ▶▶ understand that children and adults are often injured when household chemical products are not stored or used properly.

As you read through STAY SAFE you will find:

- ▶▶ the four consumer product hazard symbols and what they mean;
- ▶▶ the key safety messages for children to learn and remember;
- ▶▶ Grade appropriate activities for your program and for children to take home;
- ▶▶ important facts and figures on injuries to children due to household chemical products;
- ▶▶ why some household chemical products have different kinds of labels;
- ▶▶ a place to evaluate the program;
- ▶▶ references to learn more about home hazards and child safety.

Meet RADAR



To help you introduce the material in this education guide, meet RADAR the safety dog.

He is the mascot for many of Health Canada's children's safety resources, including the Stay Safe program KIDS CARE.

RADAR appears on many of the activity sheets in the education guide, and can be used in a variety of ways as you introduce this program – as the narrator of a puppet play or the lead character in a safety story.

RADAR also acts as a visual cue and a reminder, drawing children's attention to STAY SAFE messages.

You will notice that RADAR's role changes from grade to grade to keep pace with the growth and maturity level of the children. At the earlier levels, RADAR acts as a coach and teacher for the children, reminding them what hazard symbols mean and reinforcing the STAY SAFE messages. At the later levels, RADAR becomes a friend to children as they learn about safety around household chemical products together. RADAR and the children are encouraged to solve puzzles, remember safety messages, make safe choices, and work as a team to help others STAY SAFE.

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B. Get Ready ...

Before you start, there is some information you may find interesting about unintentional injuries due to hazardous household chemical products. You will need to know **who** is most at risk of injury, **what** causes these injuries, **when and where** injuries occur and **why** they happen. With this information and the activities provided you will be well on your way to help Canadian children STAY SAFE.

Let's start with some facts to help give you a snapshot of childhood injuries in Canada.

1. Injury Facts

Our accomplishments ...

Injury prevention efforts in Canada have resulted in dramatic declines in home injury deaths over the past 20 years. For example, we have seen a 50% reduction in deaths from unintentional injuries¹ among children between 1970 and 1991². Between 1971 and 1975, Canada and the United States had similar levels of child injury deaths per 100,000 children aged 1-14 years (24.8 and

27.8 respectively) but by the 1990s, Canada had reduced its rate to 9.7 while the US “languished” at 14.1³. Health Canada would like to think that our early work in developing requirements for hazard symbols and packaging made a difference in helping reduce unintentional injuries.

Our challenges ...

- ▶ School-aged children begin to spend more time away from home during play and social activities, but they remain vulnerable to injuries because of their natural curiosity, sense of adventure and peer influences.
- ▶ Injuries at home for children between 5 and 9 years old remain high, but injuries sustained at other locations begin to increase. Some of these injuries include unintentional poisoning that occur in a location other than the child's own home.

¹ Unintentional injuries at home are caused primarily by fires, suffocation and choking, drownings, falls and poisonings.

² http://www.health.gov.sk.ca/comp_health_indicators_rep/Section%20-%20-%20Chapter%201%20and%20Chapter%202.pdf – A Story About Health Status, ch.2.3 Unintentional Injury & Suicide

³ <http://www.cmaj.ca/> – Canadian Medical Association Journal, Barbara Sibbald

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- ▶▶ Children are more seriously affected by household chemical products than adults. With their smaller size and faster metabolism, breathing and heart rate, they tend to absorb or inhale chemicals more quickly.
- ▶▶ The majority of household chemical product injuries are poisonings by unintentional ingestion, while the second most common injuries are chemical burns from corrosive products.
- ▶▶ Demographics are related:
 - ▶ deaths from all types of injuries at home are almost 40% higher among Canada's lower socio-economic families.
 - ▶ aboriginal children have a rate of injury 4 to 7 times greater than the national average.
 - ▶ boys have higher rates of injuries compared to girls and encounter more severe injuries. Research has shown that boys tend to engage in more aggressive play, and take more risks during play, thus contributing to the higher injury rates.
 - ▶ admissions to hospitals for unintentional poisoning are almost twice as high among children from lower socio-economic families.

What we can do ...

We can teach children and parents to **STAY SAFE** – to know the hazards commonly found in the home and what action to take. **STAY SAFE** targets household chemical products, teaching injury prevention through child and parent / caregiver awareness and action.



2. STOP and LOOK for the hazard symbol!

Symbol ⁴	The Danger	Product Examples
Explosive 	This container can explode if it is heated or punctured. Flying pieces of metal or plastic can cause serious injuries, especially to the eyes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶▶ water repellant for shoes or boots in an aerosol container ▶▶ spray paint in an aerosol container
Corrosive 	This product can burn skin or eyes on contact, or throat and stomach if swallowed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶▶ toilet bowl cleaner ▶▶ oven cleaner
Flammable 	This product , or its fumes, can catch fire easily if it is near heat, flames or sparks.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶▶ contact adhesives ▶▶ solvents
Poison 	Licking, eating, drinking, or sometimes smelling, this product can cause illness or death.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶▶ windshield washer fluid ▶▶ furniture polish

⁴ A symbol is made up of a **picture** and a **frame**. The picture tells you the type of danger. The **frame** tells you if it is the chemical inside the container that is hazardous or if it is the container that is hazardous.

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So, what's new?

There are now only two frames used around the symbols:

Triangle
(inverted)



This frame looks like a traffic yield sign. It means that the **container** is dangerous.

Octagon
(eight sides)



This frame looks like a traffic stop sign. It means that the **contents** inside the container are dangerous

Before recent changes to the regulations, three different frames were used to indicate the degree of hazard. Now, only two frames are used to distinguish between the **contents** of the product and the **container** itself.

Are all products labelled?

No. Only those household chemical products which meet the classification criteria set out in the *Consumer Chemicals and Containers Regulations, 2001 (CCCR, 2001)* require specific labelling and packaging. The *CCCR, 2001* are established under the authority of the *Hazardous Products Act*, and restrict the advertisement, sale and importation of products which meet the established classification criteria.

For further information:

- ▶ contact your nearest **Health Canada, Product Safety Office**. See Appendix D, Further Information;
- ▶ go to the Health Canada website at www.hc-sc.gc.ca/psp

Why are some products labelled differently?

Products intended for use only in the **workplace** are classified using federal legislation (*Hazardous Products Act – Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System (WHMIS)*), and these requirements are enforced by the provinces and territories. WHMIS requires special symbols, labelling and information designed to inform the workers about the hazards of the product. The labelling requirements are different than those used for household chemical products. Employee training is also required at workplaces using WHMIS classified products.

Other chemical products used in the home, such as cosmetics, pesticides, drugs and foods, must meet regulatory requirements set out in different federal legislation. As a result, these products would not require the same labelling as those household products covered by the *CCCR, 2001*.

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Do all classified household chemical products have hazard symbols?

No, they don't. There are some classified household chemical products that are required to carry only signal words, hazard statements and/or first aid warnings but no hazard symbol.

For example, there is a category of household chemical products called alkyl cyanoacrylate adhesives or **quick skin-bonding adhesives**. These “super glues” are capable of bonding skin with skin instantly or nearly instantly, an effect that frequently results in trips to the hospital, clinic or doctor’s office for treatment.

In addition, products that are only irritant, such as laundry or dishwasher detergents, are not labelled with hazard symbols but do have written warnings.

You can find fact sheets about symbols and hazard statements in Appendix C.

Does the use of a “child-resistant closure” mean the product is “child-proof”?

No! “Child-resistant” means that the package is difficult for most children under five years of age to open within a reasonable time. This means that young children may still be able to open a container, if given enough time to do so. The term “child-proof” is often incorrectly used, since it implies that a child will never be able to open the container. Child-resistant packaging is a deterrent to children, so parents and caregivers should take the necessary precautions when storing any household chemical products. Look for these and other definitions in Appendix B, Definitions.

3. The STAY SAFE Message

STOP! ... when you see a container.
Don't touch!

LOOK! ... for a hazard symbol

STAY SAFE! ... go get a grown-up

Use these messages for Kindergarten and Grade 1 to teach children the following critical points:

- ▶ hazard symbols mean **Danger! Do Not Touch!**
- ▶ hazard symbols can be found on containers in the house, in the garage, in the yard and at school
- ▶ hazard symbols can be different colours and sizes
- ▶ hazard symbols are always on the front of the container and near the bottom of the label
- ▶ safe storage: locked away – **Out of reach** and **Out of sight**

Add these messages for Grade 2 and Grade 3

- ▶ in case of an emergency, contact ... your local Emergency Medical Services (EMS). Tell them who you are, where you live and what is wrong. Stay on the line
- ▶ help your family STAY SAFE. Tell a grown-up when you find a container that is not out of reach and out of sight

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Add these messages for Grade 4

- ▶ help your friends and family STAY SAFE. Keep younger children away from labelled containers. Remind grown-ups to move labelled containers out of reach and out of sight. Ask a grown-up if containers with no hazard symbols should be moved to a safer location.

Contacting Emergency Medical Services (EMS)

Children should know there are many people who can help in an emergency. If there are grown-ups nearby like parents, grandparents, care givers, babysitters, teachers, Block Parents or group leaders, they can go to these people for help. If there is no one close by, children should learn to call the emergency services number in their community. This could be 911, “0” or another designated number. This number will go to an emergency services operator who will determine if ambulance, police or fire services are required and dispatch them promptly to the location.

Make sure children know:

- ▶ What situations might be emergencies. For example:
 - ▶ choking or difficulty breathing
 - ▶ someone who won't wake up
 - ▶ someone who ate or drank something that is making them very sick
 - ▶ someone complaining of a burning feeling to the skin or eyes
 - ▶ a fire

If children are not sure if it's an emergency and they are afraid, they should always call for help.

- ▶ The emergency services number to call in your community, e.g., 911, “0”, or other designated number.
- ▶ They need to stay on the phone and answer all of the operator's questions. They should not hang up until they are told to do so.
- ▶ In emergency situations where there is no adult to make the call, the child will need to know that they should have the container with them when they call because the operator will need the information on the label.

Some questions that children may be asked include:

- ▶ What help do you want? Ambulance, Fire or Police?
- ▶ What is the emergency?
- ▶ How many people need help?
- ▶ What is the location of the emergency? (address)
- ▶ What is your name?
- ▶ What is your phone number?
- ▶ What is being done to help the person that is hurt?

You may want to practice these questions with the children, or perhaps set up a classroom activity to practice using a fake phone or one that is merely a prop.

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**Reinforce the STAY SAFE messages
with parents:**

- ▶▶ Share the information you're teaching their children. Encourage parents to reinforce this information at home.
- ▶▶ Recommend that parents post all important Emergency Medical Services numbers clearly by each telephone in the home.
- ▶▶ Help parents identify the telephone number for the local Poison Control Centre.

If you, or a parent suspects poisoning, call the Poison Control Centre immediately and follow their instructions for handling the emergency. Be sure to have the container with you when you call or go to the emergency room because they will need the information on the label.

