



Making Travel Stays Safer For Young Children

When traveling with children, you need to know that your hotel room will not be as safe as your home is. Hotel rooms are full of things that a child can get into trouble. Items like electrical outlets, windows, balconies, unstable furniture, hot water and many other items which are safeguarded at your home are now hazards once again. But you can do things to make your visit there a safer one for you and fun for your child.

Some of the things you can do include:

- ◆ **Ask** – Some hotels have rooms that have been childproofed. One example of this is The Breakers in Palm Beach, Florida. They will childproof your room ahead of your arrival if you request this service.
- ◆ **BYOCG** – Bring Your Own Childproofing Goods. You may need to bring items like outlet plug inserts, safe non-incandescent night lights, bathtub mats and the like to help make your room safer.
- ◆ **Get Down At Your Child's Level** - Like you may have done at your home, go around the room and inspect it for hazards. Things like small items left on the floor or in drawers, sharp metal objects protruding down from the bottom of table and beds, plastic bags left by a previous guest, drawer or cabinet knobs that can come off, and rubber door stop caps. All of these can be hazardous.
- ◆ **Duct Tape** – This can be used to create barriers that a young child can't get past. Items like windows, TVs, toilet seat covers, drawers, shower doors, drawers & cabinets, etc. can be easily "locked" by using a little creativity. You can even use duct tape with a rolled up towel to pad the corners of tables to make them less "hard". Don't forget to do this for night stand for kids that like to jump from bed to bed.
- ◆ **Cribs & Portable Playpens** – If you request a one for your stay, inspect it before the child gets into it. Make certain that it is sturdy and safe for your child. If not, ask for a different one. Make certain that these meet the Consumer Product Safety Commission's safety standards (e.g., slats no more than 2 3/8" apart, etc.). And don't use any pillows in the crib as well.
- ◆ **Hot Water** – Many hotels have their water set much higher than 120° F because of the number of people using showers or baths at the same time. The best thing to do is to fill the tub and closely monitor the water while it is being filled. You can even bring your own thermometer with you to check the water. Once it is fully filled and safe, then put your baby in the tub. And don't leave your child unattended.
- ◆ **Furniture** – Move furniture away from windows and the edges of balconies. Check for any furniture that may be a tipping hazard.
- ◆ **Bathroom Items** – Put all hazardous items on a high shelf and disconnect blow dryers and coffee makers.
- ◆ **Balconies** – Many older balconies have spacing that is too wide apart to be safe for a child, or are horizontal rungs which act as a ladder for the child. If in doubt, you may be able to get the hotel to put up a barrier. Otherwise, do not allow your child to have access to the area.
- ◆ **Window Cover Pull Cords** – Loop and tie up any longer window blind cords.



- ◆ **Toys** – Bring enough of their own toys to keep them occupied. Consider bringing new toys to keep them entertained.

Your trip to a hotel should be a fun event for everyone. A little bit of time spent at before you go to the hotel and after you get to the room can make all of the difference in your stay. The unfortunate thing of this is that people just don't think a scald could happen to their children, and/or they are just not aware of the possibility, often with very tragic consequences. A little bit of proactive work can go a long way to keeping your family safe.

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