A Healthy Homes Resource Guide for Families

Is your home a healthy home? Use the 8 Principles of a Healthy Home below to help improve your overall environmental health and safety.

KEEP IT CLEAN

- Vacuum carpeting, upholstered furniture, and use warm soapy water to remove settled dust when first cleaning.
- Then clean with warm soapy water and disinfect surfaces, as needed, with an appropriate disinfectant.
- Mop or wipe hard surfaces instead of dry sweeping.
- Consider steam cleaning carpeting to remove environmental allergens from pets and dust mites 2-3 times a year, as able.

KEEP IT DRY

- Fix moisture leaks within 72 hours.
- Keep indoor relative humidity between 30% and 50%.
- For any small areas of suspect mold, clean with warm soapy water.
- For larger damaged areas, follow EPA guidance by vacuuming surfaces first, then wash with warm soapy water. Throw away any items not easily cleanable.

KEEP IT PEST-FREE

- Seal off holes around inside and outside of the home.
- Keep ALL food and water picked up each night before going to bed.
- For roaches, you may need to use bait stations and gels placed inside cabinets and out of reach of children.
- Use sticky traps to monitor for cockroaches.
- Use snap or tamper proof traps for mice and rats.

KEEP IT CONTAIMINANT-FREE

- Use safer cleaners like vinegar, baking soda, lemon juice and Bon-Ami™ cleanser for routine cleaning.
- Avoid using air fresheners, candles and incense in the home.
- Don't boil cleaners on the stove top.

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KEEP IT SAFE

- Keep throw rugs, clutter, electrical cords and toys picked up.

- Install a carbon monoxide alarm on each level of the home between the bedrooms and gas sources.

- Install smoke alarms in each bedroom and hallways. Test these alarms (smoke and CO) once a month and change batteries twice a year during daylight savings time.

- Make sure handrails are on all stairs with 3 or more steps.

KEEP IT VENTILATED

- Keep ALL air vents open and clear of furniture or other household items.

- Use kitchen and bathroom exhaust fans to remove humidity, odors, moisture, gases and particles, and leave them on for 20 minutes after using these rooms.

- Install a pleated furnace filter to improve the capture of smaller breathable particles like dust and mold spores.

KEEP IT COMFORTABLE

- Keep the home thermostat set between 69 and 74°F to maintain a comfortable home.

- Have your heating and cooling system checked yearly by a licensed professional to make sure it is operating properly.

KEEP IT MAINTAINED

- Have ALL gas appliances checked by a professional yearly. If not possible, have them checked every other year.

- Remove lint from dryer vent pipes several times a year.

- Repair any wood rot and repaint areas inside and outside.

- Clean out gutters at least 2 times a year.

- Have chimneys checked and cleaned by a certified chimney sweep before safely using.

If you have questions that are not answered here, please visit Mid-America Pediatric Environmental Health Specialty Unit (MAPEHSU) Children's Mercy Kansas City webpage at **cmkc.link/MAPEHSU** for further guidance. If you cannot find answers to your questions online, call our PEHSU hotline at **(800) 421-9916** (March 2022).

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