

Babysitter's Guide to Poison Prevention

Target Age:

Teens ages 11-17

Goal:

To teach babysitters or future babysitters, how children can get poisoned, what types of poisons exist, how to prevent poisonings, and what to do if a poisoning occurs.

Learning Objectives:

By the end of the lesson, participants will be able to:

- list at least one potential poison in each of the five listed rooms of the home.
- identify two poison prevention strategies.
- relate two reasons why children under the age of 6 are at an increased risk for poisoning.
- explain what to do if a poison is swallowed.

Utah State Board of Education, Utah Core State Standards for Health Education

Health I:

Strand 3: Safety and Disease Prevention (SDP) Students will apply practical knowledge and skills to develop lifelong behaviors for personal and community well-being.

Standard HI.SDP.7: Demonstrate how to access valid and reliable health information, products, and services.

Health II:

Strand 4: Substance Abuse Prevention (SAP) Students will evaluate decisions and influences about substance use. Students will also learn to speak with health care providers, research legal consequences, and analyze facts and resources for substance abuse.

Standard HII.SAP.6: Demonstrate how to talk with a health care provider about prescription options, effectiveness, side effects, and interactions of medications.

Timeline:

This lesson is designed to be a 50- 60 minute session.

Materials:

- PowerPoint presentation (optional). The slides are available at www.utahpoisoncontrol.org (select "Education & Services")
- Copies of the *Poison Name Game** grid for all participants
- Copy of look-alike flyer* for each student

***Item is located in the appendix**

- Video *Unintentional Poisoning: Prevent React* (optional). Run time 16 minutes. Available by calling the Utah Poison Control Center (UPCC) at 1-800-222-1222 or on YouTube https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=brmFA_9QJio
- Video *Making the Right Call* (optional). Available in English and Spanish on YouTube https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=357ZL_u7fP0 . Time 10 min.
- Copy of *Be on the Safe Side** handout for each student
- Copy of the role-play activity*
- Copy of *Break the Code** activity for all participants
- Magnets, telephone stickers, and the *Babysitter's Guide** brochure available from UPCC free of charge by calling 1-800-222-1222 or by ordering online at www.utahpoisoncontrol.org
- Copy of children's worksheets* for all participants (optional)
- Copy of *Certificate of Completion** for each student (optional)

Description:

Utah statistics show that approximately 60% of poisonings occur in children less than 6 years of age. Educating caregivers is a key component in preventing a poison exposure. Babysitting in someone else's home may pose unique problems with having less control over storage of harmful substances. Babysitters may not be aware of the potential poison hazards lurking in the environment where they are responsible for the safety of children.

Babysitter's Guide to Poison Prevention

1. Introduction

- Introduce yourself**
- Explain Purpose:** To identify ways to keep children safe from poisonings by learning what types of poisoning hazards exist, how or why children typically access them, and what to do if a poisoning happens.

2. Ice Breaker/Game

- Poison Name Game:** Distribute the *Poison Name Game** house grid to each participant. Explain that they will be given 5 minutes to write as many potentially poisonous products as possible in each of the appropriate room grids. When the time limit is completed, each participant one-by-one, reads the items on their paper. If more than one person has an item listed then all participants must cross that item out. Participants continue reading their lists and others indicating if they have the same item listed. Once everyone has read through their lists, participants count the number of products left on their paper that have not been crossed out. The person with the most items listed wins. A small prize could be given to the winner (optional). Answer key* for the instructor to use as a guide to potentially poisonous items is provided.

***Item is located in the appendix**

3. Definitions and Statistics

Present the following information to the class:

- a. **What is a Poison:** Anything someone eats, breathes, or gets in the eyes or on the skin, which can cause sickness or death if it gets into or on the body. Poisons come in different forms; solid, liquid or gas/spray.
- b. **The Poison Problem:**
 - Utah Poison Control Center (UPCC) receives approximately 40,000 calls each year.
 - About 60% of poisonings involve children less than 6 years old.
 - Most poisonings happen in the home.

4. Common Substances

Present the following information to the class:

- a. **Common poisonings in children under 6 years of age** (with examples):
 - Cosmetics and Personal Care Products
 - Mouthwash, toothpaste, nail products, shampoo, perfume, talcum powder, lotion, make-up
 - Household cleaners
 - Bleach, drain and toilet bowl cleaner, laundry products, laundry packets, window cleaner, dish detergent, oven cleaner
 - Medicine and Vitamins
 - Pain relievers, cough and cold medicine, medicine for upset stomach, vitamins (especially those containing iron)
 - Topicals
 - Diaper rash ointment, acne preparations, cortisone cream, athletic rubs
 - Foreign Bodies
 - Coins, button batteries, small magnets
- b. **Look-alike Activity:** Show the look-alike flyer* and explain how small children cannot always tell the difference between these types of products. Many household products are colorful and very enticing to young children. It is up to caregivers to help keep children safe from poisons.

5. Children are More Likely to be Poisoned

- a. **Stages of Development:** Discuss the following stages as they relate to poisonings.
 - **Infants (0-6 months):** Children in this age group are usually not very mobile so most poisonings happen when someone else makes a mistake such as giving the wrong amount of medicine or the wrong medicine.
 - To prevent medicine mistakes:
 - Communicate with the child's parent before giving medication while babysitting.
 - Read the medicine label every time to understand what the medicine does, the possible side effects, and how much and when to give it.

*Item is located in the appendix

- Call poison control if you have any questions regarding medicine or you think a medicine mistake has occurred.
- **Crawlers (6 months-1½ years):** Children this age are usually mobile and begin exploring their environment. Putting things in the mouth is how they learn. Poisons can occur because of this natural behavior.
- **Toddlers and Preschoolers (1½ years-3 years):** Children in this age group are very mobile. They are usually very curious. They can usually climb and reach higher. Products that look-alike are very confusing to children of this age. Nothing is child-proof.
- b. Risk Factors and What to Do About Them:**
 - **Child's Curious Nature:** Children learn and exploring by tasting and touching.
 - **Improper Storage:** Store dangerous products up and out of reach.
 - **Adult/Babysitter Distractions:** Telephone call, doorbell, meal preparation, or other distractions put kids at risk. Most poisons occur when the product is out and in use. Have the product in hand when answering the phone or door.

6. Video *Unintentional Poisoning: Prevent, React*

Tell the class that they are going to watch a video about how to keep children safe from poisons. Although the video refers to parents, explain that as babysitters they are responsible for the children when the parents are gone.

Video Summary: This is an animated video that focuses on preventing poisoning. Common poison scenarios are demonstrated. It also explains what to do if a poisoning occurs; including first aid and how to get help. It is available in English and Spanish. Run time 16 minutes. Available at UPCC by calling 1-800-222-1222 or on YouTube https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=brmFA_9QJio . Alternatively, you may choose to show *Making the Right Call* video located here https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=357ZL_u7fP0 . Run Time 10 minutes.

7. Poison Scenario Activity

Have volunteers come to the front and read one of the babysitting scenarios*. Ask them what they would do in each situation, and then discuss it with the class.

8. Keeping Children Safe From Poisons

- a. Babysitters Guide Brochure:** Distribute brochures* to the class. Review the “Be on the Safe Side” section of the brochure. Encourage the students to take the brochure home and use it as a poison safety guide when they babysit. Note: free brochures can be obtained from the UPCC or you can make copies.
- b. Be on the Safe Side Handout:** Distribute the handout*. Encourage students to use the form as a checklist. Do a check of the house when they arrive to help prevent a poisoning. Before the parent leaves, have them fill out the important information part of the paper. This can be kept for future use when babysitting the same children, and updated as needed.

*Item is located in the appendix

9. If Someone is Poisoned

Present the following information to the class:

- a. **First-Aid for Poisoning: Call the Poison Control Center right away at 1-800-222-1222.**

If poison is...

- **Inhaled:** Quickly get the person to fresh air. Do not breathe the fumes. Open doors and windows.
 - **Example:** you are working on an art project for school, and your little sister wants to watch while you spray paint. After a few minutes of spraying you notice you have a headache, your little sister says she doesn't feel good either.
 - **On the Skin:** Remove contaminated clothing. Rinse skin continuously with water for 15 minutes. Wash gently with soap and water. Rinse again.
 - **Example:** your younger sibling finds the bathroom cleaner under the sink and by the time you get to them, you notice their hands are red and smell like cleaner.
 - **In the Eye:** Quickly start rinsing the eye with lukewarm (not hot) water and continue for 15 minutes. Have the person blink as much as possible while rinsing the eye. Do not force eyelid open. Do not use eye drops.
 - **Example:** A child you are watching finds mom's perfume, and not knowing how to use it, accidentally sprays himself in the eyes.
 - **Swallowed:** Do not make the person vomit. Call the poison control center immediately. Do not wait for symptoms to appear.
 - **Example:** the little one you are babysitting finds dad's gummy vitamins and thinks they are candy, before you have time to stop them they have already eaten a handful.
- b. **Calling the poison control center—Role Play Activity:** Ask two students to volunteer for the role-play activity*. After they read their parts aloud, discuss it with the class. Emphasize that they do not need to worry about getting in trouble for calling the poison control center. The poison control center is there to help. The main concern is the safety of the child.

10. Conclusion

- a. **Break the Code Activity:** Provide a *Break the Code** handout to each student. If time permits let them work on it for a few minutes, otherwise they can complete it at home.
- b. **Poison Center Phone Number/Magnets or Stickers:** Distribute magnets or telephone stickers with the poison control center number on it. Tell them to keep it handy when they babysit. Ask those with a cell phone to take out their phones and save the number in their contact list. Note: magnets and telephone stickers can be obtained from the UPCC by calling 1-800-222-1222 or ordering online www.utahpoisoncontrol.org.

*Item is located in the appendix

- c. **Worksheets/Activities for Children They Babysit:** Distribute a copy of each of the worksheets* to the students. Encourage them to take copies to complete with the children they babysit. This will help them teach the children they babysit about poison safety.
- d. **Certificate of Completion:** If desired, distribute a certificate of completion* to each student.

References

- Video: *Unintentional Poisoning: Prevent, React NY* Poison Control Center Utah Poison Control Center www.utahpoisoncontrol.org
- Video: *Making the Right Call* produced by TWIG media lab and the Utah Poison Control Center, 2019. Available in English and Spanish https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=357ZL_u7fP0

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APPENDIX

POISON NAME GAME

Utah Poison Control Center

Instructions: List as many potentially poisonous products as possible in each of the appropriate room grids. When allotted time is over, each participant one-by-one, will read the items on their paper. If more than one person has an item listed, then all participants must cross it out. Participants continue reading their lists and other participants must indicate if they have the same item listed. Those with the most items NOT crossed off, wins the game!



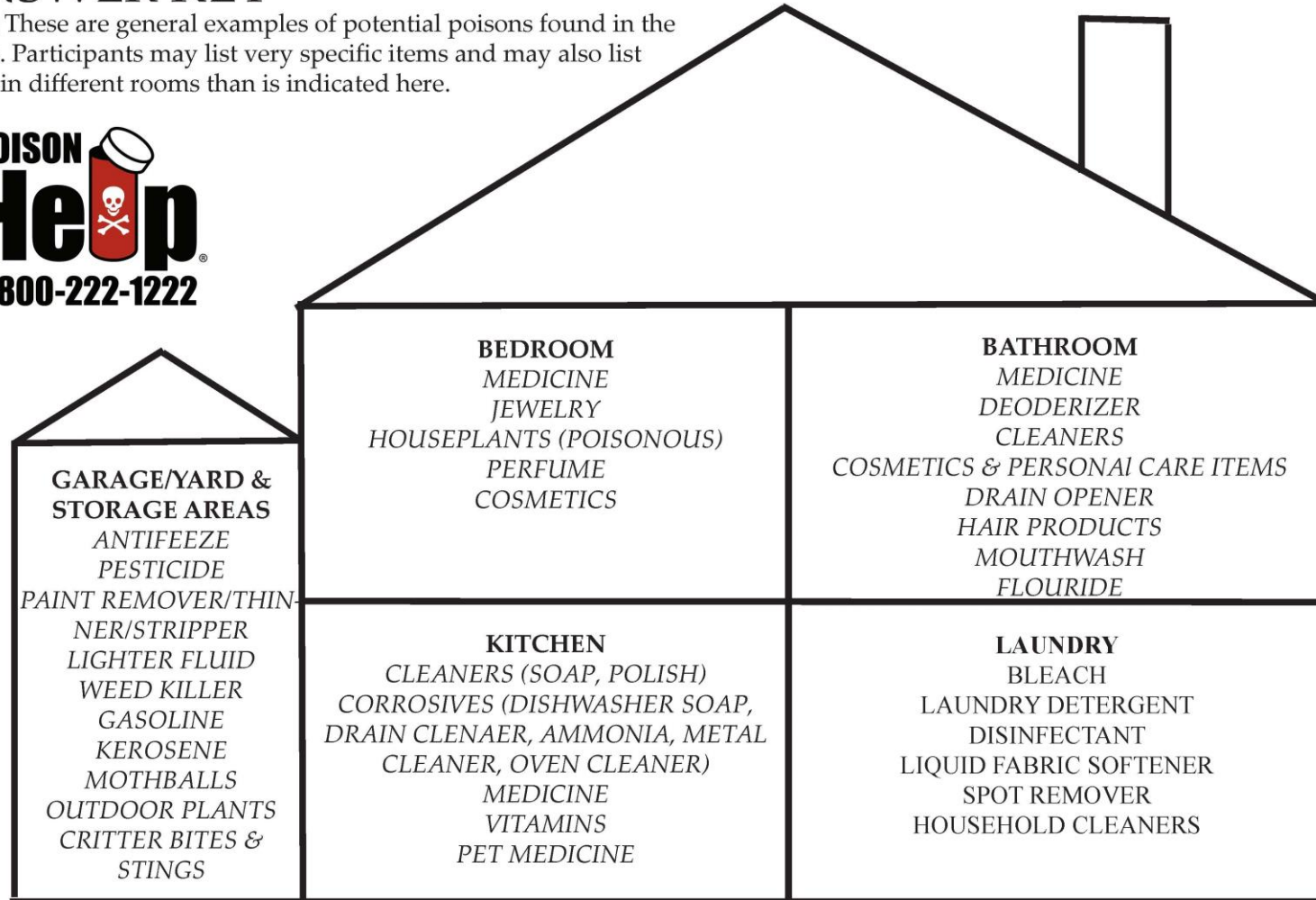
GARAGE/YARD & STORAGE AREAS	BEDROOM	BATHROOM
	KITCHEN	LAUNDRY

POISON NAME GAME

Utah Poison Control Center

ANSWER KEY

Note: These are general examples of potential poisons found in the home. Participants may list very specific items and may also list them in different rooms than is indicated here.





Poisonous Mushrooms
or Edible Mushrooms



Vitamins or Gummy Candies



Medical Cream or Cake Icing

**If you can't tell
the difference,
how can a child?**



Cleaning Supply or Juice



Pain Relievers or Chocolate Candies

REMEMBER

Never call medicine candy to get a child to take it.

Child-resistant doesn't mean child-proof.

Always keep medicines and household products:

- ✓ Up
- ✓ Away
- ✓ Out of sight



Fast. Free. Expert. 24/7,
confidential help.

Almost anything can be poisonous if it's used in the
wrong way, in the wrong amount, or by the wrong person.

If you suspect a poisoning, don't take a chance.

Call 1-800-222-1222.

Babysitter Poison Scenarios

Make a photo copy of the following scenarios and cut them apart. Call on several participants to come forward. Give each volunteer a scenario. Have them read it aloud to the class, and then respond to the question. Discuss each scenario with the class.

1. When you arrive at the neighbor's house to babysit, you find an open medicine bottle sitting on the kitchen table. What would you do? Tell why.
2. You walk into the kitchen, and you see the baby playing with a bottle of dishwashing detergent. What would you do? Tell why.
3. You've been outside playing with the children. You and the kids are very thirsty. There is a water bottle in the garage that has blue liquid in it. You think it might be blue Gatorade. What would you do? Tell why.
4. You are sitting on the couch watching TV with the children and you see a small red piece of candy on the floor under the chair across from you. It looks like it might be an M & M but you are not sure. What would you do? Tell Why.
5. While helping an older child, you realize that a younger child isn't in the room with you and you go looking for her. You find her in the laundry room. She has the cap off of the bleach bottle, and it is spilled on her and the floor. What would you do? Tell why.
6. You and the kids are playing at the park. One of the children notices some bushes with bright red berries on it. He tells you that he's heard the berries are really yummy. What would you do?
7. While playing outside with the children, you find some mushrooms growing in the grass. They look just like the mushrooms your mom puts in your favorite casserole. What would you do? Tell why.
8. The family you are babysitting for has their grandma visiting from out of town. You notice that she has left all her prescription medicine bottles sitting on the table beside her bed. What would you do? Tell why.
9. The baby you are tending has just learned how to crawl. While you are babysitting you notice that she is chewing on a leaf from one of the plants in the house. She is acting normal. What would you do? Tell why.



Did you know?

Every 30 seconds a child is poisoned in the United States.

Sixty percent (60%) of poison exposures in Utah occur in children under six years old.

Many poisonings occur when the product is in use.

The most common products involved in poisoning are:

- cosmetics and personal care items
- drugs (prescription and non-prescription)
- cleaning agents
- plants

Product label first-aid instructions may be incorrect or out of date.

There is NO such thing as childproof; only child-RESISTANT.

The Utah Poison Control Center (UPCC) is a 24-hour resource for poison information, clinical toxicology consultation, and poison prevention education. The UPCC is a program of the State of Utah and is administratively housed in the University of Utah College of Pharmacy. It is staffed 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, by registered pharmacists, nurses, and physicians with additional training in management of poisonings. The UPCC is nationally certified as a regional poison control center.



utahpoisoncontrol.org



@utahpoison



Utah Poison Control Center

University of Utah Health
College of Pharmacy, L. S. Skaggs Pharmacy Institute

UTAH POISON CONTROL CENTER BABYSITTER'S GUIDE

DO YOU KNOW
WHAT TO DO
IF A POISONING
OCCURS?





If a poisoning occurs...

- First of all, remain calm!
- Call the poison control center or a doctor right away. Have the following information ready:
 - ❑ How the child is feeling right now
 - ❑ Age and weight of the child
 - ❑ Name or description of the medicine or product
 - ❑ Amount taken
 - ❑ When it happened
 - ❑ Your name and phone number
- If the child is unconscious or having difficulty breathing, call 911 immediately!

**SKIP THE INTERNET
PICK UP THE PHONE AND CALL.
FREE, FAST, EXPERT HELP**

24 HOURS A DAY, 7 DAYS A WEEK.

1-800-222-1222

Be on the safe side

- Place the poison control number near telephones, and program it into your phone.
- Have the name and telephone number of a responsible adult nearby, in case of emergency.
- Do not leave children unattended.
- Be aware of all potential hazards in the home.
- Teach children to ask you first before putting anything in their mouth.
- Never call medicine "candy."
- Remember, small children can't read. Many poisons look like their favorite things.

Poison look-alikes

Many products around the house can be poisonous but look like something good to eat or drink. Be careful!



Be on the Safe Side

Check the rooms of the house for poison danger

Kitchen



- ☐ Cleaners (soap, disinfectant, polish)
- ☐ Corrosives (automatic dishwasher detergent, oven cleaner, ammonia, drain cleaners)
- ☐ Medicine (aspirin, pain relievers, diet aids, vitamin/iron pills, pet medicine)

Bathroom



- ☐ Cosmetics (nail polish & remover, perfume, makeup)
- ☐ Medicine
- ☐ Mouthwash
- ☐ Shaving Products
- ☐ Hair Products
- ☐ Cleaners (disinfectants, drain cleaner)

Bedroom



- ☐ Jewelry
- ☐ Medicine
- ☐ Plants

Laundry Area



- ☐ Bleach
- ☐ Laundry Detergent
- ☐ Spot Remover

Garage/Basement/Storage Area



- ☐ Paint Remover/Thinner/Stripper
- ☐ Gasoline/Kerosene
- ☐ Weed Killer
- ☐ Pesticides
- ☐ Antifreeze

TAKE ACTION

- ✓ Keep poisons up high and out of reach
- ✓ Use safety latches on cabinets where harmful products are stored
- ✓ Remove medicines and cleaners from countertops and other open areas
- ✓ Store household products away from food
- ✓ Keep all products in the original containers



Emergency Information

Family Name _____

Home Address _____

Emergency: 911

Poison Control Center: 1-800-222-1222

Police: _____

Fire Department: _____

Hospital: _____

Doctor: _____

Mom (work): _____

Mom (cell): _____

Dad (Work): _____

Dad (Cell): _____

Neighbor: _____

Name, Weight, and medicine the child takes

Name _____ Weight _____ Medicine _____

Name _____ Weight _____ Medicine _____

Name _____ Weight _____ Medicine _____

Name _____ Weight _____ Medicine _____

Copy this sheet, cut on the dotted line and fill out emergency information with the parents before they leave. Use the back if you need more space.

Calling the Poison Control Center

Activity Role-Play for Babysitters

Poison Control Specialist: Poison Control Center. My name is Richard. How can I help you?

Sally: (very frightened) I'm babysitting a neighbor boy and he just drank some bleach.

Poison Control Specialist: How old is the child?

Sally: 4

Poison Control Specialist: Do you know how much he weighs?

Sally: His mom left me an information paper. It shows 25 pounds.

Poison Control Specialist: When did this happen?

Sally: Just now.

Poison Control Specialist: How is he feeling right now?

Sally: He seems fine, but he keeps spitting.

Poison Control Specialist: Give him a small amount of his favorite drink. What is his name?

Sally: Jimmy Jones

Poison Control Specialist: What is your name?

Sally: Sally Smith

Poison Control Specialist: I think Jimmy will be fine, but I will call you back in an hour. If he gets sick, call me back immediately. What is the phone number and address where you are?

Sally: 1234 Rolling Hills Drive
New Town, Utah

Poison Control Specialist: Don't worry, Jimmy will be fine. I will check back within an hour.



Break the Code

Use the picture to figure out the safety rule. The first is done.

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M
♥	⚔	✿	☞	★	☪	♦	🌸	♣	➡	🌼	✈	☯
N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z
🐾	🦋	🏠	✳	😊	😊	🌙	📺	❄	📺	🎯	🖍	🌪

M

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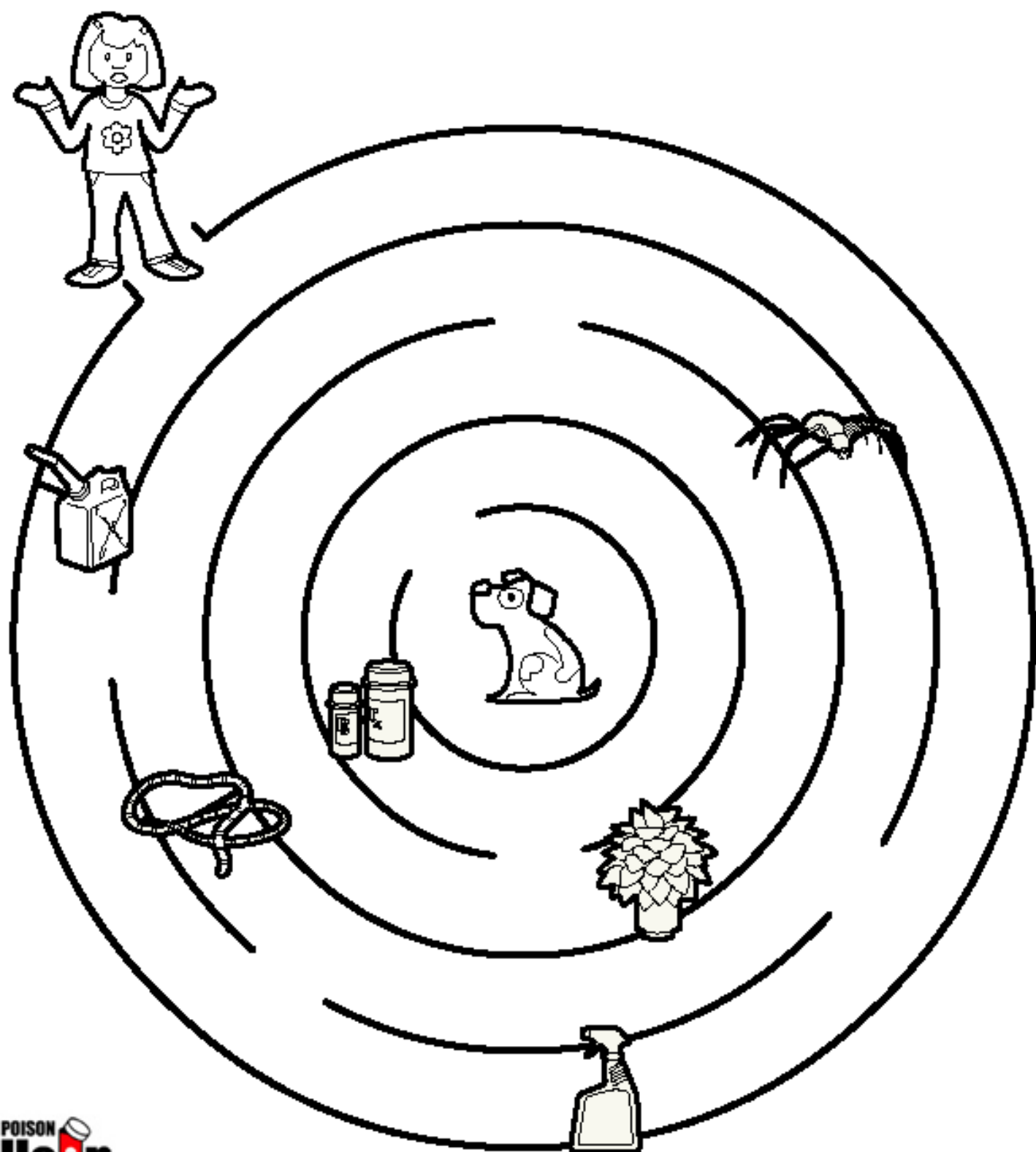
If you suspect a poisoning, call the Utah Poison Control Center.
1-800-222-1222



Utah Poison Control Center

Find the Safe Path

Help Amy get to her dog, but don't touch a poison!



Hidden Hazards

Find all the poisons hidden in this picture.

- ☐ snake ☐ wasp ☐ spray cleaner ☐ gas can ☐ pill bottle
☐ nail polish ☐ toilet cleaner ☐ dish soap ☐ mushroom



Kitchen Patrol

There are 5 safe things and 5 poisons in this picture.
Color the safe things green. Color the poisons red.



Safe items: bread, plate, milk, apple juice, banana.
Poisons: hot use plant, medicine, detergent, spray cleaner, pine cleaner.

Be Poison Smart

D	A	N	G	E	R	F	C	H	X	G	L	M
X	B	X	C	K	S	M	L	C	B	T	P	A
P	M	S	V	Q	R	X	E	U	Y	R	O	G
Y	C	W	U	T	E	D	A	Z	E	M	I	N
G	T	O	J	L	K	L	N	V	N	P	S	E
O	R	E	R	U	C	W	E	P	O	M	O	T
A	Z	V	F	D	I	N	R	K	H	E	N	S
Y	G	R	P	A	T	B	S	G	P	H	F	T
P	L	O	S	I	S	M	E	I	E	O	E	X
C	X	Q	O	M	U	B	L	C	L	Q	P	Z
X	Q	N	Y	H	T	L	T	Y	E	T	C	Q
M	Z	K	M	A	S	E	B	G	T	M	F	K
X	L	N	M	W	N	M	K	B	L	X	J	B

ADULT
CLEANERS
DANGER
MAGNETS
PILLS



POISON
PREVENTION
SAFETY
STICKERS
TELEPHONE

Be Poison Smart

D	A	N	G	E	R	F	C	H	X	G	L	M
X	B	X	C	K	S	M	L	C	B	T	P	A
P	M	S	V	Q	R	X	E	U	Y	R	O	G
Y	C	W	U	T	E	D	A	Z	E	M	I	N
G	T	O	J	L	K	L	N	V	N	P	S	E
O	R	E	R	U	C	W	E	P	O	M	O	T
A	Z	V	F	D	I	N	R	K	H	E	N	S
Y	G	R	P	A	T	B	S	G	P	H	F	T
P	L	O	S	I	S	M	E	I	E	O	E	X
C	X	Q	O	M	U	B	L	C	L	Q	P	Z
X	Q	N	Y	H	T	L	T	Y	E	T	C	Q
M	Z	K	M	A	S	E	B	G	T	M	F	K
X	L	N	M	W	N	M	K	B	L	X	J	B

(Answer Key)

ADULT
CLEANERS
DANGER
MAGNETS
PILLS



POISON
PREVENTION
SAFETY
STICKERS
TELEPHONE



Utah Poison Control Center

THIS CERTIFIES THAT



NAME

**HAS COMPLETED A BABYSITTER CLASS ON
POISON EDUCATION AND PREVENTION**

POISON
Help
1-800-222-1222



