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## Additional Resources

SocialLearning.com is more than a resource for books and DVDs that teach parenting. It is also a great place to find helpful tools for teaching life skills to teens and young children. [Click here](#) to visit [www.SocialLearning.com](http://www.SocialLearning.com) to find resources for parenting success.

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## House Safety — Childhood Poisonings



We continue our series on House Safety this month by looking at childhood poisonings. Most people consider their home a safe haven in an often stormy world. But even the most loving home can be a dangerous place when it comes to accidental poisoning of children. Many factors put young children at risk. Carelessness on the part of adults and a child's natural curiosity can be a lethal combination.

According to the Centers for Disease Control, 2.2 million cases of poisoning were reported in 2000, more than 52 percent of them involved children under 6, and more than 90 percent occurred in the home.<sup>1</sup> Did you know the hours between 4 and 10 pm are called the "arsenic hour" because this is a common time of day for poisonings to occur?<sup>2</sup> Did you know that one tablet of some medicines can kill a child?<sup>3</sup> Iron in supplements is the biggest concern when it comes to childhood poisoning, but many over-the-counter drugs such as stimulants to keep you awake and decongestant tablets can be lethal to children.<sup>3</sup>

The very things upon which we rely daily are involved in 60 percent of childhood poisonings: pool, spa, and yard chemicals; kitchen and laundry room cleaning supplies; gasoline; antifreeze; paints and solvents to name a few.<sup>2</sup>

More safety tips and strategies can be found in Foster Parent College's unique new course, House Safety. Home safety expert, Michael Quinn, takes viewers through a virtual tour of a typical foster home in Foster Parent College's self-paced course, House Safety. Quinn discusses interior and exterior safety issues and common household hazards. Viewers can use provided checklists and learn to do their own self-scout home inspection. Be safe. Be proactive. House Safety can help you insure the safety of your children.

For more information on poisoning risks, visit <http://www.cdc.gov> or call the National Poison Control Center at (800) 222-1222.

1. Harper, A. (2007) 'Healthy Home' Can Help Prevent Childhood Poisoning. Retrieved February 27, 2008, from University of Cincinnati, Academic Health Center Web site: <http://www.healthnews.uc.edu/publications/findings/?4656/4696>
2. Common Childhood Injuries and Poisonings. Retrieved February 27, 2008, from [http://children.musc.edu/health\\_library/poison/factpois.htm](http://children.musc.edu/health_library/poison/factpois.htm)
3. Hingley, A.T. (March 1996) Preventing Childhood Poisoning. Retrieved February 27, 2008 from <http://www.kidsource.com/kidsource/content3/fda.poisoning>

## Relationships: Strengthening Communications

Based on PREP (Prevention and Relationship enhancement Program) and written specifically for foster parents, this course explores conflict resolution, improving communication, and promoting intimacy in a relationship. Learn about relationship danger signs like escalation, invalidation, negative interpretations, as well as withdrawal and avoidance. Also, learn to improve communication with the following strategies: take a break, speaker-listener, feeling exercises, "I" statements, and paraphrasing.



Foster Parents who complete this course are better prepared to maintain happy and healthy family lives while managing the added responsibility of care giving.

Visit **FOSTERPARENTCOLLEGE.COM** for a free preview of the Relationships: Strengthening Communications course.

## Household Solutions – Safe and Natural Alternatives

Everyday groceries provide low-odor and non-corrosive alternatives to commercial cleansers that are safe to use around children and pets.

1. Rub halved lemons on cutting boards, rinse with cold water to clean and destroy odors.
2. Send lemons rinds through the garbage disposal to eliminate odors.
3. Clean copper by dipping a cut lemon in salt and rubbing on the copper.
4. Sprinkle salt on spillovers and oven drips while they are still liquid. The salt absorbs the drips. Wipe the mess away when it cools.
5. Food and soap scum can be removed from sinks by scouring with salt.
6. Add eight ounces of white vinegar to the laundry when you wash a load to help eliminate stubborn odors from clothing.
7. Wipe down your refrigerator inside and out with vinegar to clean, kill odors, and remove and prevent mildew.
8. Use vinegar to scour and clean tubs, sinks, and toilets, kill mold and mildew, prevent mildew growth, and remove soap and water scum. Spray or wipe the vinegar on, wait and rinse clean.
9. To clean spills in the oven, make a paste with baking soda and water; apply to baked-on spills and scrub. Wipe the mess away with damp cloths or paper towels.
10. Use a baking soda and water paste to clean a dirty oven door. Wipe the mix on the oven window, let sit for 10 minutes and rinse with water.
11. Use toothpaste with a toothbrush to clean grout between tiles.
12. Use Tang instead of toilet bowl cleaner. Pour in a cup of powdered Tang, let sit overnight, then brush and flush.

## Creative Youth



by Natalie, Foster Child – CA

### My Past

I traveled down the road of life's trials and tribulations.  
 All I used to look at was the complications.  
 I looked at the obstacles as reinforced brick walls.  
 What should have been steps up were nothing but falls.  
 But now I'm at rock bottom.  
 My old thoughts I've forgotten.  
 I can only go up from here.  
 All I need is a helpful ear.

by Willis, Foster Child – OH

## Care-Free Cooking – Ground Beef Mix for Chili, Spaghetti Sauce, Pizza and More!

Make up batches of this mix when you have spare time, then on extra busy days you can quickly prepare main courses. Makes about 7 pints.

### Ingredients:

- ▶ ¼ cup vegetable oil
- ▶ 4 medium onions, peeled and chopped
- ▶ 4 cloves garlic, peeled and finely chopped
- ▶ 4 stalks celery, chopped
- ▶ 2-3 carrots, peeled and chopped
- ▶ 5 pounds lean ground beef
- ▶ 1 tablespoon salt
- ▶ 2 teaspoons pepper
- ▶ 3 tablespoons Worcestershire sauce
- ▶ 1 jar (26 ounces) marinara sauce or any other type of spaghetti sauce



### Directions:

1. Divide the oil between 2 large skillet. Add half the onions, garlic, celery and carrots to each skillet. Cook over moderate heat for 10 minutes, stirring occasionally.
2. Divide the meat between the two skillets. Break up the meat with a large spoon. Then stir and cook until the meat is no longer pink.
3. Divide the salt, pepper Worcestershire sauce and marinara sauce between the skillets. Cover and simmer about 20 - 25 minutes.
4. Spoon off all the fat. Cool thoroughly.
5. Spoon the mixture into seven 1-pint freezer containers leaving ½ space at the top. Seal tightly and label containers. Freeze. Use within 3 months.