Demonstrate safety practices appropriate to the home health care agency, community, and workplace.
Experience a decrease in the frequency or severity of injury.
Demonstrate safe child-rearing practices or lifestyle practices.

**Implementing**

Hazards to safety occur at all ages and vary according to the age and development level of the individual.

**CLIENT TEACHING**

**Safety Measures throughout the Life Span**

**NEWBORNS AND INFANTS**
- Use a federally approved car seat at all times (including coming home from hospital). It should be in the back seat, facing backward.
- Never leave the infant unattended on a raised surface.
- Check the temperature of the infant’s bath water and formula prior to using.
- Hold the infant upright during feeding. Do not prop the bottle. Cut food in small pieces, and do not feed the infant peanuts or popcorn.
- Investigate the infant’s crib for compliance with federal safety regulations: slats no more than 2 3/8 inches apart, lead-free paint, height of crib sides, tight fit of mattress to crib.
- Use a playpen with sides made of small-size netting. Never leave playpen sides down.
- Provide large soft toys with no small detachable or sharp-edged parts.
- Use guard gates on stairs and screens on windows. Supervise the infant in swings and highchairs.
- Cover electric outlets. Coil cords out of reach.
- Place plants, household cleaners, and wastebaskets out of reach.
- Lock away potential poisons, such as medicines, paint, and gasoline.

**TODDLERS**
- Continue to use federally approved car seats at all times. Place children in back seat when traveling in a car.
- Teach children not to put objects in the mouth, including pills (unless given by parent).
- Keep objects with sharp edges (such as furniture and knives) out of children’s reach.
- Place hot pots on back burners with handles turned inward.
- Keep cleaning solutions, insecticides, and medicines in locked cupboards.
- Keep windows and balconies screened.
- Supervise toddlers in the tub.
- Fence in pools, and supervise toddlers at all times when in or near pools. Do not overfill bathtub. Do not let toddlers play near ditches or wells.
- Teach children not to run or ride a tricycle into the street.
- Obtain a low bed when the child begins to climb.
- Cover outlets with safety covers or plugs.

**PRESCHOOLERS**
- Do not allow children to run with candy or other objects in the mouth.
- Teach children not to put small objects in the mouth, nose, and ears.
- Remove doors from unused equipment such as refrigerators.
- Always supervise preschoolers crossing streets and begin safety teaching about obeying traffic signals and looking both ways.
- Check Halloween treats before allowing children to eat them. Discard loose or open candy.
- Teach children to play in “safe” areas, not on streets and railroad tracks.
- Teach preschoolers the dangers of playing with matches and playing near charcoal, fire, and heating appliances.
- Teach children to avoid strangers and keep parents informed of their whereabouts.
- Teach preschoolers not to walk in front of swings and not to push others off playground equipment.

**SCHOOL-AGE CHILDREN**
- Teach children safety rules for recreational and sports activities: never swim alone, always wear a life jacket when in a boat, and wear a protective helmet and knee and elbow pads when needed.
- Supervise contact sports and activities in which children aim at a target.
- Teach children to obey all traffic and safety rules for bicycling, skateboarding, and roller skating.
- Teach children to use light or reflective clothing when walking or cycling at night.
- Teach children safe ways to use the stove, garden tools, and other equipment.
- Supervise children when they use saws, electric appliances, tools, and other potentially dangerous equipment.
- Teach children not to play with fireworks, gunpowder, or firearms. Keep firearms unloaded, locked up, and out of reach.
- Teach children to avoid excavations, quarries, vacant buildings, and playing around heavy machinery.
- Teach children the health hazards of smoking. If you smoke, stop.
- Teach children the effects of drugs and alcohol on judgment and coordination.

**ADOLESCENTS**
- Have adolescents complete a driver’s education course, and take practice drives with them in various kinds of weather.
- Set firm limits on automobile use, namely, never to drive after drinking or using drugs, and never to ride with a driver who has done so. Encourage adolescents to call home for a ride if they have been drinking, assuring them they can do so without a reprimand.
- Restrict number of passengers in car during the first year of driving.
- Teach adolescents to wear a safety helmet when riding motorcycles, scooters, and other sports vehicles. Teach safety rules for water sports.
- Encourage adolescents to use proper equipment when participating in sports. Schedule a physical examination before participation, and be certain there is medical supervision for all athletic activities.

**Promoting Safety across the Life Span**

Measures to ensure the safety of people of all ages focus on (a) observation or prediction of potentially harmful situations so that harm can be avoided and (b) client education that empowers clients to protect themselves and their families from injury. Safety measures covering the life span from infancy to elders are listed in the accompanying Client Teaching.
NEWBORNS AND INFANTS. Accidents are a leading cause of death during infancy, especially during the first year of life. Infants are completely dependent on others for care; they are oblivious to such dangers as falling or ingesting harmful substances. Parents need to learn the amount of observation necessary to maintain infant safety. They also need help to identify and remove common hazards in and around the home, and first-aid information that includes cardiopulmonary resuscitation and interventions for airway obstruction. Common accidents during infancy include burns, suffocation or choking, automobile accidents, falls, and poisoning. Education and support of parents can make them more knowledgeable and better prepared to protect their children from accidents and injuries.

TODDLERS. Toddlers are curious and like to feel and taste everything. They are fascinated by potential dangers, such as pools and busy streets, so they need constant supervision and protection (Figure 32-2). Parents prevent many accidents by “toddler-proofing” the home or other setting where the child will be. This practice extends to the use of federally approved car restraints and removing or securing all items that can pose a safety hazard to the child in any setting. It may be necessary to inspect for and remove sources of lead from the environment. Lead poisoning (plumbism) is a risk for children exposed to lead paint chips, fumes from leaded gasoline, or any “leaded” substances. The ingestion of lead-based paint chips is the most common cause of lead poisoning in children.

CLINICAL ALERT

The remodeling and renovation of older homes (e.g., those built before 1978) accounts for most of the lead poisoning seen today. Nurses need to educate families living in older homes about their children’s risk for lead poisoning and provide lead poisoning prevention advice.