

I can be
poisoned
if I drink
cleaning
things



Poisoning

Aims and objectives

Recognise how toddlers explore with their mouths and the risk from poisoning by common household products.

Activity/Session

Parents/carers: Discuss experiences as toddlers explore their home and find things to put in their mouths. Consider how products with a bittering agent may offer an extra safety precaution.

Outcomes

Learners to be able to:
Understand early development, to recognise how toddlers can be poisoned. Consider risk reduction and prevention ideas.

Session notes

Surprising facts

- No top is child-proof, it can take just seconds for some 3-4 year olds to open a child-resistant lid.
- Toddlers are interested in the smell, taste and texture of things, even odd smells and taste.
- Brightly coloured cleaning products left next to the toilet, or dishwasher tablets or liquid tabs under the sink can look interesting enough to drink, bite or taste.

Why might a toddler be poisoned by cleaning things?

- Toddlers are fascinated by the world around them and love to explore by tasting and putting things in their mouths.
- If cleaning things are left next to the toilet or under the sink a toddler can easily get to them.
- If toddlers can climb they may get into higher cupboards to reach things.
- If you are cleaning and are distracted by the door bell or phone you could leave cleaning products within your child's reach.
- Some children can get the child-resistant cap off cleaning things and swallow the contents in seconds.

What can you do to stop this kind of accident from happening?

- Put all cleaning things away up high and out of reach and sight.
- Teach children not to drink anything they haven't been told they can drink - but don't rely on them remembering.
- Buy products that have child-resistant tops. Look for products with a bittering agent such as Bitrex as it has a nasty taste and may prevent a serious injury should a child try to swallow it.

What other ways might a toddler get poisoned?

- Medicines and painkillers are a real danger to toddlers if they're left lying around on bedside cabinets or in handbags.
- Alcohol or gardening chemicals left within reach of a child. Keep all these products out of a child's reach and sight, ideally in a high cabinet with a lock.

Tasting the most bitter substance on earth is a great ice-breaker for your session. Order your Bitrex Taste Test [here](#)