

## Keep It Maintained

- Repair cracks and holes in foundation.
- Clean gutters regularly.
- Fix peeling paint.
- Replace furnace filters regularly.

## Keep It Comfortable

- Inspect regularly for problems.
  - Have a professional check heating and cooling systems at least once a year.
  - Seal all cracks and crevices, especially around doors and windows.
  - Make sure insulation levels are right for where you live.
- [energy.gov/energysaver/insulation](http://energy.gov/energysaver/insulation)

More information:

Healthy Homes Partnership  
[extensionhealthyhomes.org/ccontent.html](http://extensionhealthyhomes.org/ccontent.html)

TN Healthy Homes Partnership  
[TNhealthyhomespartnership.org](http://TNhealthyhomespartnership.org)

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**Healthy Home**  
A Guide for Parents



## What is a healthy home?

A healthy home supports the health of those who live there. Big or small, urban or rural, any home can be healthy. Following the eight principles of healthy housing will start you and your family on your way to a healthier home.

## Why is a healthy home important for your child?

Young children spend most of their time indoors, usually at home. For a number of reasons, they are particularly vulnerable to hazards in their indoor environment:

- Their brains, bodies and immune systems are still growing and developing.
- Their curious nature often results in hand-to-mouth contact and increased exposure to toxins.

## What are the harmful effects of an unhealthy home?

Some of the more common health problems include:

- Asthma triggers
- Allergies
- Injuries
- Poisonings
- Learning disabilities
- Behavior disorders

# 8 Healthy Home Principles

## Keep It Dry

- Fix roofing and plumbing leaks immediately.
- Keep humidity levels between 40-60 percent, using dehumidifiers if necessary.

## Keep It Clean

- Use mats at doors to keep dirt out.
- Regularly clean, using damp cloths and mops. Dry cleaning just spreads the dirt around.
- Use natural or nontoxic cleaning supplies.



## Keep It Pest Free

- Seal all cracks and crevices using caulk and weather stripping.
- Keep food and water away from pests.
- Never use pesticides where children can reach.
- Use Integrated Pest Management techniques.  
[extension.tennessee.edu/publications/Documents/pb1303.pdf](http://extension.tennessee.edu/publications/Documents/pb1303.pdf)

## Keep It Ventilated

- Use exhaust fans in bathrooms and kitchens.
- Vent clothes dryer exhaust fans to the outside.

## Keep It Contaminant-Free

- Test your home for radon.  
[www.epa.gov/radon](http://www.epa.gov/radon)
- If home was built before 1978, have children tested for lead poisoning.
- Never allow smoking in your home or car.

## Keep It Safe

- Use smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors.
- Set water heater to a maximum of 120 degrees F.
- Childproof according to child's age.
- Follow recommended infant safe sleep ABCs (alone, on back, in crib).
- Keep medications, cleaners, and all toxic substances out of the reach of children.

