

# ***Stop Children from swallowing Hazardous Chemicals***



**KEEP THEM SAFE**  
**OUT OF REACH • OUT OF SIGHT**

**dti**

Department of Trade and Industry

**E**very year almost 10,000 young children are rushed to hospital because they have swallowed household chemicals. The vast majority of these cases are children under the age of 3 years old. White spirit, paint stripper, brush cleaner, disinfectant, bleach and lavatory cleaner are the most common causes of concern.

Most of these accidents occur in the home; most of the chemicals have been left within easy reach; and over half happened when the children were left alone for five minutes. Inquisitive toddlers love to explore brightly labelled and interesting bottles and containers.

## Hazardous chemicals have warning labels:



### Harmful/Irritant

A substance which is not a serious health risk but may cause some ill health if it is inhaled or consumed or penetrates the skin. Some substances will irritate the skin and eyes.



### Toxic/Very Toxic

A substance which causes a serious risk to health if swallowed, and in some cases if inhaled or spilt on the skin.



### Corrosive

A substance which may cause painful burns and destroys living tissue.



## Parents

- **DO** always keep household chemicals out of sight and reach of children, preferably lock them away.
- **DON'T** leave household chemicals by the toilet or on a low shelf in the kitchen or garage.
- **CHILD RESISTANT CLOSURES** are used to protect your children from the more hazardous chemicals,
- **DO** always replace the lid on such containers after use.
- **DON'T EVER** transfer the chemicals from such containers to other types of bottles - if you do you could be putting your child at risk.

## Remember!

*If a child is suspected of swallowing any household chemical, you should:*

- Try to act calmly and avoid upsetting the child
- Gently give a drink of water. This dilutes the poison
- **DON'T** make the child sick
- Telephone either your GP or the nearest A&E department to find out whether the child needs to go to hospital
- If you cannot contact your doctor, take the child quickly to hospital. If necessary, call an ambulance
- Take the container and product you think has been swallowed. Do not rely on memory



**ANTI-FREEZE**      **OVEN CLEANER**  
**BLEACH**          **DRAIN CLEANER**  
**WHITE SPIRIT**    **BRUSH CLEANER**  
**PAINT STRIPPER**   **LAVATORY CLEANER**  
**DISINFECTANT**    **METHYLATED SPIRIT**  
**WEEDKILLER**     **MULTISURFACE**  
**DETERGENT/**      **CLEANER**  
**WASH POWDER**