



February 11, 2021

Ms. Jane Latman
President
HGTV
850 Third Ave
New York, NY 10022

Dear Ms. Latman:

We join together as 56 Safe Kids coalitions in the hope we could work with you to demonstrate child safety practices in your programming. The HGTV network's shows provide valuable tips on renovating and decorating homes. These shows are popular, and their reach with homeowners is significant and influential. Many of the viewers are parents.

We are confident that your team works diligently to make sure that such shows stage episodes in ways that are consistent with proven home safety practices with respect to children. In fact, we saw on your web site that safety is discussed. However, there have been times when they present unsafe behavior.

This is especially important today during the COVID-19 pandemic when so many more families are at home and parents are challenged to supervise their children every second of the day, while they work their "day job." We need to ensure that our homes are as safe as they can be to reduce the exposure of young children to unintentional injuries—the leading cause of death to children age 19 and under.

Here are two examples: In *Fixer Upper* Season 2 Episode 9 "Couple Seeks a Unique Fixer," the expert designer created a nursery and staged the crib for an expectant family. Inside the crib were bumper pads. They create an unsafe sleep environment risking suffocation. Pediatricians strongly urge putting kids to sleep in cribs free of bumpers, pillows, stuffed toys, or other similar products.^{1 2}

On *Flip or Flop* Season 6 Episode 3 "Backyard Staycation," the homeowner was seeking to add a backyard swimming pool. The landscape contractor advised that a fence would be required, completely surrounding the pool. But there was a concern that a fence would hurt the backyard's look. The contractor had it right. Child drowning is the leading cause of death for children ages one to four.

Why is this so important? It's because your shows are popular and can influence a parent on how a room can be decorated, a remodeling project is carried out or a home's exterior can be enhanced. According to one study conducted by the National Council on Family Relations, some parents may watch television, view incorrect behavior and practices, and assume the practices are safe. But sometimes they are not.³ The good news is that HGTV programs can increase its value by growing its role as an educator on how to embed child safety in homes. We are sure you agree that safety and aesthetics can live together in the same home. In addition, the shows could influence renovation contractors, decorators, and home inspectors to follow best practices.

We are excited about the ways Safe Kids Worldwide and its coalitions can help HGTV create child safe homes. Many of our coalitions provide this advice to individual families, at no charge. Further, in the past, Safe Kids experts have provided safety tips on a range of child safety issues on prominent television programs, especially morning shows like the *Today Show*, *Good Morning America*, and *CBS This Morning*.

We thank you for your consideration. We hope we could meet with you about ways to collaborate. We will reach out to you and you can contact Anthony Green, 202.615.4300 or agreen@safekids.org.

Sincerely,

Safe Kids Alabama
Safe Kids Arkansas
Safe Kids Northwest Arkansas, AR
Safe Kids Arizona
Safe Kids Pima County, AZ
Safe Kids Central California, CA
Safe Kids Greater Sacramento, CA
Safe Kids Inland Empire, CA
Safe Kids Orange County, CA
Safe Kids Stanislaus County, CA
Safe Kids Santa Clara/San Mateo, CA
Safe Kids San Diego, CA
Safe Kids Colorado
Safe Kids Larimer County, CO
Safe Kids Delaware
Safe Kids Palm Beach County, FL
Safe Kids Greater Tampa, FL
Safe Kids Columbus, GA
Safe Kids Savannah, GA
Safe Kids Jefferson, GA
Safe Kids Hawaii
Safe Kids Illinois
Safe Kids Kansas
Safe Kids Cowley County, KS
Safe Kids Massachusetts
Safe Kids Oakland County, MI
Safe Kids Montana
Safe Kids Grand Forks, ND

Safe Kids Minot, ND
Safe Kids Fargo-Moorhead, ND
Safe Kids New Jersey
Safe Kids New Mexico
Safe Kids Clark County, NV
Safe Kids Washoe County, NV
Safe Kids New York
Safe Kids Greater Dayton, OH
Safe Kids Greater Cincinnati, OH
Safe Kids Oklahoma City, OK
Safe Kids Portland Metro, OR
Safe Kids Pennsylvania
Safe Kids Allegheny County, PA
Safe Kids Rhode Island
Safe Kids Tennessee
Safe Kids Mid-South, TN
Safe Kids Cumberland Valley, TN
Safe Kids Greater Houston, TX
Safe Kids San Antonio, TX
Safe Kids Greater Dallas, TX
Safe Kids North Texas - Fort Worth, TX
Safe Kids Washington State
Safe Kids Wisconsin
Safe Kids Marathon County, WI
Safe Kids Sauk County, WI
Safe Kids Southeast Wisconsin, WI
Safe Kids Wood & Clark County, WI
Safe Kids Wausau, WI

About Safe Kids

Safe Kids Worldwide brings together more than 400 state and local coalitions to protect children from unintentional injury—the number one cause of death for kids 19 and under—through research-based education, awareness, and advocacy. For 32 years, we have worked to keep kids safe in and around cars, at home, and at play. We strive to be a parent’s partner in child safety efforts.

¹ Rosen, M. M. (2011, October 18). Get bumpers out of cribs, doctor group urges. *CNN health*. Retrieved from <https://www.cnn.com/2011/10/18/health/no-bumpers-cribs-sids-parenting/index.html>

² According to the Centers for Disease Control, unintentional suffocation is the leading cause of injury deaths for children under year one. “10 Leading Causes of Injury Deaths by Age Group Highlighting Unintentional Injury Deaths, United States -2018”

³ Dail, P. W. and Way, W. L. (1985 October). What do parents observe about parenting from prime-time television? *Family Relations*, Vol. 34 (4), pp 491-499. <https://doi.org/10.2307/584009> . Available at: <https://www.jstor.org/stable/584009>