

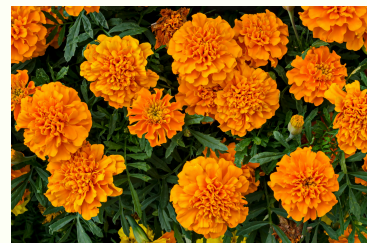
# SAFE PLANTS FOR KIDS

Plants can make a child care space feel calmer, brighter, and more inviting. They also help children connect with nature by touching leaves, smelling flowers, watching growth, and caring for living things. But not every plant is safe for young children.

Young children explore with their hands and mouths. They may touch leaves, pull flowers, or try to taste berries. That is why plant safety matters.

Choosing non-poisonous plants can help you:

- lower the risk of poisoning
- make outdoor and indoor spaces safer
- support hands-on learning
- give families more confidence in your program

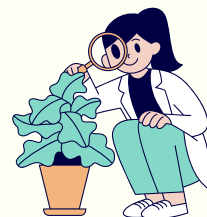


## HOW CAN PROVIDERS CHECK IF A PLANT IS SAFE FOR CHILDREN?

The safest approach is simple: If you are not sure about a plant, do not let children touch or taste it.

Use this quick safety routine:

- identify every plant in the space
- remove plants you cannot identify
- compare plants to trusted child-safety resources
- keep unknown berries, seeds, and leaves out of reach
- teach children to always ask an adult before touching or tasting plants



It also helps to walk your classroom, playground, or garden often and look for anything new growing in the area.

## WHAT PLANT SAFETY PROBLEMS SHOULD CHILD CARE PROVIDERS WATCH FOR?

Some plants can attract children because they look pretty, bright, or fun to touch. Be extra careful with plants that have:

- bright berries
- thorns
- seed pods
- mushrooms growing nearby
- shiny leaves
- fallen leaves or flowers children may pick up
- milky sap



A common mistake is thinking a plant is safe just because it looks harmless.

## HOW CAN PROGRAMS KEEP PLANT AREAS SAFE OVER TIME?

Plant safety is not a one-time task. It should be part of your regular safety routine.

Here are easy ways to stay on track:

- check plants every month
- remove unknown plants or weeds
- keep tools out of children's reach
- store plant food and sprays safely
- watch for berries, pods, or mushrooms

Source: [childcareed.com](http://childcareed.com)



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## Even Plants Can Be Poisonous

Learn the names of your plants and label them. Below is a list of some of the more common indoor and outdoor plants that you may have in your home. This list is not a complete list. If you have a plant around your home that is not on the list, you may call the Poison Center at 1-800-222-1222 to find out how poisonous it may be. You must know either the common name or the botanical name in order for the Poison Center to determine if it is poisonous. It is not possible to do plant or berry identifications over the phone, so check with a nursery for identification of all unknown plants. Carefully supervise children playing near poisonous plants. Call 1-800-222-1222 immediately if a child samples a mushroom or possibly poisonous plant.

### Non-Poisonous Plants

Common Name	Botanical Name
African violet	<i>Saintpaulia ionantha</i>
Begonia	<i>Begonia</i>
Christmas cactus	<i>Schlumbergera bridgesii</i>
Coleus	<i>Coleus</i>
Dandelion	<i>Taraxacum officinale</i>
Dracaena	<i>Dracaena</i>
Forsythia	<i>Forsythia</i>
Impatiens	<i>Impatiens</i>
Jade	<i>Crassula argentea</i>
Marigold Calendula	<i>Tagetes</i>
Petunia	<i>Petunia</i>
Poinsettia	<i>Euphorbia pulcherrima</i> (may cause irritation only)
Rose	<i>Rosa</i>
Spider plant	<i>Chlorophytum comosum</i>
Swedish ivy	<i>Plectranthus australis</i>
Wandering Jew	<i>Tradescantia fluminensis</i>
Wild strawberry	<i>Fragaria virginiana</i>

### Poisonous Plants

Common Name	Botanical Name
Azalea, rhododendron	<i>Rhododendron</i>
Caladium	<i>Caladium</i>
Castor bean	<i>Ricinis communis</i>
Daffodil	<i>Narcissus</i>
Deadly nightshade	<i>Atropa belladonna</i>
Dumbcane	<i>Dieffenbachia</i>
Elephant Ear	<i>Colocasia esculenta</i>
Foxglove	<i>Digitalis purpurea</i>
Fruit pits and seeds	contain cyanogenic glycosides
Holly	<i>Ilex</i>
Iris	<i>Iris</i>
Jerusalem cherry	<i>Solanum pseudocapsicum</i>
Jimson weed	<i>Datura stramonium</i>
Lantana	<i>Lantana camara</i>
Lily-of-the-valley	<i>Convalleria majalis</i>
Mayapple	<i>Podophyllum peltatum</i>
Mistletoe	<i>Viscum album</i>
Morning glory	<i>Ipomoea</i>
Mountain laurel	<i>Kalmia latifolia</i>
Nightshade	<i>Solanum spp.</i>
Oleander	<i>Nerium oleander</i>
Peace lily	<i>Spathiphyllum</i>
Philodendron	<i>Philodendron</i>
Pokeweed	<i>Phytolacca americana</i>
Pothos	<i>Epipremnum aureum</i>
Yew	<i>Taxus</i>

Source: National Capital Poison Center ([www.poison.org](http://www.poison.org)). Photos of selected plants in this appendix are available at <http://www.poison.org/prevent/plants.asp>.