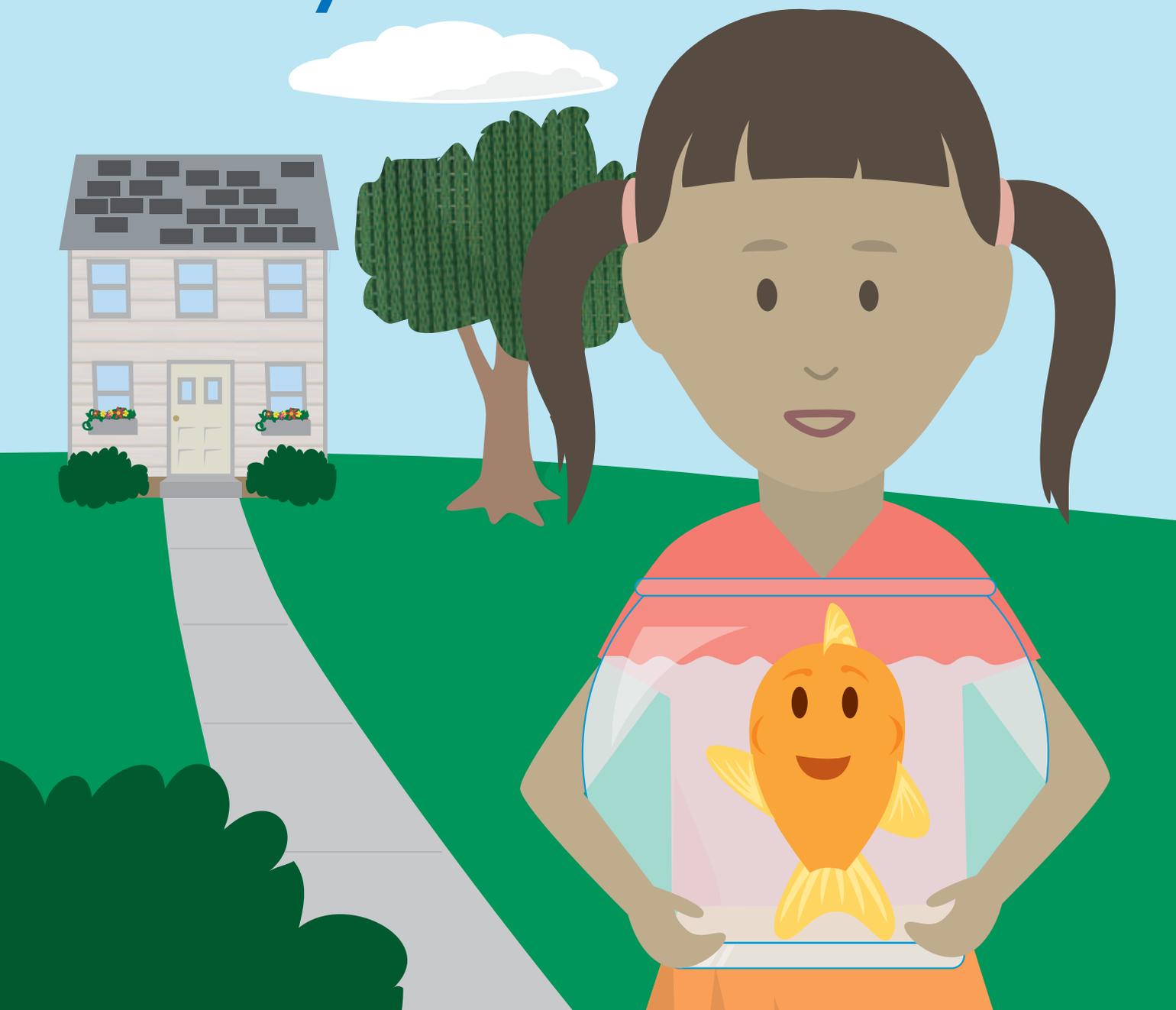


Susie and Jerome

Learn about a

Healthy Home



**Text by**

Joan Bothell and Mary-Margaret Gaudio  
Healthy Environments for Children Initiative

**Illustrations and design by**

Kevin Noonan

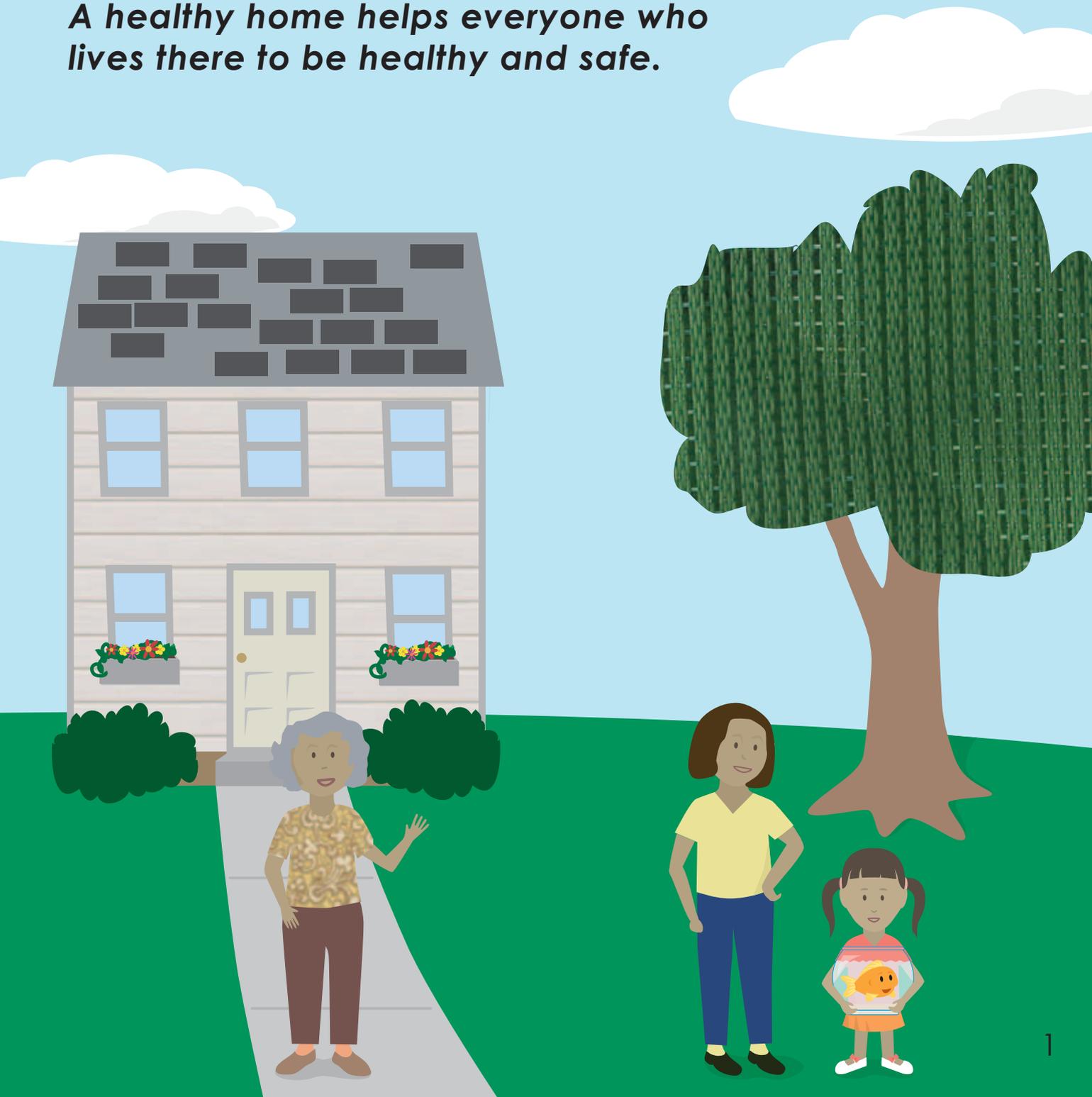
Cooperative Extension System  
College of Agriculture and Natural Resources  
University of Connecticut



Funding for this project was provided by the  
Connecticut Department of Public Health

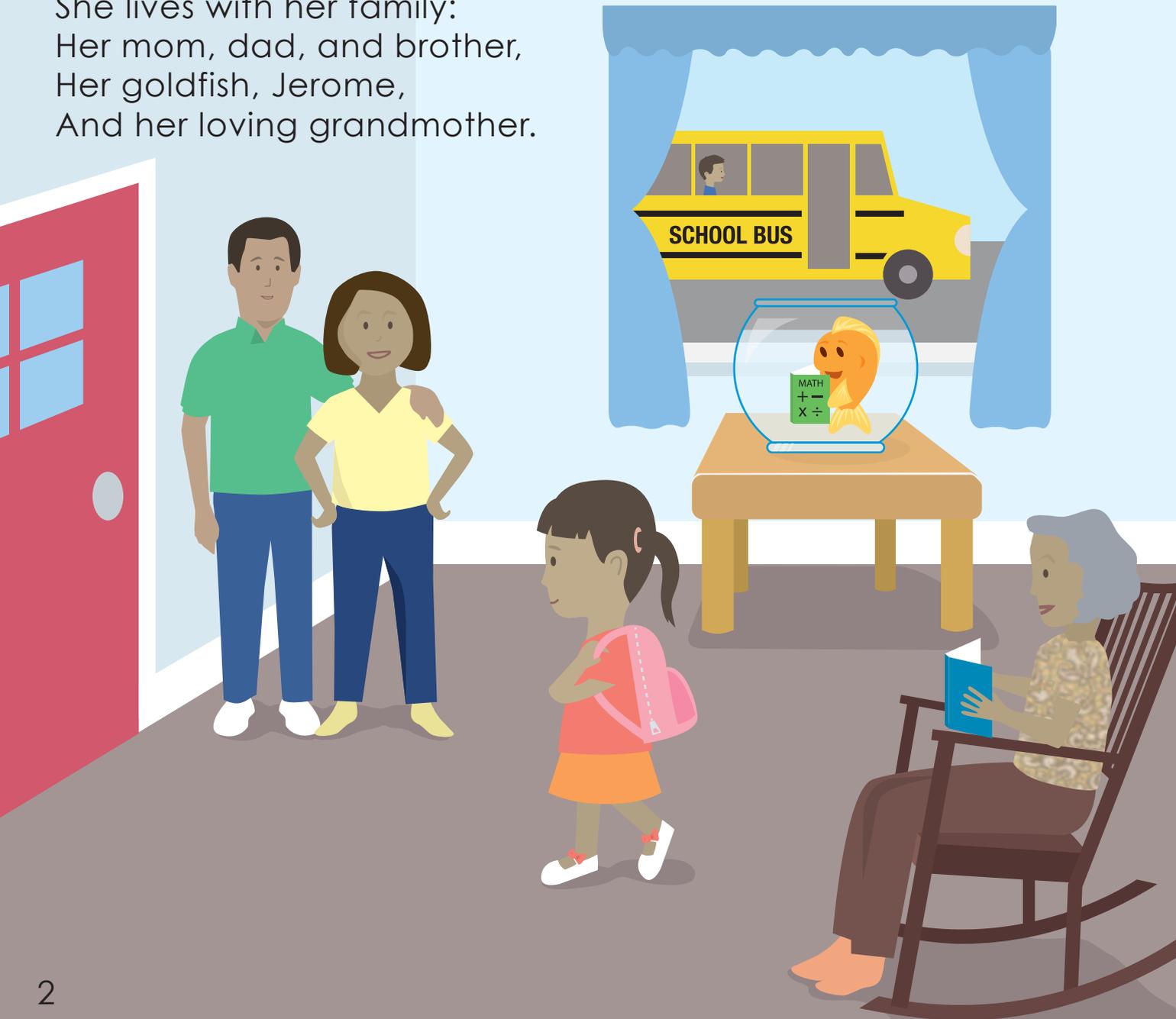
2012

***A healthy home helps everyone who lives there to be healthy and safe.***



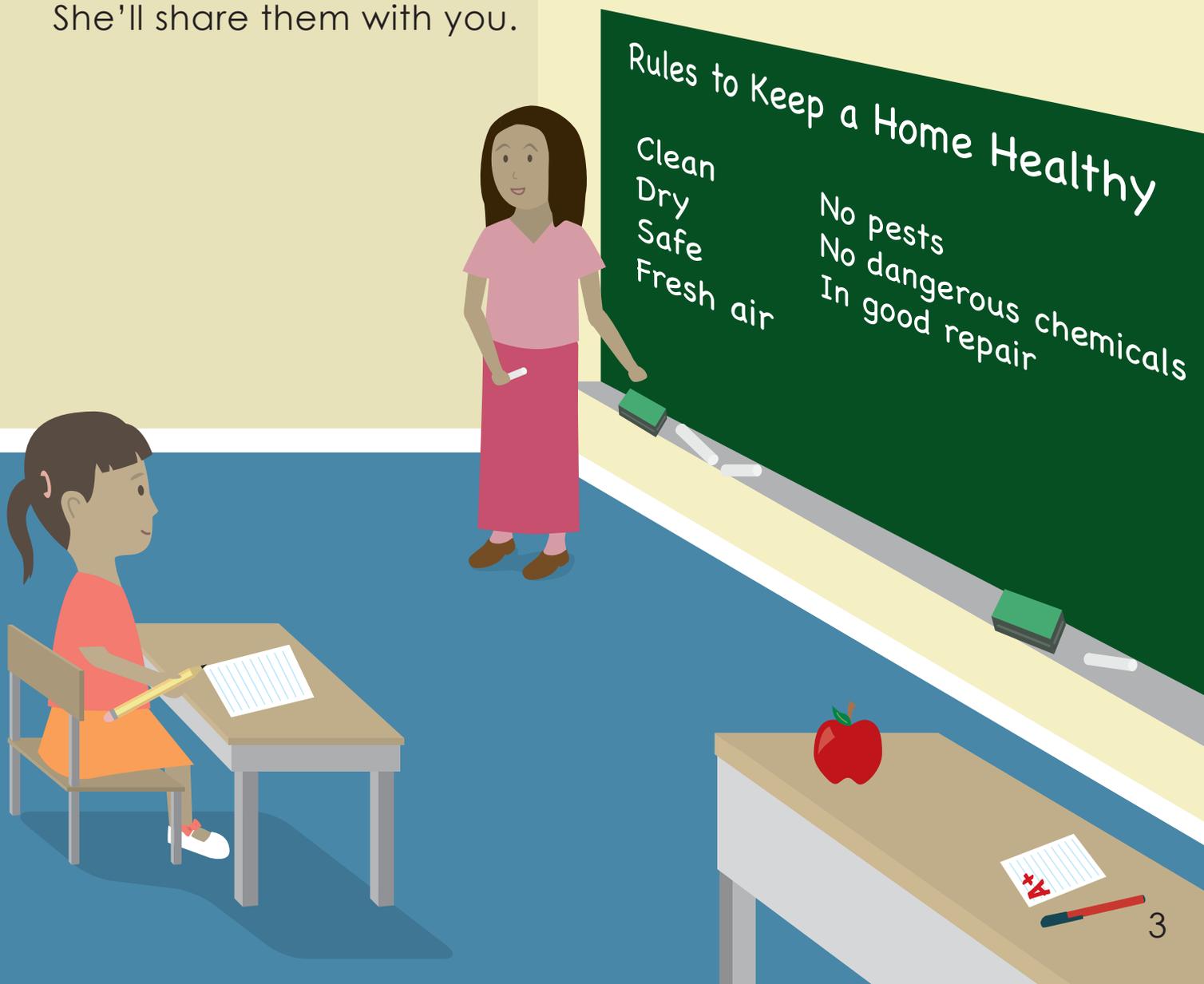
Susie B. Careful  
Is funny and smart,  
A girl who is helpful  
And has a good heart.

She lives with her family:  
Her mom, dad, and brother,  
Her goldfish, Jerome,  
And her loving grandmother.



At school Susie's learning  
About health and her home.  
She pays close attention—  
She'll soon teach Jerome.

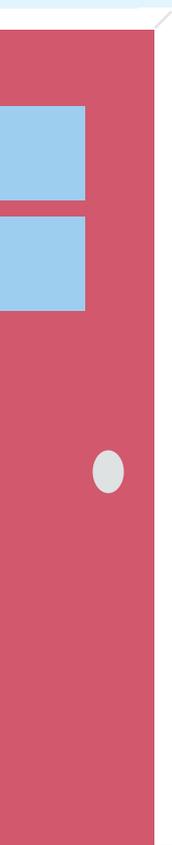
Susie's learned seven rules  
That you can learn too,  
To keep your home healthy—  
She'll share them with you.



# To keep out things that might make people sick (like pests and a healthy home is **clean**

Keep your home really clean—  
That's rule number one.  
Clear off dust, pick up clutter.  
Now isn't that fun?

Wash your sheets, towels, and clothes,  
Each week if you can,  
Leave your shoes at the door.  
Show that you're a clean fan.



Can you put your toys away?  
Can you put your dirty clothes where  
they belong (not on the floor)?  
Can you leave dirty shoes at the door?

dangerous chemicals),



Dirt's great in your garden  
But not in your home.  
(If you don't believe Susie  
Then just ask Jerome.)

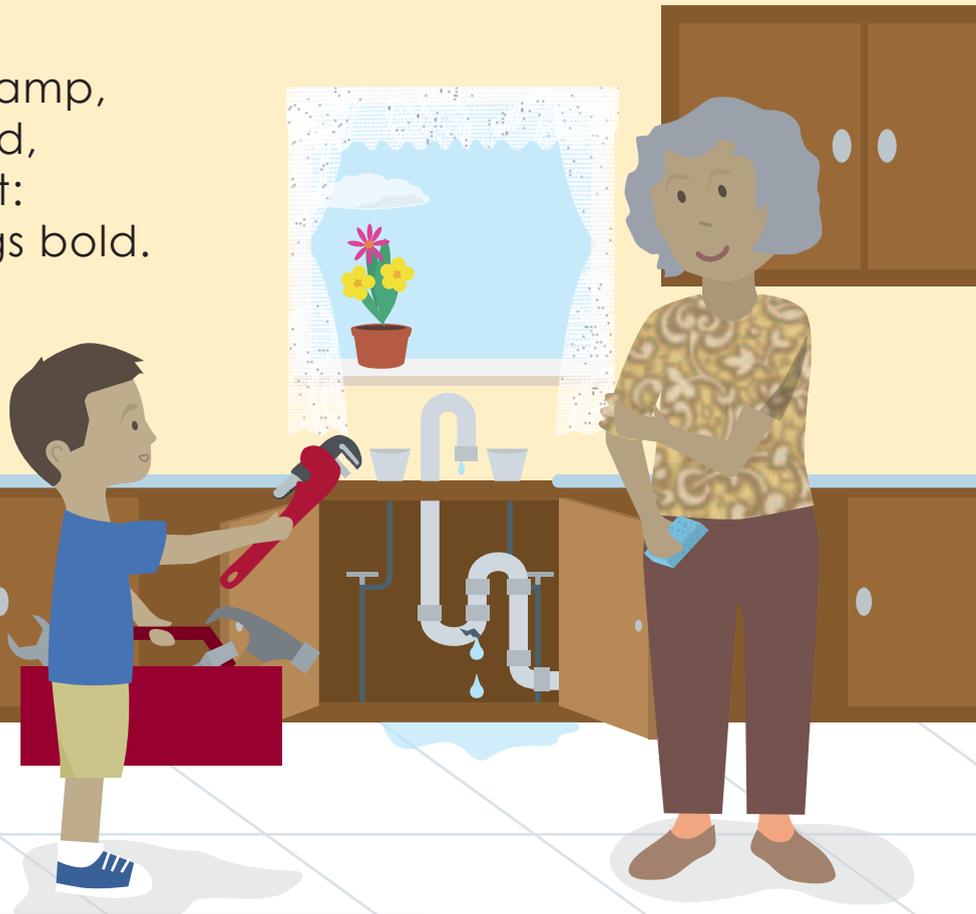
A clean home will help you  
Stay healthy and strong.  
(That's something you probably  
Knew all along.)



# To keep out pests and mold, a healthy home is **dry**

Rule number two  
Is to keep your home dry.  
Sue has a good reason,  
And she'll tell you why.

When a home is too damp,  
It grows yucky old mold,  
And bugs come to visit:  
Damp spots make bugs bold.



Can you hang up your wet towel?  
Can you make sure you don't splash  
when you take a bath or shower?  
Can you tell a grownup if you see  
a leak?

If you see pipes that are leaking,  
Tell a grownup about it.  
If you spill something wet,  
Clean it up, don't shout about it.

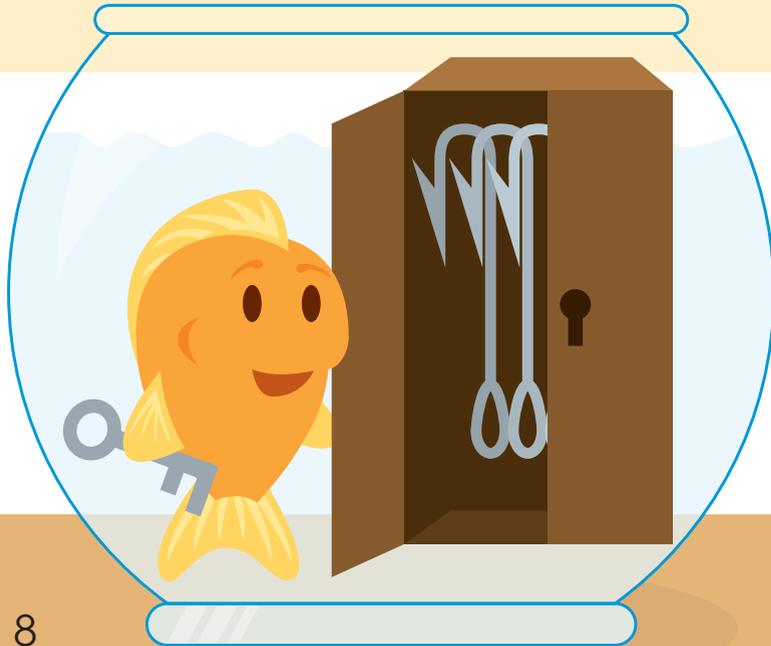
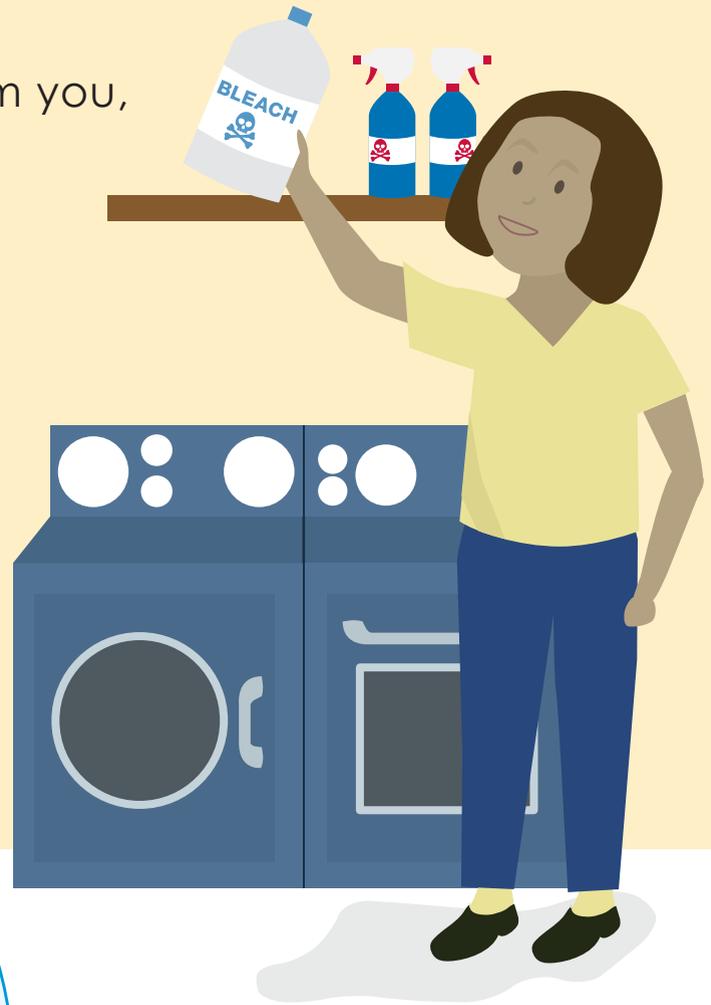
When you shower or bathe,  
Keep the puddles inside.  
If you splash water around,  
It will need to be dried.



To prevent accidents and injuries,  
a healthy home is **safe**

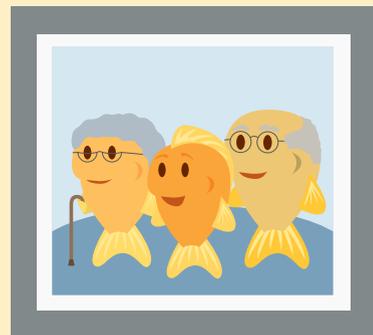
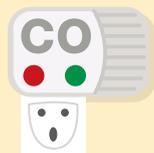
Next—keep your home safe  
From some things that might harm you,  
Or the people you love,  
Or the critters who charm you.

If you see dangerous things  
Like pills, bug spray, or bleach,  
Ask a grownup to move them  
From out of kids' reach.



To stop slips, trips, and falls,  
When stuff's lying around,  
Pick it up, put away,  
Move it off of the ground.

When you're not really sure  
If something's safe or it isn't  
Grownups can tell you.  
They'll make the decision.



Can you keep stuff off the stairs where people might trip?

Can you tell a grownup if you see something you think is dangerous?

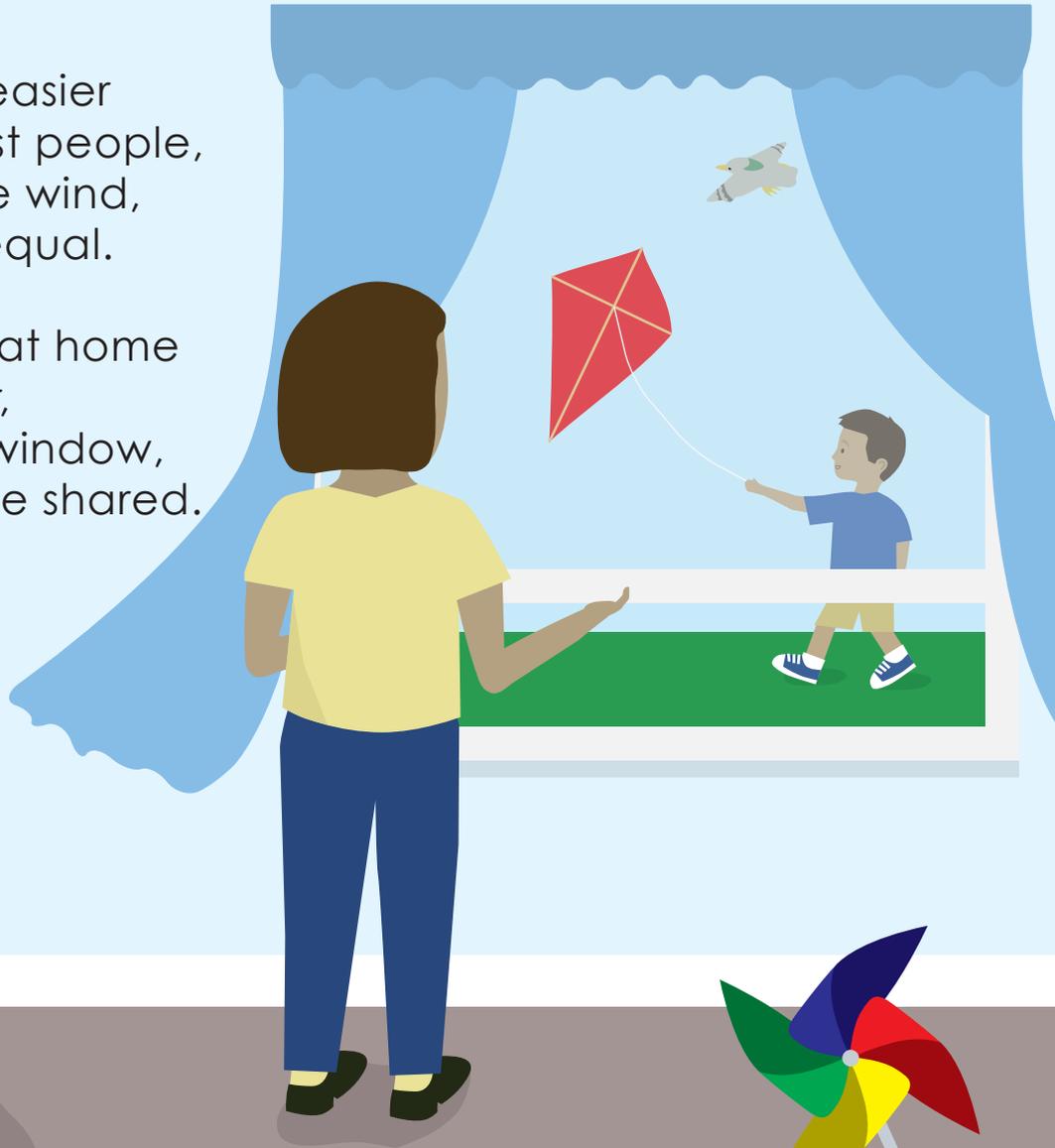
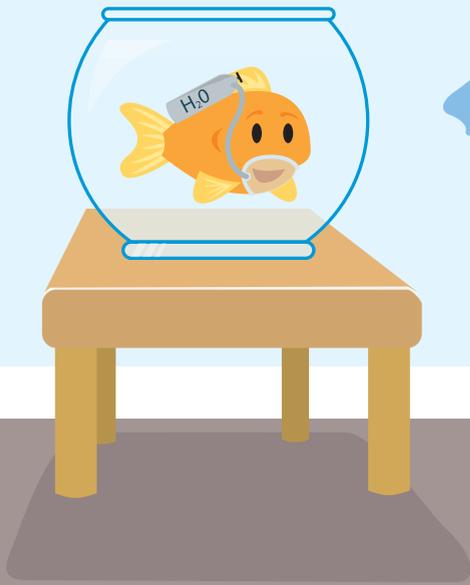
Can you ask a grownup to put away dangerous things?



To make breathing easier,  
a healthy home has **fresh air**

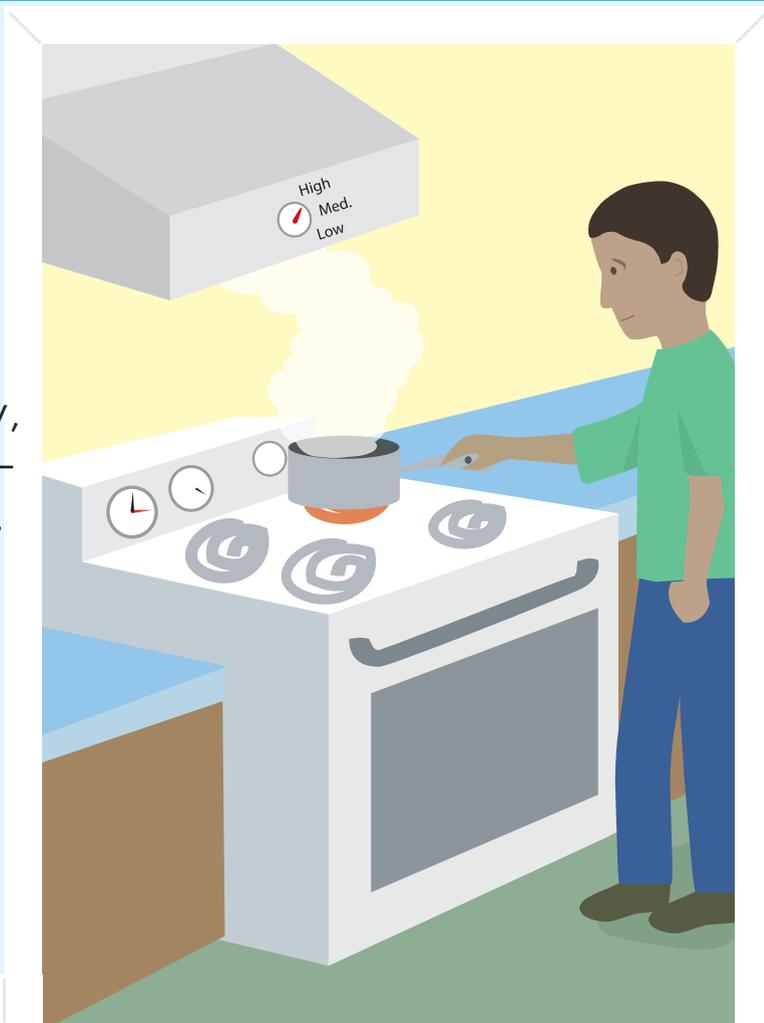
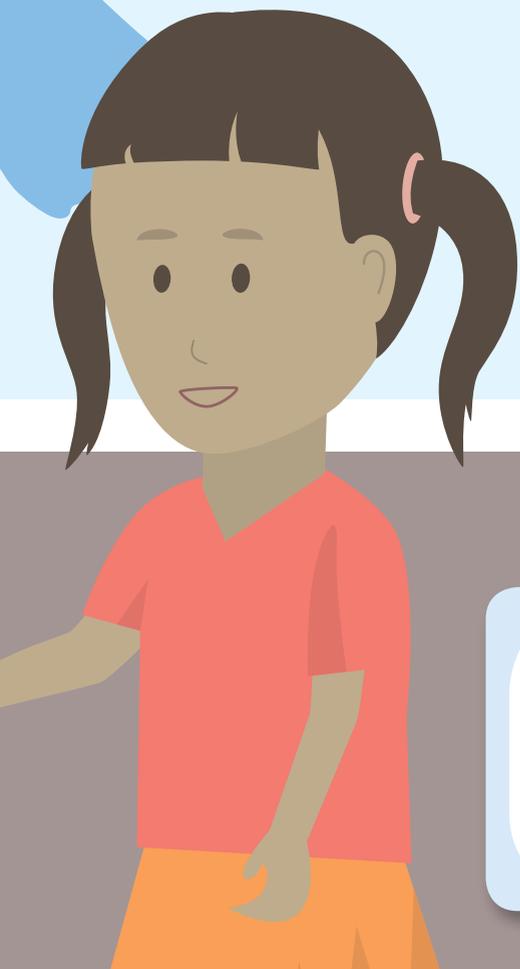
Fresh air makes it easier  
To breathe for most people,  
For a clean, gentle wind,  
There is surely no equal.

Ask the grownups at home  
To bring in fresh air,  
They can open a window,  
So a breeze can be shared.



A fan in the bathroom,  
And one in the kitchen,  
Can push more air around  
Than the wings of a pigeon.

With fresh air in your home,  
You may start to feel bubbly,  
Though Jerome in his bowl—  
Fresh air makes him wobbly.



Can you ask a grownup to open a window on a nice day?

Can you ask a grownup to turn on a fan in the kitchen?

Can you ask a grownup to turn on a fan in the bathroom?



# To keep people from getting sick, a healthy home **doesn't have pests**

A pest's a bad guest  
Who has not been invited,  
Like mice, rats, and bugs,  
Which get people excited.

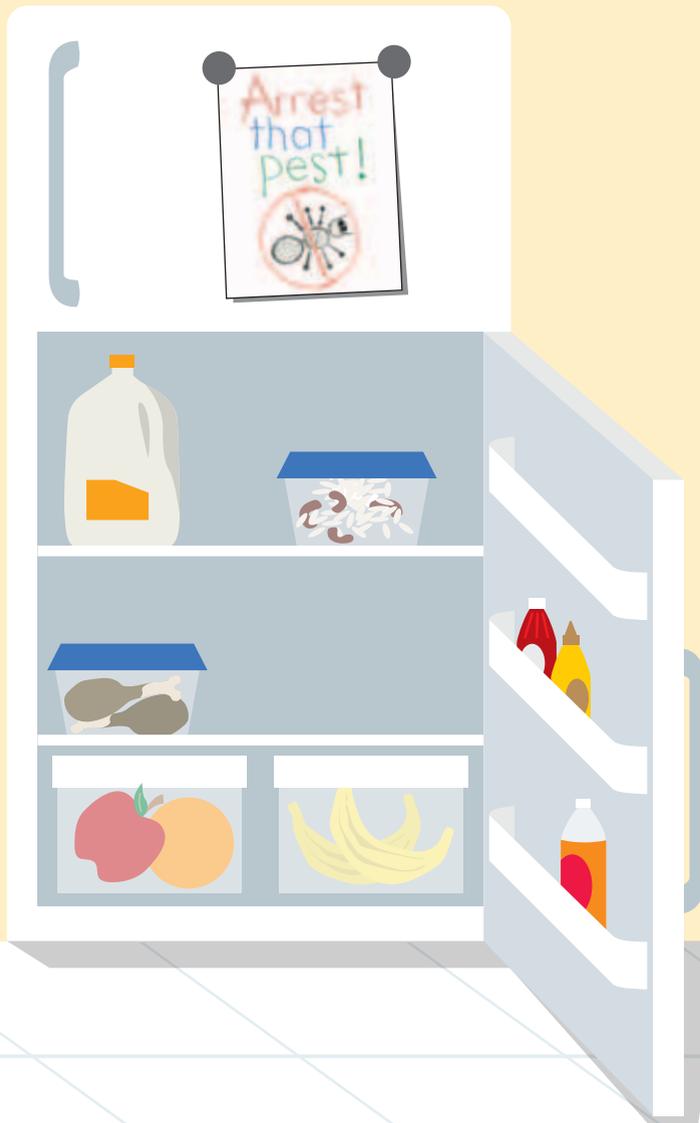
Keep them out of your home:  
You can try if you're able.  
You can clean up your dishes,  
Wipe your own kitchen table.



Can you wipe the crumbs off the table  
and throw them away?

Can you help put leftover food away?

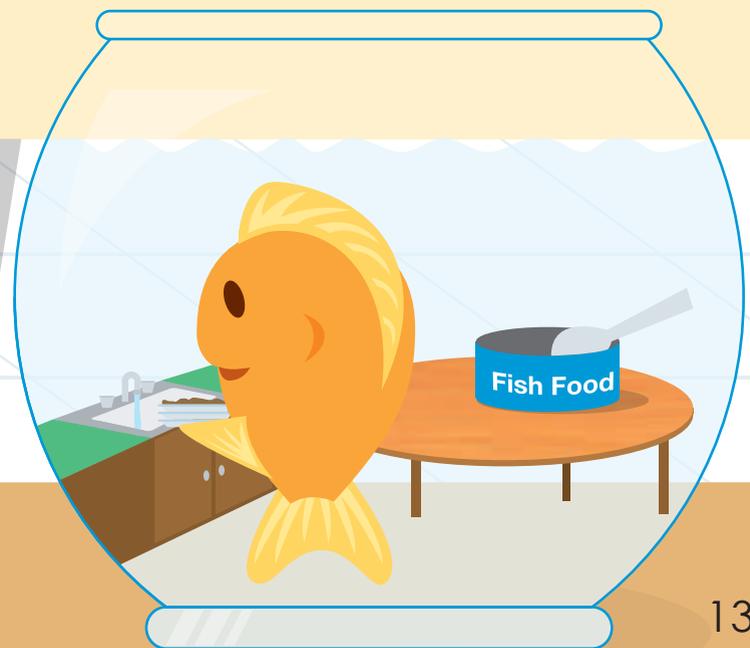
Can you carry dirty dishes to the  
kitchen sink?



Put leftover meals  
In the fridge and close tight.  
If pests come to snack,  
That meal's out of sight.

Put leftover sweets  
In a box with a cover,  
Not lying around  
For some pests to discover.

Put crumbs in the trash can,  
To be taken outside,  
So pests don't have food,  
Or good places to hide.



# To keep people from getting hurt or sick, a healthy home **doesn't have dangerous chemicals**

Ask grownups around you,  
"Please don't smoke near me.  
Keep smoke out of my home,  
It's unhealthy and scary."

Smoke that's on clothes,  
On hands and in hair  
Is bad for your health.  
Don't share smoky air!



Can you politely ask someone you know not to smoke near you?

Can you tell a grownup if you see peeling paint or paint dust?

Can you remember not to touch cleaning supplies, like laundry soap?

If your home has old paint,  
The dust and the flakes  
Can make people sick,  
So for all of your sakes

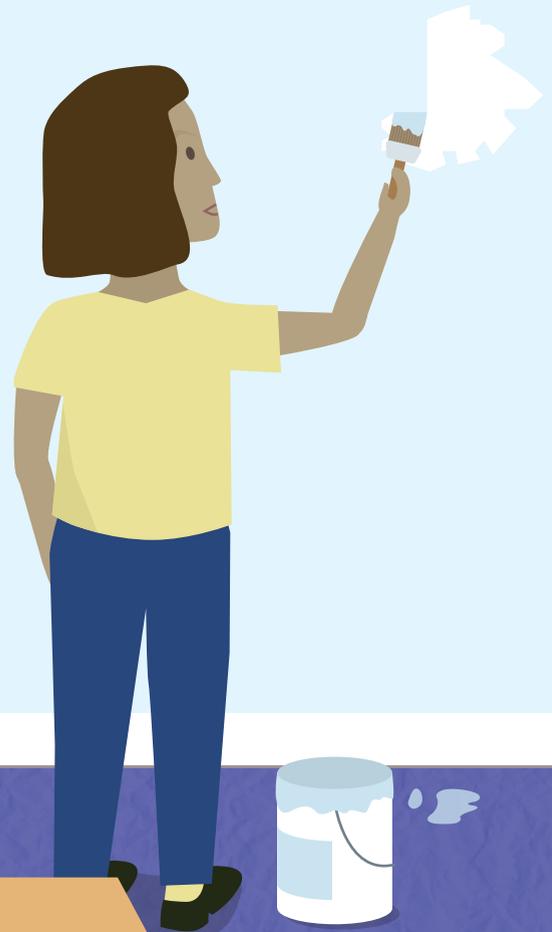
Ask grownups to clean it  
With wet rags and some soap,  
Then you won't need to worry.  
The grownups can cope.



# To keep small problems from becoming big problems, a healthy home is in **good repair**

Most household repairs  
Are for grownups, don't doubt it.  
But you can help your family  
By talking about it.

If you see a small problem,  
Like a little hole in a wall,  
Tell a grownup you know,  
So the whole wall doesn't fall.



Sue's Mom patches small holes.  
Dad repairs a loose railing  
And they hire an expert  
To fix plumbing that's failing.

They check their home often  
To find problems while small.  
Keep it fixed, keep it safe.  
Keep it healthy for all.



Can you tell a grownup if you see a broken window in your home?

Can you tell a grownup if you see a dripping faucet?

Can you tell a grownup if a door won't close all the way?



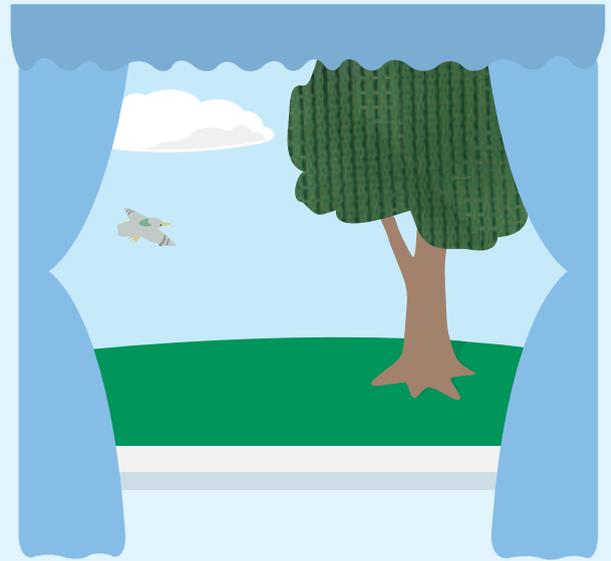
Susie B. Careful  
And Jerome, her pet fish,  
Want you to know  
That they have one big wish.

They want folks to be healthy,  
Not coughing or sneezing,  
Or sick, scraped, or stung,  
Or bleeding or wheezing.



The message they have—  
It's clear and it's plain,  
It's important for you,  
So we'll explain it again:

You, too, can live  
In a safe, healthy home,  
Just like Susie B. Careful  
And her fish pal, Jerome.



Can you tell your family what a healthy home is?

Can you tell your family why you want your home to be healthy?

Can you tell your family some ways to make your home healthy?



## Rules for a healthy home

- Clean
- Dry
- Safe
- Fresh air
- No pests
- No dangerous chemicals
- In good repair



## Things grownups can do

### To keep your home **clean**

- Leave your shoes at the door to keep dirt out of your home
- Use a damp mop and damp dust cloth to clean
- Vacuum carefully and often
- Clean up clutter
- Wash bedding once a week, using hot water to kill dust mites

### To keep your home **dry**

- Clean up spills right away
- Regularly check for leaks, inside and outside, and repair them right away
- Avoid carpet in areas that may become wet, like bathrooms, kitchens, and basements

### To keep your home **safe**

- Use the safest possible household products
- Store household products and medicines where children cannot reach them
- Make sure that you have a working smoke alarm and carbon monoxide alarm

### To keep your home full of **fresh air**

- Whenever possible, use fans in bathrooms and kitchens
- Whenever possible, open windows

### To keep your home **free of pests**

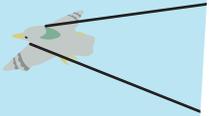
- Remove food, water, and places where pests can live
- Store food in strong, covered containers
- Take out trash every day
- If necessary to kill pests, use the safest possible methods, like sticky traps, baits in closed containers, and boric acid powder

### To keep your home **free of dangerous chemicals**

- Do not allow smoking in your home
- Read product labels carefully, and follow their safety instructions
- If your home was built before 1978, learn about lead paint dangers
- Test for radon, a natural but dangerous gas

### To keep your home **in good repair**

- Check your home regularly
- Seal cracks, holes, and other openings in your home
- Repair small problems promptly to prevent them from becoming big problems



University of  
Connecticut

College of Agriculture  
and Natural Resources  
*Cooperative Extension System*

Learn more about  
healthy homes by visiting  
these websites or by  
calling Infoline at 2-1-1



[www.ct.gov/dph/  
healthyhomes](http://www.ct.gov/dph/healthyhomes)



[www.cdc.gov/  
healthyhomes](http://www.cdc.gov/healthyhomes)



[www.hec.  
uconn.edu](http://www.hec.uconn.edu)