

SAFETY TIP OF THE WEEK

ZERO HARM

FALLS PREVENTION AROUND THE HOME

Household injuries can happen to any family. Taking proper precautions to prevent falls is an essential part of ensuring a safe home. More than 80% of fall-related injuries to children 4 years and under occur in the home. For children ages 5 to 14 years, nearly half of fall-related injuries occur in the home; 23 percent occur at school.

Key Facts

- Each year, approximately 103 children die from fall-related injuries.
- Each year, more than 2.3 million fall-related injuries in children are reported.
- Falls are the leading cause of unintentional injury for all children ages 14 years and under.
- Window falls account for 12 childhood deaths and 4,000 injuries for children under age 10 years annually.

Where, When and How

- Window falls occur more frequently in large urban areas, low-income neighborhoods, and in overcrowded housing.
- Children living in apartment buildings have the highest number of window fall incidents – five times more than children living in residences.
- The majority of falls occur at noon and early evening, the most common playtime for children.
- Infants are at risk from falls associated with furniture, stairs and baby walkers.
- Windows and playground equipment are major risk factors for toddlers and older children.

Take these basic precautions to help prevent falls around the home:

- Install secure handrails and grab bars.
- Keep cords and clutter out of the way.
- Keep chairs pushed in and cabinets and doors fully closed.
- Secure tall and heavy furniture with furniture straps.
- Look out for uneven flooring.
- Install handrails and grab bars where necessary, such as the stairway and bathrooms.
- Use non-slip rugs on the floor and mats or decals in the bathtub or shower.
- Keep hallways and stairs well-lit and clear of clutter.
- Never let children play on high porches, decks, stairs or balconies.
- Safety gates at the tops of stairs must be attached to the wall, as these are more secure than the kind held in place by outward pressure. Use safety gates that meet current safety standards to avoid entrapment and other hazards.