

Fall Prevention Transcript

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Fall prevention

As children become mobile - and curious - chances are they will take some tumbles. Even though we have more control over them, babies are at risk as well. In the first part of this presentation, we will cover some important information, then we will review what you can do to help prevent your child from falling.

Do you know?

How many fall-related injuries in children are reported each year?

- 2 thousand
- 23 thousand
- 2.3 million

Unfortunately, it's a lot more than that! Falls are the leading accidental cause of injury to children under age 14, and each year, 2.3 million childhood fall-related injuries are reported.

Unfortunately, it's a lot more than that! Falls are the leading accidental cause of injury to children under age 14, and each year, 2.3 million childhood fall-related injuries are reported—that's nearly half the population of the state of Wisconsin!

That's right! Falls are the leading cause of accidental injury to children under age 14, and unfortunately, each year 2.3 million childhood fall-related injuries are reported.

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Facts

Falling from windows accounts for 12 deaths and 4,000 injuries to children under the age of 10 each year.

More than 80 percent of fall-related injuries to children under 4 occur in the home.

For a comprehensive Fact Sheet, click on the Facts button.

What can I do?

While some falls, like those that come with baby's first steps, are a necessary part of growing up, there are ways you can help protect your child from dangerous falls.

Safety on elevated surfaces

Always stay within reach when your baby is on any elevated surface, such as a changing table, bed, or sofa. Even when your baby is strapped in, it is possible for her to wiggle out, so keep her in view and within reach at all times.

Buckles and straps!

There are straps with buckles on many child products. Car seats, high chairs, swings, strollers, even shopping carts have straps with buckles to keep your child from getting out of the seat and falling. Be sure to use the straps. Even if your child begins to resist as he gets older, be firm and continue to buckle him in.

Learning to walk the safe way

Baby walkers account for a large percentage of injuries each year. Babies often fall down stairs in their walkers. Studies have shown that walkers may actually hinder a child's learning to walk and may even reduce learning progress, and since walkers can be dangerous as well, it's best not to use one.

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Do you know?

How can you help prevent your baby or toddler from falling down the stairs?

- Always carry him up and down stairs.
- Always hold his hand when he is using the stairs.
- Let him try the stairs on his own, but be right next to him in case he needs some help.

While none of these answers is technically incorrect, your child needs to practice certain physical challenges - like climbing the stairs - in a protected environment. It's best to let him try, but have your hands ready to grab him if he loses his balance.

While none of these answers is technically incorrect, your child may have his own way of climbing stairs, and holding his hand may actually make it more difficult for him to practice his skills. It's best to let him try, but have your hands ready to grab him if he loses balance.

Yes! You are letting him practice a necessary skill, but in a protective environment. You can be right there, ready to grab him if he loses balance, while at the same time, you are giving him the freedom necessary to master this skill.

Learning to walk

Falls are likely to happen as young children develop their skills, and are a necessary part of growing up. To make those unavoidable falls less painful, it's best to make sure the floors of play areas are soft, and furniture with sharp corners, such as coffee tables, are removed. Keep the area clear of toys and other things that can increase your child's chances of falling.

Stairs

Baby gates are an excellent way of protecting your little one from falling down the stairs. Have a gate at the top and bottom of stairways for the best protection. When your child is using the stairs, be sure you are right with him, in case he starts to fall.

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Hazards inside and outside

Make sure your stair railings are sturdy, and stairs are kept clear. In fact, keeping traffic areas clear of clutter is best. Something as simple as a magazine or book on the floor can cause a child to slip and fall. Always be present when your child is on balconies, porches, or fire escapes. Playgrounds are another common place for falls. Be sure your child uses equipment appropriate to his age, and always be present or have him within view when he gets older.

Windows

Windows are a threat to your child's safety. A screen simply is not strong enough to withstand a lot of pressure, and children leaning on screens can fall and be seriously injured, or even die. Keep furniture - including beds and cribs - away from windows.

If a window is accessible from a child's height, you can purchase window guards. Similar to baby gates, window guards bar the window, but are easy to remove by an adult in the event of a fire. Some windows have stops, which prevent a window from opening more than four inches. This is another alternative for keeping your child safe from open windows.

Away from home

Even if you have your home secured, your child may still be at risk when visiting relatives or playing at a friend's house. While you can't control all external situations, talk with friends and relatives your child visits regularly about ways they can make their homes safe from falls.

Safe environment

Falls are the leading cause of accidental injuries in children under age 14. However, you can create a safe, protective environment, without limiting your child's natural need to explore and master skills.

Thank You

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