

SAFEGUARD AGAINST FALLS



Safe Nursery Action Group Members:

Nan Peterson
Safe Kids Coordinator
American Family
Children's Hospital
(608) 262-9993

Lisa Bullard-Cawthorne
Daniel Stattelman-Scanlan
Amy Vieth
Public Health -
Madison & Dane County

Mary Bradley
Child Safety Advocate

John E. Stanley
Dane County Coroner

Jim Savage
Kohl Safety Center

Michelle Reinen
WI DATCP
(608) 224-5160

In Wisconsin, falls are the second leading cause of death.

Injury is the greatest danger to your child's life. For children under 15 years old, 25% of all injury related hospitalizations are due to falls. Severe head injuries and broken bones from falls are the most common injury for all ages, including infants.

Here are a few safety tips that can help prevent falls during the early years of your child's life.

Birth – 6 Months

Babies wiggle, twist and move. They can fall off things when you least expect it. Falls from anywhere can badly hurt your baby.

Always keep at least one hand on your baby when placed on a changing table, bed, couch, or any place off the ground.

When you are unable to hold your baby, place him/her in a crib, playyard or in a safe place on the floor.

Do not use babywalkers. Your baby can tip over, fall down stairs or even fall out of it.

Always strap your baby into highchairs, infant carriers, strollers, swings and shopping carts.

Move chairs, cribs and beds away from windows and draperies.

Keep infant carriers and bouncy seats off tabletops, furniture, etc.

Call your health care provider right away if your baby falls and hits his/her head.

7 Months – 12 Months

Falls from heights can badly hurt your baby.

Use gates on stairways and doors to prevent falls at home.

Use window guards to keep your child from falling out of the window. Screens are not meant to keep children



Use window locks (vent locks) to keep your windows from opening more than 4 inches.

Do not use babywalkers. Your baby can tip over, fall down stairs or even fall out of it. Your baby could also pull hot or sharp items onto himself/herself.

Always strap your baby into highchairs, infant carriers, strollers, swings and shopping carts.

Move chairs, cribs and beds away from windows and draperies.

Keep infant carriers and bouncy seats off table tops, furniture, etc.

Call your health care provider right away if your baby falls and hits his/her head.



⚠ WARNING

Child can fall from shopping cart, causing severe head injuries.

Use seatbelt to restrain child in seat.

1-3 Years

Your child is active and can fall a lot. Some falls can badly hurt your child.

Be sure the surfaces under playground equipment are soft. Use at least 9 inches of mulch, pea gravel, or protective rubber matting under and around all equipment.



Use gates on stairways and doors to prevent falls at home.

Use window guards to keep your child from falling out of the window. Screens are not meant to keep children in.

Always supervise your child on fire escapes, high porches and balconies.

Always strap your child into highchairs, strollers, swings and shopping carts.

Move chairs, cribs and beds away from windows and draperies.

Install lower hand rails on stairs for your child's height (18 inches versus 32 inches).

Use plastic guards/netting on stairs and deck railings to keep your child from falling through the railings.

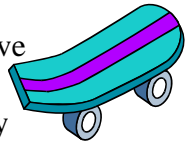
Should your child have a head injury from a fall, call your health care provider if he/she has nausea or vomiting, drowsiness, or passes out.

4 – 5 Years

Some falls are inevitable at this age, however you can protect your child from injury associated with certain falls.

Be sure the surfaces under playground equipment are soft. Use at least 9 inches of mulch, pea gravel, or protective rubber matting under and around all equipment.

Your child should always wear protective safety gear on bikes, skates, scooters, skateboards, snowboards, etc. This may include helmets, wrist guards, elbow guards and knee guards.



Take down any gates blocking stairways to prevent your child from climbing on or over them, unless they are needed for younger children.

Use window guards to keep your child from falling out of the window. Screens are not meant to keep children in.

Always supervise your child on fire escapes, high porches and balconies.

Install lower hand rails on stairs for your child's height (18 inches versus 32 inches).

Use plastic guards/netting on stairs and deck railings to keep your child from falling through the railings.

Should your child have a head injury from a fall, call your health care provider if he/she has nausea or vomiting, drowsiness, or passes out.

Tips for All Ages

Remove area rugs to prevent tripping. If the rug must remain in place, secure it with non-slip backing. Put slip-proof mats or abrasive strips in the bath tub and shower. Installing grab bars add further protection.

Keep hallways and stairs well lit and free of clutter (toys, clothes, etc.)



Informational Resources

US Consumer Product Safety Commission	www.cpsc.gov
American Academy of Pediatrics	www.aap.org
Safe Kids Worldwide	www.safekids.org
WI Dept of Agriculture, Trade & Consumer Protection	www.datcp.state.wi.us