

Fall Prevention



Falls are the most common cause of childhood injury in the home, leading to more than 1.3 million visits to the emergency department each year. Falls can occur anywhere in the home, especially in areas with cluttered floors, low lighting or slippery surfaces. Parents and caregivers should take steps to make their homes safer and prevent falls.

Floors

- Keep floors clear of toys and clutter.
- Wipe up any spills immediately.
- Make sure carpets and runners are tightly in place.
- Only use rugs with non-slip backs.
- Do not use wax to polish floors unless it is non-skid wax.
- Be aware that wearing just socks or slippers on wood or waxed floors can be very slippery.
- Keep cords from lamps and phones tucked out of the way so children do not trip over them.

Lighting

- Make sure hallways and stairs are well lit.
- Place night lights in bathrooms, children's bedrooms and dark hallways.
- Replace burned out light bulbs immediately.
- Keep flashlights around the house in case of emergencies.

Stairs

- Stairs should have banisters or handrails on each side.
- If infants or toddlers are in the house, install safety gates at the top and bottom of all stairs.
- Attach the safety gates with hardware to the wall or banister. Do not use pressure mounted gates at the tops of stairs.
- Mount the gate no more than 3½ inches from the floor. This will prevent a child from getting trapped under the gate.
- Never let children play on stairs or railings.
- Keep the stairs free of clutter.

Windows

- Never let children play near windows.
- A window screen alone is not enough to keep a child from falling out of a window.
- Keep windows locked and use window guards on all upper level windows.
- Do not place any furniture near windows. Children can climb on the furniture to reach windows they otherwise could not.