

# Furniture Tip-overs



Most parents do not think of furniture and TVs as dangerous. However, when these items tip-over, serious injury can and does occur. When children play in the house, they often use dressers and shelves as climbing toys, leading to tips-overs. Additionally, with large TVs becoming more and more popular, the risk of serious injury from a TV falling increases. Over the last 18 years, the number of injuries from furniture and TV tip-overs has increased, suggesting more needs to be done to prevent these injuries.

## Furniture Tip-over Facts

- Every year, 14,700 children younger than 18 years of age visit the emergency department for injuries from furniture tip-overs.
- TV tip-overs cause the most injuries for children younger than 10 years. Young children are most likely to suffer head and neck injuries.
- Desks, cabinets and bookshelves tipping over lead to the greatest number of injuries to children ages 10-17 years. These older children usually suffer lower body injuries.

## What Causes Tip-overs?

- Most injuries occur when unsecured furniture falls or tips-over.
- Many times a child pulls the furniture onto himself.
- Other causes include children climbing the furniture or pushing it over on another child.

## Who is at Risk?

- Most injuries occur to children younger than 7 years of age.
- Young children are not able to think about the danger of their actions. They are often not fast enough to avoid a falling piece of furniture, or strong enough to lift the furniture off of themselves if they are trapped.

## Prevention Tips

- Place the TV on a low, wide base. Push it as far back on its base as possible.
- Do not use shelves or dressers as TV stands. These are not made to support the weight of a TV. When purchasing a TV stand, check the size and weight limits.
- Strap all TVs to a stable stand and/or wall.
- Attach large furniture, such as dressers and bookshelves, to the wall using safety straps, L-brackets, or other secure attachment devices.
- Safety straps are available that do not require drilling holes in furniture and can secure items up to 100 lbs.
- Place heavy items on lower shelves of bookcases or entertainment centers.
- Use desks with wide legs or solid bases.
- Install drawer stops on all drawers to prevent them from being pulled out more than two-thirds of the way.
- Parents should not place items of interest (toys, remote control) high on shelves or on top of the TV. Children may try to climb up the furniture to reach these items.
- Keep cords from TVs and other appliances tucked away so a child does not pull these items down on himself.