

Please remember that no safety device can take the place of your watchful eye. Supervise young children at all times, whether you're at home or out to play. Supervision is the best way to keep them safe.

For more information,
visit www.health.ri.gov/childhoodfalls
INJURY PREVENTION PROGRAM



CHILDHOOD FALLS

WINDOWS

Do not rely on a window screen to stop a child from falling out of a window. Screens are not strong enough to prevent falls.



Install window guards on all windows above the first floor. Make sure they can be opened quickly from the inside in case of a fire.

Use window stops so that windows do not open more than four inches. A young child may squeeze through a window opened more than four inches.

Open windows without guards or stops from the top only. Be warned, however, that growing children may have enough strength and skill to open the bottom pane.

Keep windows locked when they are closed.

Move high chairs, cribs, and other furniture that a child could climb on away from windows.

Falling is a natural part of childhood as children learn new skills, test their limits, and explore things around them. While most falls are harmless, some falls can result in serious injury. In fact, falls are the cause of 1.2 million emergency room visits and about 60 deaths each year among children younger than five.

The good news is that you, as a parent or caregiver, can play a major role in preventing serious falls. **Supervision is key.** Supervise young children at all times, especially around fall hazards. If you need to step away from your child for a short time, put him or her in a safe place, like a crib or playpen.

Because more than 80% of fall-related injuries happen at home, it is important to keep your home safe for children. Follow the tips in this brochure to protect your child from serious falls from beds, cribs, highchairs, stairs, and windows.

A LOT CAN HAPPEN IN A SPLIT SECOND

We know you can't watch them every second, but you can make sure they are in a safe place.

BEDS

Do not leave your child alone on a bed or other piece of furniture (changing table, sofa/couch, counter, table, etc.). She may roll or crawl off unexpectedly (even if she has never rolled or crawled before!)

Do not let your child jump on the bed or other furniture.

Use a safety rail when your child is moving from a crib to a bed. If using bunk beds, use a safety rail on the top bunk.

Have your child sleep in a safe, age-appropriate bed. Co-sleeping is not recommended.

CRIBS

Keep crib sides up when your baby is in his crib, even if he can't yet push up on both hands.

Lower the height of the crib mattress when your baby can push up on both hands/all fours. Lower it again when she can sit up or pull to stand.

Remove toys, bumper pads, mobiles, and other objects from your child's crib. These items are not recommended for cribs at any stage. In addition, as children grow, they could use them as steps to climb over the side.



Stop using the crib when the top rails are less than 3/4 of your child's height.

If using a used crib, ensure that it has all needed parts and that it works properly. Regularly inspect the crib to check for safety risks (loosened screws, etc.).

For specific information on new crib safety standards, including the recent ban on drop-side cribs, go to www.cpsc.gov/info/cribs



HIGH CHAIRS

Always strap your child in when using a high chair, booster seat, car seat, swing, stroller, shopping cart, or anything else with safety straps!

Look for special safety features on high chairs, such as a wide base, wheels that lock, and five-point harness straps.

Make sure older children who are not strapped in sit safely in their chairs (no standing, tipping back, etc.)



STAIRS

Use child safety gates at both the top and bottom of the stairs.

- » Use safety gates that meet current safety standards. Gates should have a JPMA (Juvenile Products Manufacturers Association) Certification Seal.
- » When possible, use gates that are mounted to the wall or banister, rather than tension gates. Mounted gates offer the best protection, particularly at the top of the stairs.



- » Do not use accordion-style gates. Your child could get her head caught in them.
- » Keep gates closed and locked in place at all times.

Do not use baby walkers on wheels. A child may fall down the stairs or tip over while using the walker. Use a stationary play center with a stable non-moveable base instead.

When your child is learning to crawl or walk, teach him how to go down stairs backwards. If he goes down backwards, he can hold on to the stair above him for balance.

Actively supervise your toddler on the stairs. Hold her hand and teach her how to hold the handrail when going up and down stairs.

Do not let children run or play on the stairs.

Keep stairs well lit and clutter free.