



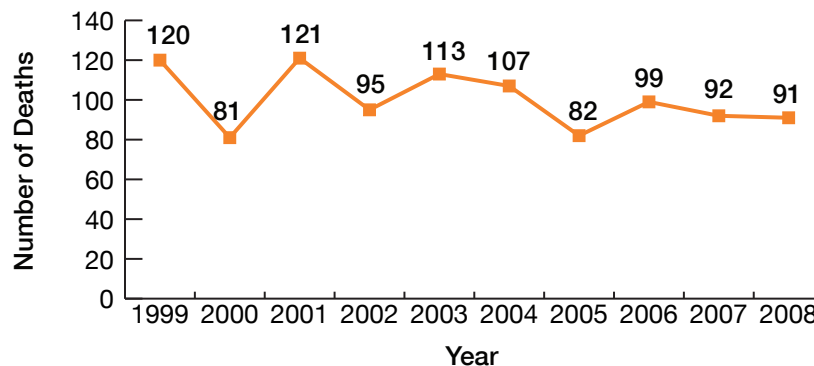
Safety from Falls



Key Facts

- Since 1999, an average of 100 children ages 14 and under have died from fall-related injuries annually.
- In 2008, 91 children ages 14 and under died from unintentional falls.

1999-2008 Unintentional Fall-Related Deaths Among Children
(United States, Ages 14 and Under)



- Each year since 2001, an average of more than 2.3 million nonfatal fall-related injuries among children were reported.
- In 2009, almost 2,350,000 children sustained nonfatal fall-related injuries.
- Falls are the leading cause of unintentional injury for all children ages 14 and under.
- In 2009, more than 45 percent of nonfatal fall-related injuries and 56 percent of fall-related deaths were among children ages 4 and under.
- Window falls account for approximately 8 deaths and 3,300 injuries among children ages 5 and under annually.

Where, When and How

- The risk of a child being injured as a result of a fall at home is twice the risk as at child-care.
- Young children are at risk from falls associated with furniture, stairs and baby walkers.
- Windows and playground equipment are major risk factors for toddlers and older children.
- Window falls occur more frequently in large urban areas and low-income neighborhoods.
- Children living in multi-unit dwelling buildings have the highest number of window fall incidents.
- A recent study showed that more window falls occur in the spring and summer than other seasons. Falls most frequently occur between noon and early evening, the most common playtime for children.
- Each year from 2004 to 2008, approximately 3,000 children under 15 months of age sustained baby walker-associated injuries.

Who

- Males are more than twice as likely as females to die from fall-related injuries.
- Window fall victims are more likely to be male children, under 5 years of age and playing unsupervised at the time of the fall.
- Low-income children are more likely to be injured from falls due to unsafe environments, including aging or deteriorating housing.
- The risk of falls from buildings among minority children under 5 years of age is approximately twice that of white children.

Proven Interventions

- Window screens are not enough. Protect children from falling out by installing window guards on upper floors, making sure they are designed to open quickly from the inside in case of fire.
- In New York City and Boston, education and window guard distribution programs resulted in a 96 percent reduction in the incidence of window falls over 10 years.
- Today, 98 percent of baby walkers sold in the U.S. comply with Consumer Product Safety Commission standards. Since the introduction of the standards in 1997, there has been a 60 percent reduction in the baby walker-associated injury rate and a \$173 reduction in injury costs per baby walker.
- The use of safety gates at the tops and bottoms of stairs reduces a young child's chances of falling. The cost of a safety gate is about \$13 to \$40.
- Protective surfacing under and around playground equipment can reduce the severity of fall-related injuries.

Costs

- Almost 50 percent of the total lifetime cost of unintentional injury among children ages 14 and under treated and released from the emergency department is due to falls.

Laws and Regulations

- In June 2000, the American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM) established voluntary safety standards for window guards, which ensure that those guards designed for single-family homes or the lower floors of apartment buildings have simple emergency-release mechanisms for use in the event of a fire.
- Five states have adopted all or parts of the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission's *Public Playground Safety Handbook* ("CPSC guidelines"). In Rhode Island, only school playgrounds are required to conform to the CPSC guidelines. California and Michigan also require compliance with the ASTM voluntary standards for public playgrounds. Additional states require only certain categories of public playgrounds, such as those at licensed child care facilities, to comply with the guidelines, standards or other rules.
- All baby walkers must meet ASTM voluntary and mandatory standards, which require that baby walkers either be too wide to fit through a standard doorway or have safety features, such as a gripping mechanism, to stop the walker at the edge of a step.