

Kids Can't Fly!

Window Safety and Prevention Tips for Families with Young Children

Falls are the leading cause of injury to children, and falls from windows involving young children are especially serious. Window falls are preventable. **To prevent window falls, parents and caregivers should:**

- **Install approved window guards.** Massachusetts building codes require that a window guard must have a quick-release that can be operated by an adult or older child in an emergency. Be sure the window guards you purchase include this feature. *Window stops and window guards can be purchased at local hardware stores and chain department stores. Window stops range in cost from \$5-10 each. Child safety window guards cost about \$40, depending upon the style/brand/window size. It is important to remember that these need to be installed correctly in order to work.*
- **Keep all furniture, especially beds, sofas and dressers, or anything else children can climb, away from windows.**
- **Lock all unopened doors and windows.**
- **Open windows from the top down**, especially when there are children in the home.
- If you must open windows from the bottom, **buy window-stops** at your local hardware store that will limit the opening to less than 4 inches. Window-stops can be disabled by an adult or older child in an emergency.

Other Safety Tips for the Home:

- Encourage children to play in the center of a room. **Don't store toys next to windows.**
- **Establish home fire escape routes** and schedule regular family practice drills. Be sure all adults and older children practice so they can disable window-stops and remove window guards in an emergency.
- **Regularly check for and fix loose railings or boards** on upper story balconies.
- **Make sure porch and balcony railings are spaced 4" apart or less** to prevent children from slipping through or trapping body parts; railings on older buildings can be up to 7" apart and may need to be replaced to protect children.
- Remember, no tool or equipment is 100% foolproof. **Young children require constant supervision** to keep them safe.
- **Window screens will not prevent a child from falling out of a window!** *Remember: Screens are designed to keep bugs outside, NOT to keep children inside!*

To Learn More:

http://www.nsc.org/get_involved/divisions/Pages/WindowSafetyObservancesPdfs.aspx

<http://www.netwellness.org/healthtopics/ch/falls.cfm>

<http://www.bphc.org/programs/cib/healthyhomescommunitysupports/injuryprevention/kidscantfly/Pages/Home.aspx>