



PREVENT FALLS FROM WINDOWS

According to the '2012 Child and Youth Injury Report' compiled by the Public Health Agency of Canada (latest statistics), falling is the leading cause of hospitalization for children.

The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission states that 3,000 to 5,000 children fall out of windows every year and it is considered one of the top five home hazards.

As children grow and begin to explore their environment with increased strength and mobility, the chance of this type of accident occurring multiplies because they are curious and unaware of the dangers.

For your children's safety and for your peace of mind, Children's Health and Safety Association recommends the following precautionary measures:



- **Install Window Safety Devices:** Window screens are not sufficient to protect your children from falling out of a window. Keep your windows (above the first storey) closed or install window safety devices. A window guard or window stop will prevent your windows from opening beyond four inches (4") and at the same time, allow an adult to open it fully, if required. Window screens are not safe because they are easily lifted, torn or pushed out.
- Don't underestimate your child's strength.
- Discuss the dangers of climbing on window ledges and leaning or pushing against window screens with your children.
- Keep windows closed and locked when children are around. To reduce the chance of an accident, keep furniture and any other climbable items away from windows.
- Many municipalities require apartment windows to have mechanical safety devices so they cannot be opened more than 10 cm (4 inches). If you remove or disable the safety devices, you can endanger the life of a child. Make sure your windows have mechanical safety devices that are working properly.
- When opening a window for ventilation, choose one that your child cannot reach. Whenever possible, open your windows from the top instead of the bottom.
- Doors to balconies should be secured with a childproof lock.

- If you have double-hung windows (the kind that can open from the top as well as up from the bottom) it is generally safer and highly recommended that you open the top pane. Please remember that growing children may have enough strength and dexterity to open the bottom pane. Do not assume an unlocked window is childproof.
- Children are often tempted to climb up to apartment windows and balcony guardrails to get a better view. In such instances, a fall can happen in a matter of seconds. **Never** leave children unattended on a balcony or near an open window.
- Use barriers to prevent children from climbing to upper floors.
- If you live in a two or three storey family home strategic landscaping may lessen the extent of injury sustained in the event of a fall. Shrubs and soft edging such as wood chips or grass under a window can cushion falls.
- Fire escapes, balconies and rooftop areas are '**unsafe**' environments for children to play.
- If you're planning to replace your windows, make sure they have the best safety features and devices.
- Secure curtain pulls or blind cords with cleats fastened high on the window frame. Many children have been strangled while playing with dangling cords.



REMEMBER
IT ONLY TAKES ONE UNSUPERVISED MOMENT FOR A CHILD TO FALL OUT A WINDOW!

Window Guards

Window guards screw into the side of a window frame and have bars no more than 4 inches apart. They come in different sizes for all forms of windows and adjust for width. Guards must meet requirements for spacing and strength.

If you have window guards installed on your windows it is critical to have a release mechanism so they can be opened for escape in the event of an emergency - but still difficult for children to open.



Other Window Safety Devices

Consider using other window safety devices such as window wedges or braces or removing the hand cranks on casement windows.

Whichever window safety measure you decide to use, ensure windows do not open more than 4 inches. Toddlers have been known to get trapped in 5 inch window openings.

Windows provide a means of escape from a burning home, so whatever protection devices are used, they need to be easily opened or removed.

Safety devices cannot take the place of adult supervision.

Making your home child-safe is not a one-time project – it's an ongoing responsibility!



In Case of a Fall

Never try to move a child who appears to be seriously injured after a fall. Call '911' and let trained medical professionals move the child with every proper precaution. If a child is not breathing and you are trained in CPR, as all parents should be, follow your CPR protocol.

Additional Resources

[Window Blind Cord Safety](#)

[Sleep Safety](#)

[First Aid Training Reveals the Secret Hero in Everybody](#)