



PREVENTING CHILDHOOD FALLS

All windows above the first floor should be equipped with window guards — preferably guards with emergency release devices in case of fire. Children can fall from windows open as little as four inches.

- Open windows without guards at the top only, or use window stops so they open only a few inches.
- Never rely on window screens to prevent falls.
- Supervise children at all times around open windows.
- Move furniture away from windows, and keep them locked when they're closed.

Never let children play on fire escapes or high porches, decks or balconies.

- Make sure all railing slats are secure and no more than 3½ inches apart. Securely attach mesh or plastic barriers to cover openings greater than 3½ inches.

Any house with a baby or toddler in it should have safety gates at the top and bottom of every staircase.

- Safety gates at the tops of stairs must be attached to the wall, as these are more secure than the kind held in place by outward pressure.
- Keep hallways and stairs well-lit and clear of clutter, and don't let children play on stairs.

Keep young children safe by strapping them into seats and carriers and avoiding baby walkers.

- Never leave young children alone on changing tables, beds, couches or other furniture. Always strap them into high chairs, infant carriers, swings and strollers.
- Never use baby walkers on wheels. Stationary play centers give your baby a chance to practice standing and moving in an upright position without going anywhere and getting into hazardous situations.

- Always put a baby in a carrier on the floor, not on top of a table or other furniture.

Keep children at play safe with the right safety gear and adult supervision.

- If you have playground equipment, the ground beneath it should be cushioned with shredded rubber, hardwood fiber mulch or chips, or fine sand. Grass and soil are not as good at preventing serious injuries. The material should be 12 inches deep and extend at least six feet in all directions. This won't prevent falls, but it can reduce the risk and severity of injuries.
- Insist that children wear their helmets correctly every time they ride their bikes, scooters, skateboards or inline skates. Helmets should be centered on top of their heads, with straps snugly fastened under their chins. Make sure their helmets carry stickers indicating they meet safety standards.
- Make sure children wear knee pads, elbow pads and wrist guards while inline skating or skateboarding. Skaters should take lessons, avoid skating at night and skate on smooth, paved surfaces free of traffic.
- Children under age 8 should not ride scooters without close adult supervision. Make sure children riding scooters wear knee pads and elbow pads in addition to helmets.

