

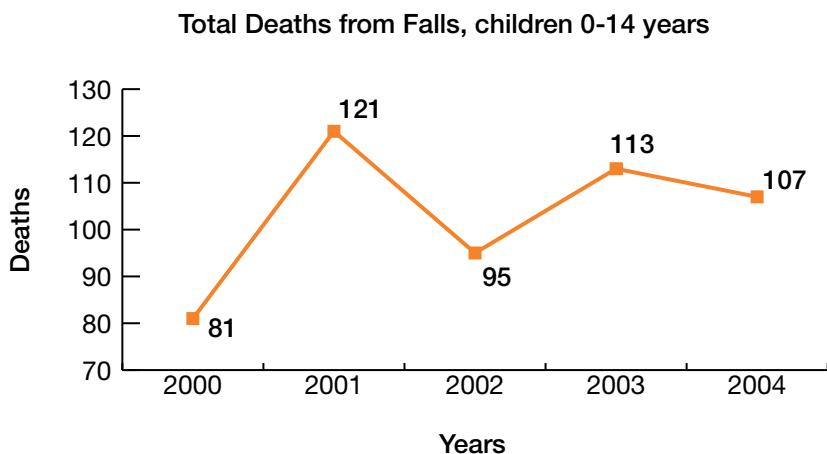


Safety from Falls



Key Facts

- Each year, approximately 103 children die from fall-related injuries.



- Each year, more than 2.3 million fall-related injuries in children are reported.
- Falls are the leading cause of unintentional injury for all children ages 14 years and under.
- In 2005, more than 2.2 million children were treated in hospital emergency rooms for fall-related injuries. Forty percent of those injuries were to children ages 3 years and under.
- In 2004, 65 percent of all fall-related deaths were children ages 4 years and under.
- Window falls account for 12 childhood deaths and 4,000 injuries for children under age 10 years each year.

Where, When and How

- More than 80 percent of fall-related injuries to children 4 years and under occur in the home. For children ages 5 to 14 years, nearly half of fall-related injuries occur in the home; 23 percent occur at school.
- Window falls occur more frequently in large urban areas, low-income neighborhoods, and in overcrowded housing.
- Children living in apartment buildings have the highest number of window fall incidents – five times more than children living in other residences.
- The majority of falls occur at noon and early evening, the most common playtime for children.
- Infants 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.
- In 2004, nearly 3,900 children (less than age 4 years) were treated in hospital emergency rooms for baby walker-related 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 age 5 years and playing unsupervised at the time of the fall.
- Low-income children are more likely to be injured from falls due to improper supervision and unsafe environments, including aging or deteriorating housing.
- Black and Hispanic children are at greater risk of falls from heights due to their increased likelihood of living in urban, multiple-story, low-income housing.

Proven Interventions

- Window screens are not enough. Window guards should be installed on upper floors, making sure they're designed to open quickly from the inside in case of fire.
- Protective surfacing under and around playground equipment can prevent falls or reduce the severity of fall-related injuries.
- The use of safety gates at the tops and bottoms of stairs reduces a young child's chances of falling.
- In New York City, an education and window guard distribution program combined with window guard legislation resulted in a 35 percent reduction in window fall-related fatalities after two years.

Costs

- The largest portion of injury costs for children ages 14 years and under is attributed to falls.
- Falls are responsible for approximately one-quarter of all childhood unintentional injury-related costs.

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.
- Playground equipment guidelines have been developed by the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) and ASTM. Fifteen states have passed legislation or regulations to address playground safety.
- 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 features, such as a gripping mechanism, to stop the walker at the edge of a step.