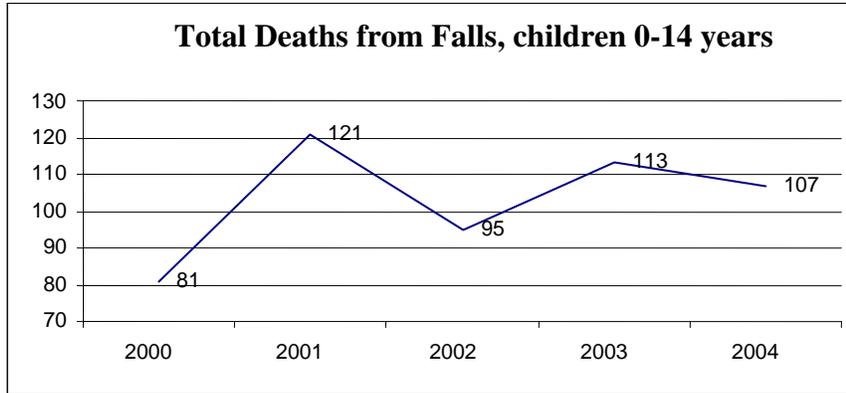


Safety from Falls

Key Facts

- Each year, approximately 103 children die from fall-related injuries.¹



- Each year, more than 2.3 million fall-related injuries in children are reported.²
- 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.³
- In 2004, 65 percent of all fall-related deaths were children ages 4 years and under.⁴
- Window falls account for 12 childhood deaths and 4,000 injuries for children under age 10 years annually.⁵

Where, When and How

- More than 80 percent of fall-related injuries to children 4 years and under occur in the home.^{6 7} 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.⁸
- Children living in apartment buildings have the highest number of window fall incidents – five times more than children living in residences.⁹
- The majority of falls occur at noon and early evening, the most common playtime for children.^{10 11}
- Infants are at risk from falls associated with furniture, stairs and baby walkers.¹²
- Windows and playground equipment are major risk factors for toddlers and older children.¹³

- In 2004, nearly 3,900 children (less than age 4 years) were treated in hospital emergency rooms for baby walker-related injuries.¹⁴

Who

- Males are more than twice as likely as females to die from fall-related injuries.¹⁵
- Window fall victims are more likely to be male children, under age 5 years and playing unsupervised at the time of the fall.^{16 17}
- Low-income children are more likely to be injured from falls due to improper supervision and unsafe environments, including aging or deteriorating housing.^{18 19 20 21}
- 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.²²

Proven Interventions

- Window screens are not enough. Protect children from falling out by installing window guards on upper floors, making sure they're designed to open quickly from the inside in case of fire. Window guards are priced between approximately \$10 and \$30.^{23 24}
- Protective surfacing under and around playground equipment can prevent falls or reduce the severity of fall-related injuries.²⁵
- The use of safety gates at the tops and bottoms of stairs reduces a young child's chances of falling.²⁶
- 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.^{27 28 29}

Costs

- The largest portion of injury costs for children ages 14 years and under is attributed to falls.³⁰
- Falls are responsible for approximately one-quarter of all childhood unintentional injury-related costs.³¹

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.³²

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