



# Window and Balcony Safety: Prevent Falls

In the United States, 4,000 children fall from buildings every year — 70 percent fall from second- or third-story windows.

## HARD FACTS

*The majority of serious falls happens at home. Children are twice as likely to be injured in a fall-related injury at home than at a child care facility.*

*Boys are more than three times as likely as girls to die from fall-related injuries.*

*Children younger than 7 years old are at the most risk of falling from windows or balconies.*

*Most window falls happen from windows with screens properly installed.*

## CHILDREN AT RISK

- Playful and spontaneous children.
- Imaginative and curious children.
- Energetic and persistent children.

*Sound like any children you know?*

## CHILDREN AT HIGHEST RISK

- Boys.
- Younger than 5 years old.
- Supervising parents are distracted (making meals, entertaining, etc.).

## WINDOW SAFETY

- Teach your children about window safety. “Screens keep bugs out; they do not keep kids in.”
- Teach them to play a safe distance from windows and enforce this rule in your home. (e.g. “We play two two big steps from windows”).
- Keep furniture or anything a child can climb away from windows.



- Keep windows closed and locked when not in use.
- Only allow windows to open 4 inches and install a **window stop** that meets the standards of the American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM) — to keep children from opening them further. (Be sure an adult can open them in an emergency).
- If you open windows wider than 4 inches, install **window guards** that can be removed by an adult in an emergency, and meet the ASTM standards.
- Share this information with grandparents, child care providers, friends and neighbors who may have children visit their home.
- Have an emergency fire escape plan for your family.

## BALCONY SAFETY

- Children on balconies should have careful supervision.
- Make sure spaces between slats/bars are 4 inches or less.
- Install a plastic shield or mesh barriers that covers the railings.
- Keep furniture away from balconies.
- Keep doors leading to balcony locked.

Source: [safekids.org](http://safekids.org), [stopat4.com](http://stopat4.com)

For more information on injury prevention, call 983-6800.

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