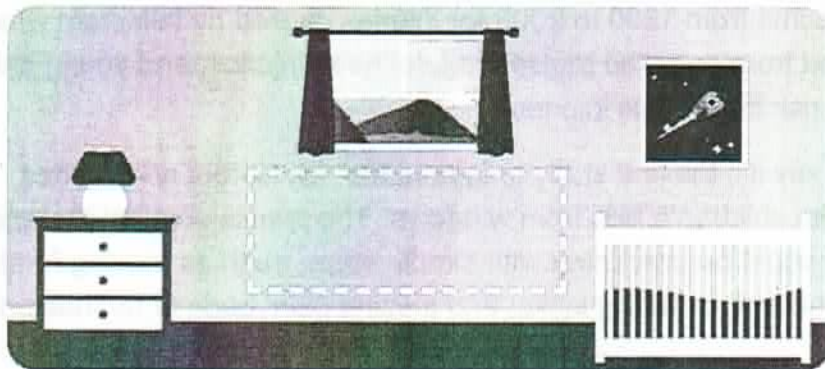




BE SMART
ABOUT WINDOW SAFETY

Window screens are a great way to keep bugs out of your home. But you can't depend on the screen to protect a child from falling out of a window. Nearly 15,000 children a year are injured from falling out of windows.



- To help prevent window falls, keep windows closed and locked when children are around. If you do open a window, make sure it is out of their reach. Keep furniture, or anything children can climb on, away from the window. Be sure to set rules about playing around windows.
- Most window falls occur when children are alone. Remember that there is no substitute for supervision.



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WebMD

About 5,000 Kids Fall From Windows Each Year

Simple Prevention Measures Include Installing Locks, Keeping Furniture Away From Windows

By Jennifer Warner

FROM THE WEBMD ARCHIVES 

Aug. 22, 2011 -- Falls from windows injure about 5,100 children on average each year in the U.S., and most could be prevented with simple window safety measures.

A new study shows an estimated 98,415 children were treated in hospital emergency rooms from 1990 to 2008 for injuries caused by falls from windows. Injuries ranged from cuts and bruises to fatal head injuries, and young children were most at risk for serious injuries.

Researchers say it's the first study to look at the risk factors and injuries associated with children's falls from windows. The results suggest that many of these injuries could be prevented with simple steps, such as moving furniture away from windows, installing locks, and placing plant beds or bushes under windows.

Window Fall Risks

In the study, researchers analyzed information from a nationwide database of children treated in hospital emergency rooms over a 19-year period from 1990 to 2008.

The results showed that an estimated 98,415 children were treated for injuries caused by a fall from a window during this period, an average of 5,180 per year.

Researchers found the following factors were associated with window falls:

- Boys were more likely than girls to fall out of windows and accounted for 58% of window fall injuries.
- Falls from windows were more common in spring and summer months.

- One-fourth of the window fall-related injuries required hospitalization.
- Children under 5 years were more likely to suffer serious injuries from a window fall and three times more likely to suffer a head injury.

The study also showed that the type of landing surface plays a major role in the severity of head injuries caused by window falls. Children who landed on a hard surface, such as concrete, were twice as likely to suffer head injuries, be hospitalized, or die from their injuries compared with those who landed on cushioned surfaces.

How to Improve Window Safety

Researchers say placing bushes or plant beds underneath windows can create a cushioned landing surface and reduce the impact of falls from windows for children of all ages.

Other steps to increase window safety include reducing access to windows by moving furniture away from windows and installing window guards or locks that prevent the window from opening more than 4 inches.

Although information about whether furniture was placed near the window was not available for 95% of the falls, researchers found 4% of window falls involved children rolling off beds or climbing on furniture before falling out a window.

Similarly, there was little information about whether a screen was in place at the time of the fall. But when this information was available, 83% reported that a screen was in place.

"Findings from other studies demonstrate that screens often are in place (up to 76% of the time) but do not provide adequate protection against window falls involving children," researcher Vaughn A. Harris, of the Center For Injury Research and Policy, The Research Institute at Nationwide Children's Hospital, in Columbus, Ohio, and colleagues write in *Pediatrics*. "Parents and other child caregivers should be counseled not to depend on screens to prevent children from falling out windows."