



Window Safety

It is important to maintain the safety of your family, especially children, inside your home. Some of the leading causes of death and injury to children are unintentional falls. According to Safe Kids WorldWide, in 2013, close to two million children visited emergency rooms for fall-related accidents. There are a number of preventative measures you can take to lessen the likelihood of a window-related injury occurring within your home.

SAFETY PRECAUTIONS

1.) Ensure that children maintain a safe distance from open windows. It is recommended that furniture not be placed near or in-front of windows, as this can give children easy and dangerous access to the window. It is also important to remember that screens will not prevent a child from falling out of a window. Screens are designed to be easily removed, and are meant for air ventilation and keeping insects out of a home.

2.) As an added safety measure, consider installing hardware on your windows that limit the distance they can be opened. Night latches and window opening control devices (WOCD) are two examples. Both options restrict windows from opening more than four inches. By adding this hardware, you will be able to open your windows for ventilation while worrying less about an accidental fall.

3.) Caregivers should also keep in mind the dangers of window treatments with hanging cords. Children playing around windows with this type of treatment are at risk of choking and strangulation. If possible, install window treatments that are operational without cords.

EMERGENCY RESPONSE

While falls and other window-related injuries are a concern, it is important to teach children the proper operation of a window in case of an emergency. In some situations, a window may be the only option for exiting the home. When preparing for emergency situations, there are a number of things to keep in mind:

- Ensure all home occupants know the proper way to operate a window in case of an emergency
- Develop and practice an emergency evacuation plan
- Make sure windows are not nailed or painted shut
- All grilles or grates on windows should have proper release mechanisms
- Window unit air conditioners should not be installed in windows that may be needed for escape

Maintaining a safe home environment should be a major priority among homeowners. Through proper planning and by maintaining awareness, accidental falls and other window-related injuries can be easily prevented.

Visit the National Safety Council for more information on window safety and how to prevent window-related accidents.