

Keep Your Eyes Open and Your Windows Shut; Active Supervision of Kids is Key for Window Safety

Safe Kids Columbus reminds parents that April 4-10 is National Window Safety Week

Columbus, GA — Placing a crib, changing table or even a chair next to a window might offer your child a nice view outside or access to fresh air, but be careful – window falls can happen to anyone and in some cases, can be deadly. Safe Kids Columbus recommends that adults actively supervise their children when around open windows. Toddlers have been known to fall out of windows open as little as five inches.

Every year, window falls account for 12 childhood deaths and 4,000 injuries for children under 10 years old. Safe Kids Columbus strongly recommends window guards on all windows above the first floor, preferably guards equipped with an emergency release device in case of fire.

“A screen is not a safety device,” says Christy Hubbard, Safe Kids Columbus coordinator. “It’s designed to keep insects out, not to keep children in. Proper safety guards on windows save lives.”

Window guards were shown to reduce window fall-related deaths by up to 35 percent as part of a pilot program in New York City. “In an apartment in a high-rise building, window guards should be considered essential safety equipment,” says Hubbard.

Safe Kids Columbus also reminds parents and caregivers:

- Install *window guards* to prevent children from falling out of windows. For windows above the first floor, install window guards with an emergency release device in case of fire.
- Install *window stops* so that windows open no more than 4 inches.
- Keep windows locked and closed when they are not being used.
- Keep furniture away from windows so kids can’t climb to the ledge.
- If you have double-hung windows — the kind that can open down from the top as well as up from the bottom — it is generally safer to open the top pane, but growing kids may have enough strength, dexterity and curiosity to open the bottom pane.
- Never try to move a child who appears to be seriously injured after a fall — call 911 and let trained medical personnel move the child with proper precautions.
- Consider using cordless window products in your home if you have young children or they visit your home frequently.
- Check all Roman Blinds and roll up shades in your home — kids have been strangled while playing with dangling cords. If looped pull cords, exposed inner cords, or exposed lifting loops are found, replace the blinds or shades with products that do not have exposed pull cords or inner cords.

For more information about window safety and falls, call Safe Kids Columbus at (706) 321-6183 or visit www.safekidscolumbusga.com. National Window Safety Week is an annual program of the National Safety Council. For more information, visit www.nsc.org.

Safe Kids Columbus works to prevent accidental childhood injury, the leading killer of children 14 and under. Its members include public safety agencies, teachers, EMTs, county commissioners, health educators, nurses, civic groups, faith-based organizations, public health organizations, local government, and many others concerned about the well being of our children. Safe Kids Columbus is a member of Safe Kids Worldwide, a global network of organizations dedicated to preventing accidental injury. Safe Kids Columbus was founded in 1998 and is led by the Columbus Health Department.