

Safety Fact Sheet

Ceiling Fans



What is a ceiling fan?

A ceiling fan is a large paddle fan mounted on the ceiling of a room. Ceiling fans are used to cool people down in hot weather.

How may a child be injured?

Cuts and bruises and tendon damage

- Children may receive cuts, bruises and tendon damage when being accidentally tossed into the fan, in play, by a parent or when playing on bunk beds or furniture near ceiling fans.

Struck by object

- Children may receive skull fractures or limb fractures when struck by the blades of a ceiling fan.

How common are these injuries?

In a study in Townsville over a two year period, 50 injuries were attributed to ceiling fans. Of these, 22 were injuries to children younger than 15.¹ In a Malaysian study, one child died after being struck in the head by a ceiling fan while playing on the upper bunk of a bunk-bed.² There are no other recent published statistics available.

Is there a Law or an Australian Standard for Ceiling Fans?

There are no laws or Australian Standards relating to ceiling fans. Please keep in mind the safety reminders below when installing a ceiling fan.

Remember:

- Keep bunk beds and other furniture away from ceiling fans.
- Install ceiling fan protectors or impeller guards in areas frequented by children.
- Use wall-mounted fans in children's rooms.
- Do not allow children to stand on or jump off furniture near a ceiling fan.
- Do not place children on the shoulders of adults or playfully throw children up in the air around ceiling fans.

¹ Potts, J. R., "Ceiling fan injuries: the Townsville experience", *Medical Journal of Australia* 1999;**170**:119–20

² Alias et al, "Head Injury from Fan Blades Among Children", *Asian Journal of Surgery*, 2005;28:168-170