

Fact Sheet

Falls from Windows

An alarming number of children present to The Children's Hospital at Westmead each year as a result of falling from windows. Children may fall out of a window which is open more than 10cm, even if a fly screen is present.

How common are these injuries?

Over the past 10 years there have been 89 children admitted to the Children's Hospital at Westmead after falling from windows. Almost all of these children fell from a window in their own home.

Over the past five years:

- 4 out of 5 children admitted to hospital because of a fall from a window were under 5 years;
- 80% had fallen more than two metres;
- 80% had significant /severe injuries;
- 3 out of 5 cases admitted to hospital were boys;
- About half of the cases were associated with furniture near the window.

How may a child be injured?

Children may fall out of windows if they are able to climb on furniture to reach the window or if they are jumping or playing on a bed near an open window.

- **Injuries resulting from children falling from windows range from** cuts and bruises to head injuries, broken limbs and even death.

Is there a Law or an Australian Standard to prevent window falls?

There are no laws or Australian Standards relating to domestic windows to prevent falls. Please keep in mind the safety reminders below.

Remember:

- The Children's Hospital at Westmead recommends that you stop all windows above the ground floor from opening more than 10cm.
- If possible, always open windows from the top, not the bottom.
- Keep furniture away from windows, so that children can not climb up to windows using furniture.
- Do not rely on fly screens to protect a child from falling out of a window.
- Teach your child to play away from windows.

This fact sheet is for educational purposes only.

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kids health
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