Kids are unpredictable. INJURIES DON'T HAVE TO BE.

A step ahead... of childhood falls

Tips to keep your 5-9 year old safe.

Falls can cause severe injuries for children

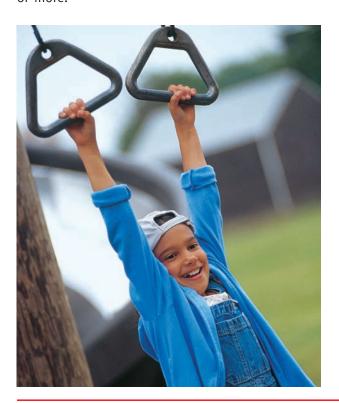
Falls are:

- The main cause of injuries treated in hospital.
- The second leading cause of head injuries and a common cause of broken arms and legs.

Children 5-9 years of age are more likely to need hospital treatment when they fall from:

- Playground equipment and other heights
- A bicycle, skateboard, or in-line skates
- · A bed or other furniture
- · Steps and stairs

Children of all ages are more severely injured if they fall from a height of $1\frac{1}{2}$ metres (5 feet) or more.



What you can do

Learn how injuries can occur

Kids are curious, active and imaginative. Between 5-9 years of age they:

- · Like to be the biggest, fastest and best!
- Enjoy jumping, balancing and climbing.
- Think they can do more than they are able to do, especially boys, who are injured more often than girls.
- May not see danger in what they are doing.
- May forget the safety rules, especially when excited.
- May be influenced by older children to try new things and use equipment in ways that can be dangerous.



Create safer places for children

The playground

Children 5-9 years old are more frequently injured at a playground than at any other age.

Your home

- Fix loose carpeting on stairs, tighten loose railings and replace broken floor tiles.
- Keep stairs and hallways clear.
- Place beds and furniture away from the windows and balcony railings.
- Install safety devices on windows and



balcony doors so they only open 10 centimetres (4 inches).

 Maintain your outdoor home play equipment such as climbers, swings, forts and trampolines.

Your neighbourhood

- Report unsafe road and sidewalk conditions to your local public works or operations department.
- Report broken street lights to local public works or operations department.

Watch children closely Parents and caregivers:

- Know where your children are playing at all times and that they are being watched.
- Never leave a child unattended on or near a balcony or fire escape.
- Increase your supervision when other children are playing at your home, or when there is a change in routine or environment such as school vacations.
- Stand by children when they are learning to ride a bicycle, in-line skate, or when they climb on playground equipment.
- Help children use recreation equipment safely:
 - Kids need to wear the proper helmet correctly every time they bike, skateboard, scooter, in-line skate, ski, skate, toboggan, play hockey, or wear shoes with wheels.
 - Wrist and mouth guards, and knee and elbow pads are recommended for many activities and sports.
- Consider lessons for your child, or seek assistance from others if you are unfamiliar with a sport.
- Provide healthy snacks and a short "down time" to help children move more safely from one activity to another.



- Involve children in making family safety rules and help them understand why they are important.
- Make sure children follow the safety rules every time, every day.
- Tell children that you like it when they are playing safely.
- Follow the safety rules yourself. Children learn by watching adults.

Some examples of safety rules for your family:

- Wear good fitting running shoes to reduce the chance of a slip, trip or tumble.
- Wear a helmet and the proper safety gear for bicycling and other wheeled sports every time.
- Never climb or jump on beds, chairs, sofas, or kitchen cupboards.
- Play with friends in a room where adults can see children.
- Walk up and down stairs using handrails.

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INJURIES DON'T HAVE TO BE.

For more information:

Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit 1-877-721-7520

www.simcoemuskokahealth.org



