

# 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 1½ metres (5 feet) or more.



### What you can do

# 1

## 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.

# 2

## 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.

## 3 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.

## 4 Create and follow family safety rules

- 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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### For more information:

Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit

1-877-721-7520

[www.simcoemuskokahealth.org](http://www.simcoemuskokahealth.org)