

Prevention of crush injuries from furniture tipovers

Information for parents and caregivers

Each year many children are injured from furniture or appliances toppling over onto them and crushing them. Children have been killed by unstable and unsecured furniture, and large objects, falling onto them.

One of the realities of life is that young children do not always use furniture in the way that it is intended. They can be very creative in how they use furniture for play, or to gain access to something that is stored out of reach. For example, bookcases and dressers with drawers can be used as a ladder to reach something that is stored up high.

Other items such as TVs (especially large flat screen TVs), microwaves, and fish tanks can be on unstable stands or bases and topple onto children. Even concrete statues, birdbaths and large pots in the garden can cause problems if they don't have a secure, broad and stable base.

For more information, contact:

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Ways to prevent furniture tipovers

Most injuries from furniture or appliances toppling onto young children can be avoided by:



- Choosing safer furniture with a broad and stable base.
- Avoiding the use of pedestal tables to hold heavy items.
- Testing furniture for stability, especially for tall pieces, or if the item is positioned on thick carpet. For furniture with drawers, open bottom 2–3 drawers, and press down on open drawers to test for stability. Some items may be made stable by propping up the front edge/legs.
- Securing unstable furniture and items to the wall. Secure tall bookcases, shelving, and unstable heavy furniture to walls (into studs) with furniture brackets and/or anchors.
- Anchoring a flat screen TV to the wall, using the brackets supplied.
- Pushing the TV as far back as possible on a sturdy, low-rise base. Avoid flimsy shelving.
- Making changes to the layout of the room and furniture to make sure young children are not able to climb onto furniture.
- Putting heavier items on bottom shelves and in bottom drawers.
- Removing or blocking access to tall lamps or coat racks to keep young children away.
- Placing electrical cords out of a child's reach, and teaching young children not to play with the cords.
- Removing items from the top of the TV and furniture that might tempt young children to climb, such as toys, lollies, and the remote controls.
- Checking the garden and securing garden statues and potted plants. You may have to concrete garden statues into the ground.
- Using caution when travelling - the furniture in the hotel or home you are visiting may not be secure.