

The Home Safety Series: Breaking Down Childhood Injury by Age and Stage

Key Messages:

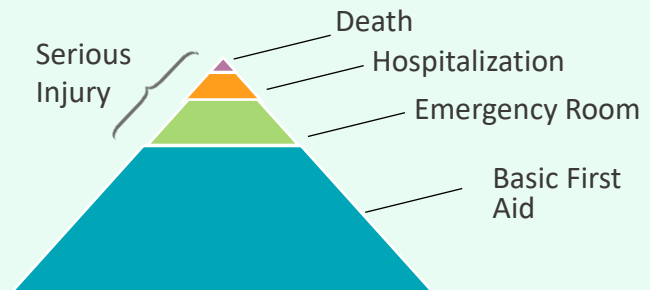
- ❖ **Childhood injury** can seriously impact family wellbeing and quality of life
- ❖ Serious childhood **injuries are preventable** with the right action and support
- ❖ The injury risk and type will depend on the child's **age and developmental stage**



Preventing Serious, Life Altering Injury

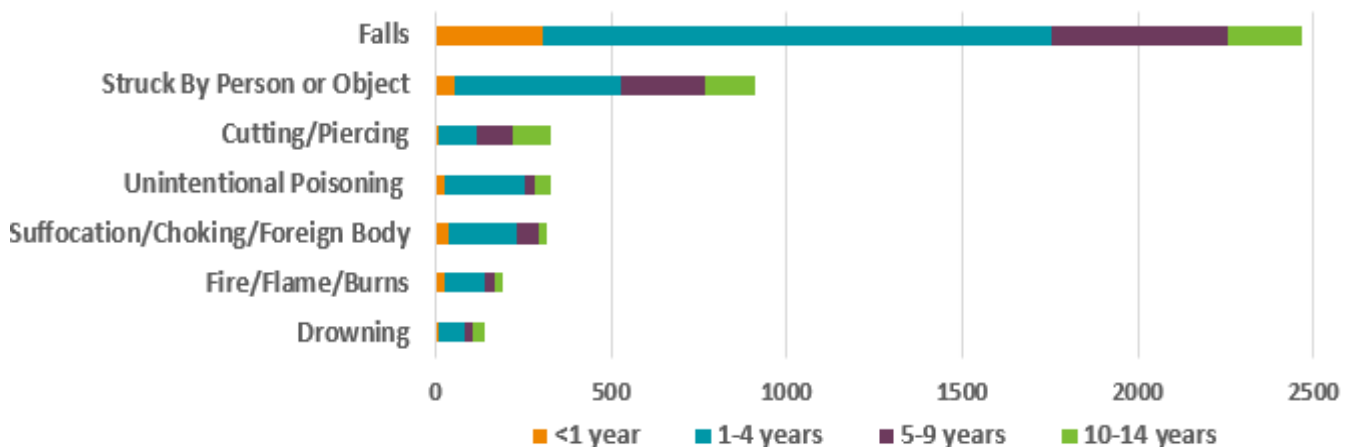
Injuries are the leading cause of childhood death and disability in Canada, and most of these injuries occur in the home.

Our vision is a world where all children are free to play, learn and grow without fear of serious, life altering injury.



Leading Causes of Childhood Injury in the Home:

Emergency Department Visits for Home-Based Injuries in the Edmonton Zone, 2011-2021



*Please note that this graph only depicts injuries that were reported as happening in the home. As a result, the numbers are likely underreported.

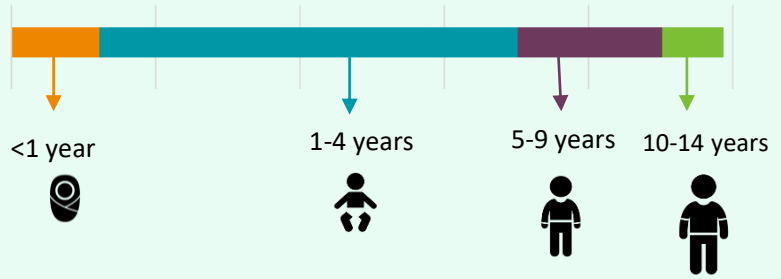
Childhood Injuries in the Home:

Falls

Falls are the #1 cause of injury

Where do most childhood falls happen in the home?

- ❖ From **furniture** (i.e., beds, couches, highchairs, change tables)
- ❖ On **stairs**
- ❖ While **being carried**
- ❖ **Slips or trips** on the ground or floor (i.e., water, toys, and other tripping hazards)
- ❖ From **play equipment** (i.e., backyard play structures)



Preventing Falls

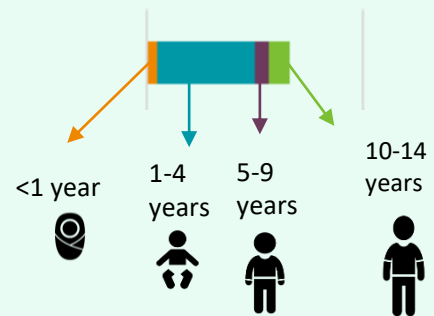
- ❖ Install **window guards**
- ❖ Move **furniture away from windows**
- ❖ **Clear clutter** from stairs and floors to prevent tripping hazards
- ❖ Place car seats and other **carriers on the floor**, never on top of furniture
- ❖ Install **stair gates** at the top and bottom of stairs. Never use pressure mount gates at the top of stairs
- ❖ Always **buckle children into their highchair** and other high surfaces
- ❖ **Teach** children to safety use play equipment



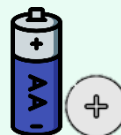
Poisoning

The **10 most common poisons** for children:

1. Advil®
2. Pediatric Tylenol®
3. Vitamin D
4. Adult Tylenol®
5. Melatonin
6. Hand Sanitizer
7. Essential Oils
8. Fluoride Toothpaste
9. Cream/Lotion/Make-Up
10. Miscellaneous Substance



Other common poisons:



(Statistics from Injury Prevention Centre, 2023)

Childhood Injuries in the Home:

Preventing Poisoning

- ❖ Keep all poisons **Locked Up Tight** and **Out Of Sight**
- ❖ If you think someone has been poisoned, call **PADIS** at **1-800-332-1414**
Poison & Drug Information Service
- ❖ Read and **follow** all **directions** on poison labels
- ❖ Review **first aid information** before using poisons
- ❖ Choose the **least hazardous** product available
- ❖ **Teach** children about the hazard symbols



Poison



Corrosive



Flammable



Explosive



(Photos from Injury Prevention Centre)

Breathing Emergencies

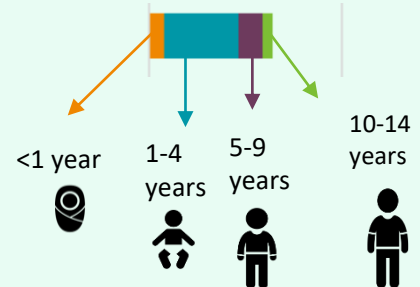
Choking = Food or object caught in the airway

Children are more likely to **choke on foods** that are ...

- ❖ **Hard** (i.e., raw carrots, hard candy)
- ❖ **Sticky** (i.e., gum, raisins, peanut butter)
- ❖ **Round** (i.e., grapes, hot dogs)
- ❖ **Inhalable** (i.e., seeds, powdered sugar)

Toys and other small pieces:

- ❖ Be cautious of anything small enough to fit through a toilet paper roll



Suffocation = blockage of the nose and mouth. More common in infants with limited head and neck control

Common suffocation risks:

- ❖ Bedding and soft mattresses
- ❖ Sharing a sleep surface with someone
- ❖ Sleeping in a car seat while in the home
- ❖ Plastic bags

Strangulation = Constriction of the neck

Cords, strings and ropes can get caught around the neck and cause strangulation

Common Strangulation risks:

- ❖ Blind cords
- ❖ Drawstrings on clothes
- ❖ Necklaces and scarves

Childhood Injuries in the Home:

Preventing Breathing Emergencies

Choking

- ❖ Cook, mash and/or puree hard vegetables
- ❖ Cut round foods length-wise and into **small pieces**
- ❖ Remove bones, pits and seeds from foods
- ❖ Have children sit while eating
- ❖ Use a **toilet paper roll** to check toy safety. If the toy can fit through the roll, then it is too small



Suffocation:

- ❖ The safest place for infants to sleep is on their back in a **crib or bassinette**
- ❖ If bed-sharing, remove hazards that may cover the nose or mouth

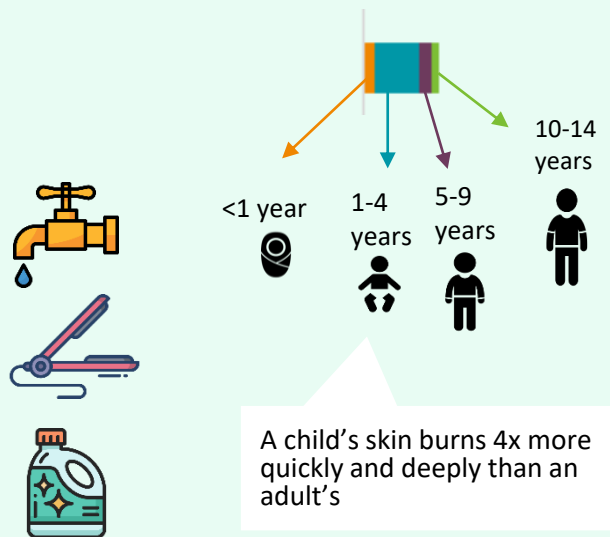
Strangulation:

- ❖ Cut or remove **blind cords**
- ❖ Remove **drawstrings** from clothing
- ❖ Ensure cords on pacifiers and other children's items are **too short to wrap around the neck**

Fire and Burns

Heat, electricity, and some common household **chemicals** can cause burns. Hazards to watch for include:

- ❖ Heat burns from hot **tap water**
- ❖ Contact with **hot objects**, like stoves, irons, fire pits and portable heaters
- ❖ Electrical burns and shocks from **outlets**, damaged wires and unsafe electrical devices
- ❖ Chemical burns from harsh **cleaners**, fertilizers and batteries



Preventing Burns

- ❖ Set **hot water heaters** to **49°C**
- ❖ Place hot items **out of reach** of children (i.e., hot beverages, curling irons). **Exercise caution** if using these items when children are nearby
- ❖ Place safety gates around burn hazards, such as fireplaces and heaters
- ❖ Place **plug covers** on outlets
- ❖ **Unplug** electrical items when not in use
- ❖ Keep chemicals **locked up tight** and **out of sight**

Fire Safety:

- ❖ Keep a **fire extinguisher** in the kitchen and near other fire hazards
- ❖ Keep lighters, matches and flammable materials **locked up**
- ❖ Ensure there are working **smoke detectors** on all levels of the home
- ❖ Plan and practice fire **safety drills** with children

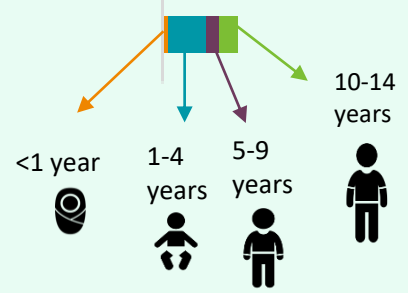
Childhood Injuries in the Home:

Drowning

An infant or young child can drown in as little as 2.5 cm (1 inch) of water

Drowning Hazards:

- ❖ Bathtubs, sinks and toilets
- ❖ Swimming or wading pools
- ❖ Buckets/containers filled with water (i.e., mop buckets, coolers, rain barrels)
- ❖ Outdoor bodies of water (i.e., wells, ponds, drainage ditches, irrigation canals)



Preventing Drowning

- ❖ Young children should **never be left alone in the bathtub**. Bath seats and floatation devices are not safe alternatives to supervision
- ❖ **Close toilet lids** and secure them with a child lock
- ❖ **Empty water** from containers immediately after use
- ❖ Watch children closely outdoors, especially when wells, ponds, rain barrels or drainage ditches are nearby
- ❖ All children (and adults) should learn basic water safety rules and **swimming skills**
- ❖ Use an approved **life jacket or PFD** while in and around water
- ❖ **Supervise children** anytime they are swimming or playing near water



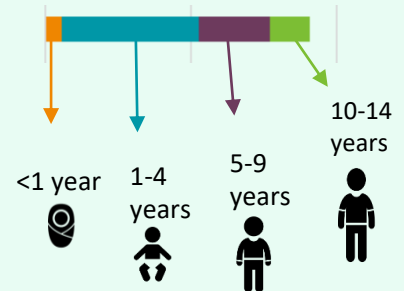
Struck by Objects or People

This category includes injuries from being hit or colliding with objects or people

Examples:

- ❖ Being hit by an object such as a baseball or a falling box
- ❖ Being **pinned under** a piece of **furniture** or an appliance that tipped over, such as a TV, bookshelf or dresser
- ❖ Walking into a wall, door or piece of furniture, such as a coffee table
- ❖ **Colliding** with another person while running

The #2 cause of injury



Childhood Injuries in the Home:

Preventing Injuries from Being Struck by Objects or People

- ❖ Any pieces of furniture a child might climb on, such as tables, dressers, shelves, or TV stands, should be sturdy and **anchored to the wall**
- ❖ Attach **protective padding to corners** of coffee tables, fireplace hearths, and countertops with sharp edges
- ❖ Store heavy and/or hard objects in a secure location or somewhere low to the ground where they will not fall

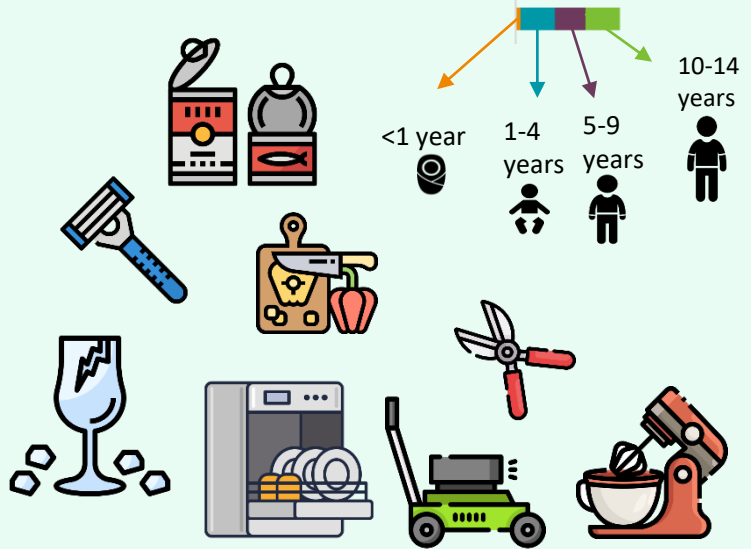


Cuts and Piercing

Sharp objects in and around the home can lead to injury if not handled safely

Examples of Hazards:

- ❖ Recyclables (i.e., cans, glass jars)
- ❖ Kitchen appliances (i.e., blenders, mixers, dishwashers)
- ❖ Knives and other utensils
- ❖ Tools (i.e., saws, pliers, scissors)
- ❖ Farm machinery



Preventing Cuts and Piercing

- ❖ **Lock up** sharp items and keep them out of reach of young children
- ❖ When sharp items are in use, **supervise** children closely to ensure safety
- ❖ **Teach children** boundaries and rules for what is safe to touch and play with
- ❖ Clean up broken glass and/or damaged equipment immediately

