

Preventing falls at home

Falls are the No. 1 cause of injury in kids and adults.

If you are a parent, you know that keeping things clean at home can sometimes feel next to impossible — especially during seasons when we spend a lot of time indoors. Clutter, slippery floors and other tripping hazards can cause serious injury. Following are some tips for helping to reduce the risk of falls at home:

Bedrooms

A clean floor significantly reduces the risk for trips and falls. It's a cliché but, "everything has a place and everything in its place," is a great rule to live by when it comes to a clutter-free household.

- Throw away toys that are broken and give away toys that get little use.
- Develop a system for storing clothing and toys that is easy for kids to stick with. Basket and bin organizers are a simple way to keep belongings in order and off the floor.

Bathrooms

Bathrooms are full of falling hazards — especially slippery when wet.

- Install grab bars in the tub and shower, and use nonslip mats or grip strips to prevent slipping and sliding.
- Dry off before stepping out. It seems like common sense, but make sure your child is in the habit of drying off completely before stepping out of the shower.
- Talk to your kids about leaving the floor safe and dry for the next person before they leave the bathroom.

Common areas

Make an effort as a family to keep the clutter at bay by cleaning as you go.

- Create a designated area for shoes, coats and backpacks. Have children place these items in this space right when they walk through the door.
- Try not to leave laundry baskets at the bottom of the stairs or laptop cords stretched across the room.

Electronics

Video game, television and computers cords can pose a major tripping hazard in the home.

- Secure wires and cords along the wall whenever possible.
- If, for whatever reason, a cord cannot be near a wall, secure it with a cable cover.
- Assign a place for kids to stash controllers and other accessories when game time is over.

Be a Role Model

It's hard to ask your kids to keep things clutter free if you leave a trail behind you. Your child is far more likely to listen when you tell them not to leave their belongings lying around if you keep your things neatly in place as well.

childrenswi.org/safetycenter
safetycenter@chw.org

