

Safe Kids Wake County offers Window Safety Tips

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Safe Kids Wake County offers Window Safety Tips Raleigh, NC (October 13, 2008) —

Every year, nearly 4,000 kids — mostly toddlers — fall out of windows; 28 percent require a hospital stay, and about a dozen die. Safe Kids Wake County strongly recommends window guards on all windows above the first floor, preferably guards equipped with an emergency release device in case of fire. “A screen is not a safety device,” says Sylvia Scholl, Safe Kids Wake County coordinator. “It’s designed to keep insects out, not to keep children in. Proper safety guards on windows save lives.” Window guards were shown to reduce fatal falls by up to 35 percent as part of a pilot program in New York City. “In an apartment in a high-rise building, window guards should be considered essential safety equipment,” says Sylvia Scholl. Still, no safety device can take the place of active adult supervision. Always keep an eye on kids around open windows. Toddlers have been known to fall out of windows open as little as five inches. Since the Fall Season has begun and windows are more frequently open, Safe Kids Wake County reminds parents and caregivers:

- Keep windows locked when they’re closed, and keep furniture away from windows so kids can’t climb to the ledge.

- If you have double-hung windows — the kind that can open down from the top as well as up from the bottom — it is generally safer to open the top pane, but growing kids may have enough strength, dexterity and curiosity to open the bottom pane. Don’t assume an unlocked window is childproof.

- Never try to move a child who appears to be seriously injured after a fall — call 911 and let trained medical personnel move the child with proper precautions. (Of course, if a child is not breathing and you are trained in CPR, as all parents should be, follow your CPR training.)
- Tie the curtain pulls or blind cords out of reach — kids have been strangled while playing with dangling cords. Install safety tassels on the ends of the curtain pulls, or cut the loops, so a child is less likely to get trapped. For more information about window safety, falls and childproofing, call Safe Kids Wake County at (919) 350-8951 or visit www.usa.safekids.org. National Window Safety Week is an annual program of the National Safety Council; for more information, call (800) 621-7619 or visit www.nsc.org/aware/window. Safe Kids Wake County works to prevent accidental childhood injury, the leading killer of children 14 and under. Safe Kids Wake County is a member of Safe Kids Worldwide, a global network of organizations dedicated to preventing accidental injury. Safe Kids Wake County was founded in 1996 and is led by WakeMed Health & Hospitals.

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