

CHANGE TABLES

Falling is the cause of most injuries to children under 5 years of age (65%). A quarter of all injuries from nursery furniture, resulting in hospital admission, are to the head.

Babies are generally injured after rolling to the side and falling off. Falls occur in children as young as three months, and can result in concussion or fractures.

Injuries often occur when a carer turns or moves away from the table to get something. Carers often express surprise, e.g. "she has never rolled over before" or "he usually lies quietly".

Child Safety Practices

Supervise children constantly while on the change table. If you need to turn away, keep one hand on the baby. If you have to leave the room, take the child with you.

Ensure that the change table is positioned away from hazards.

If available, use restraints such as safety straps or harness systems to secure the child while on the table.

Prepare for the child's change before you place them on the change table. Always keep everything you need to change baby close at hand. If you run out of something, replace it immediately rather than waiting for baby's next change time.

Maintain a routine of steps to familiarise the child with the changing procedure. Talk to the child as you do each step to maintain their attention.

Safety Features

There is no Australian Standard for change tables, so look for the following features when purchasing:

- Some form of a roll off protection.
- Raised sides at 100mm (10cm) high.
- Concaved shape deep enough to stop the child rolling.
- Child restraint (waist strap to stop baby rolling)
- Strong construction.
- Safe, accessible storage area for items.
- Mechanism to stop the product collapsing.
- Manufacturer's name and instructions.

Alternative Methods for Changing a Child

On a soft and dry surface on the ground or floor using:

- a towel
- a portable foam change mat
- a blanket
- on a large bed

Kidsafe ACT
www.kidsafeact.com.au
(02) 62902244