

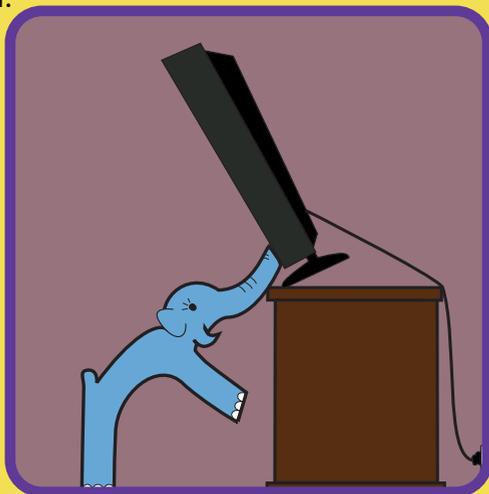
Falls are the leading cause of hospitalisation for children. They are naturally inquisitive but do not have the skills to identify hazardous objects and behaviours. However, choosing furniture carefully, securing heavy furniture, locking cupboards and drawers as well as keeping dangerous objects and areas out of reach and out of sight can prevent falls and blunt force trauma to children.

## Choose Furniture Carefully

Folding mechanisms in furniture and appliances can jam or trap fingers. Choose options that can't be easily operated by children and that don't fold up suddenly.

Check the gaps between the railings of gates, fences, banisters and cots to ensure that they are no greater than 10cm wide to prevent children from becoming trapped or falling through.

Make sure that automatic garage doors have a device fitted to stop them when an object is touched while closing. The switch should be out of reach of children.



## Beds

The number one cause of hospitalisation from falls in children under 12 months of age involve a bed. Bed sharing makes it difficult to apply safe sleeping guidelines, and babies can be injured by rolling out of bed or when adults roll on top of them.

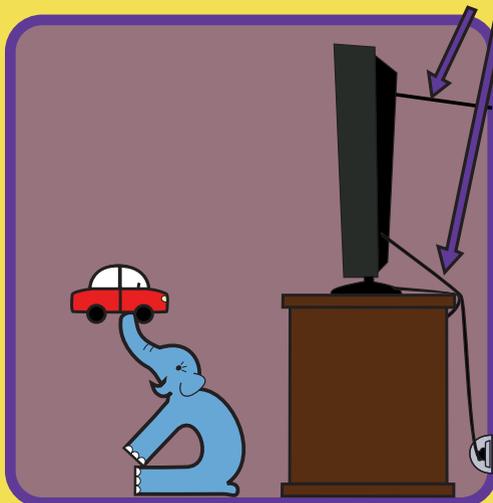
Where possible use trundle beds and other systems instead of bunk beds. If a bunk bed is the only option, try choose one that is built to the Australian Standard and do not allow young children on the top bunk.

## Secure Heavy Furniture

When toddlers and children use heavy items (such as televisions and cupboards) to stand up or climb on they can pull the furniture on top of themselves. Make sure that:

- You anchor free-standing furniture and appliances to the wall i.e. bookshelves and televisions
- Outdoor furniture, barbecues and heaters are stable and secure
- Garden statues and bird baths are cemented to the ground to prevent toppling

Secure the television to the wall or cabinet



## Nursery Furniture

Choose nursery furniture that meets Australian Standards.

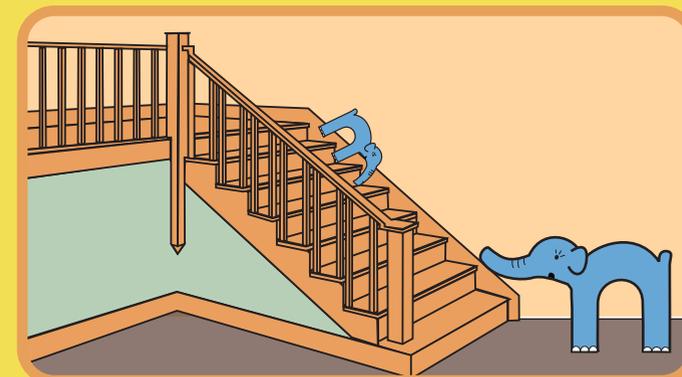
Do not leave children unattended on the change table, even to just turn away. Have everything you will need next to the change table and within reach. Use any safety straps provided, but even when using these stay within arms reach.

Children are frequently injured by trying to climb out of cots and falling, often head first. Be wary of objects in and near the cot that can be used as steps or that can help children climb.

Most injuries in highchairs are caused by children standing up or trying to climb out. Choose a highchair with a full 5-point harness and adjust the harness firmly each time you use the highchair and do not leave them unattended.

Where possible, keep nursery furniture such as highchairs, cots and change tables away from other furniture, to prevent children using these to push the furniture over or climb out. This includes keeping highchairs far enough away from the table to prevent toppling.

Ensure that you use and adjust the 5-point safety harness in your pram or stroller every time you use it. Make sure you use pram brakes when stopped, keep a hand on the pram at all times and use the safety tether strap on the handle of your pram.



## Lock Cupboards and Block Stairs

Drawers and cupboards that can be reached by children should be fitted with child-resistant or child-proof latches to prevent access and finger jams.

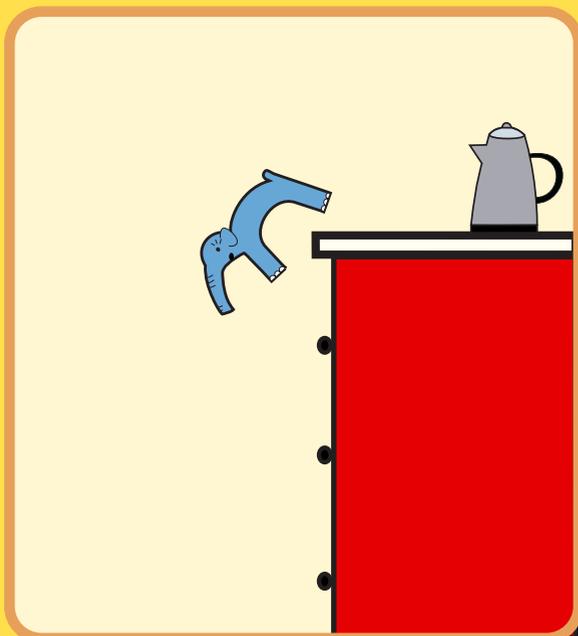
Fit a safety gate to the bottom and top of stairs to prevent children gaining access. Pressure mounted gates are not suitable as they are not strong or stable enough. Ensure all stairwells have a hand rail and side guards.

## Keep Out of Reach

Use high storage areas for items that pose the greatest danger to children. Low storage areas (e.g. under the kitchen sink, drawers) can be used for items that pose less of a risk.

Store lawn mowers, garden equipment, power tools and other equipment out of reach of children.

Keep surfaces such as kitchens and workshop benches clear and return items to their storage space immediately after use.



## How Accidents can be Prevented

### STEP 1 – Spot the hazards

Use this brochure and other Kidsafe resources to help you spot hazards in your home.

### STEP 2 – Decide how to deal with the hazard.

When dealing with hazards remember that:

- 1. Removing the hazard** is the best option where possible (i.e. keep kitchen appliances stored up high in cupboards to prevent them being pulled down on top of children)
- 2. Guard against the hazard** by installing and using gates and barriers (i.e. put a non-pressure mounted gate at the top and bottom of stairs)
- 3. Lock or block the hazard** by using safety products to restrict or remove access to the hazards (i.e. anchor the tv to the wall or tv cabinet)
- 4. Actively supervise within arms reach** when there are hazards you are unable to remove, guard or block against (i.e. when children are in high-chairs or on change tables)

Never depend on telling children not to do something.

### STEP 3 – Make the changes

Once you have decided how to deal with the hazard, do it straight away. You will feel more relaxed and children will be able to play more safely.

Combine any barriers you put in place with adult supervision and education.

# Falls and Blunt Force Trauma



## For more information

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