



Australian first – product guide to prevent kids from falling out windows

The Children's Hospital at Westmead is reminding parents that 'kids can't fly' in its new product safety guide aimed at preventing children falling from windows.

The campaign developed by the hospital's Kids Health department aims to end the steady rise in childhood window falls. Since 1998, 210 children have been admitted to the hospital with 113 cases the result of a window fall and the remaining 97 a result of a balcony fall.

Head Trauma Surgeon at the Children's Hospital at Westmead, Professor Danny Cass is extremely concerned about the sharp rise in admissions as a result of window and balcony falls saying, "just this year alone 10 children have been admitted after a window or balcony fall including a two year old who tragically suffered fatal head injuries" he said.

Professor Cass says that as the majority of window and balcony falls occur in a child's own home, I want to remind parents that children can fall from a window open more than 10cm even if a flyscreen is attached. "

"Many parents don't realise that traditional flyscreens do not stop children from falling out of windows."

The 'Kids Can't Fly Window Safety Product Guide' has been produced by Kids Health, The Children's Hospital at Westmead to assist parents to select safety devices for windows. The guide can be downloaded via:

www.kidshealth.chw.edu.au/projects/falls-windows-and-balconies

To prevent window falls:

- Fit window latches or locks to stop windows opening more than 10cm on all windows above the ground floor.
- Open windows from the top where possible.
- Keep beds and other furniture away from windows so that children cannot climb up to windows.
- Do not rely on a flyscreen to prevent a child falling out of a window.
- Supervise your child when they are near windows.

-Teach your child to play away from windows.

To prevent balcony falls:

-Balcony balustrades (railings) should be at least 1 metre high.

-Vertical bars in the balustrade should be no more than 10cm apart.

-Balustrades should not have any horizontal or near horizontal parts that would allow children to climb.

-Keep all furniture, pot plants and other climbable objects away from the balcony edge (be aware of light furniture that children could drag over to the edge).

-Always supervise children on balconies.

-Keep doors leading to balconies closed to prevent child access to them.

A 'Kids Can't Fly Window and Balcony Safety Checklist' and additional child window and balcony safety information and resources can be accessed via:

www.kidshealth.chw.edu.au/projects/falls-windows-and-balconies

Ends.

Professor Cass is available for interview

The Children's Hospital at Westmead

The Children's Hospital at Westmead is the highly respected, largest paediatric centre in NSW, providing excellent care for children from NSW, Australia and across the Pacific Rim. It forms part of the Sydney Children's Hospitals Network (Randwick and Westmead).

Established in 1880, The Children's Hospital at Westmead is a public Hospital and registered charity with 3,000 staff working in 150 departments. 70,000 sick children and their families are cared for each year in a family-focused, healing environment – this includes 29,000 inpatient admissions, 50,000 emergency department presentations and 735,000 outpatient occasions of service.

Funded by the NSW Government, The Children's Hospital at Westmead provides significant extra services aided by the generosity of individual and corporate donors. For more information visit www.chw.edu.au

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