

Hazard: Falling Between Levels

Identity of Hazard(s): This category covers falls from one level to another, inside or outside a dwelling, where the difference in levels is more than 12 in. It includes, for example, falls out of windows, falls from balconies or landings, falls from accessible roofs, into basement wells and over garden retaining walls.¹

Primary Health Outcome(s): Bruises, sprains, fractures, head and spinal injury¹

Health Alert! Falls are the leading cause of non-fatal injuries for all children ages 0 to 19. Every day, approximately 8,000 children are treated in U.S. emergency rooms for fall-related injuries. This adds up to almost 2.8 million children each year.²

Gain Control: Actions You Can Take^{1 2}

- Make your home safer. Use home safety devices, such as guards on windows that are above ground level, stair gates, and guard rails. These devices can help keep a busy, active child from taking a dangerous tumble.
 - Safety catches will reduce the likelihood of children being able to open a window unsupervised. Catches which restrict the distance a window can be opened to 4 inches should be fitted to windows above ground floor level to reduce the possibility of an accident involving a child.
 - Falls are least likely when window sills are at least 43 inches from the finished floor level.
 - In multi-story buildings there is a need for increased safety precautions to upper story windows, because of the increased risk posed by the more severe harms resulting from distance of fall.
 - Guarding (e.g. railings) should be provided to balconies and landings to prevent falls. It should be at least 43 inches high and designed and constructed so as to discourage children climbing and strong enough to support the weight of people leaning against it. There should be no openings to the guarding which would allow a 4 inch sphere to pass through.
-

Local Resources for Detroit Residents:

- If renting, call Detroit Buildings, Safety Engineering and Environmental Department (BSEED): (313) 628-2451
- Detroit Planning and Development Department (CDBG Home Repair Program): (313) 224-3461
 - Must be homeowner with homeowners insurance and be current on property taxes
- Young Detroit Builders (for low cost carpentry): (313) 964-2763

¹http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/documents/huddoc?id=operating_guidance_hhrs_v1.pdf

²<http://www.cdc.gov/SafeChild/Falls/index.html>