

# Data Brief

## Stop the Falls:

*An Initiative to Prevent and Decrease the Number of Window Falls in Children Living in Chicago.*

MAY 2018

### *Falls are the leading cause of non-fatal injuries for all children ages 0 to 19*

According to the National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, each day approximately 8,000 children are treated in United States emergency rooms for fall-related injuries.

To reduce the number of window fall-related injuries and deaths among Chicago children, in 2002 the Injury Free Coalition for Kids created the STOP THE FALLS coalition to engage in policy and program initiatives. The coalition consists of physicians and staff from hospitals in the city of Chicago--Lurie Children's Hospital, Stroger Hospital of Cook County, University of Chicago Medicine (Comer Children's Hospital), Mt. Sinai Hospital, and Rush University Medical Center--as well as members of the Illinois Department of Public Health and Chicago Department of Public Health, local architects, Master of Public Health students, and families of children who have been injured by window falls.

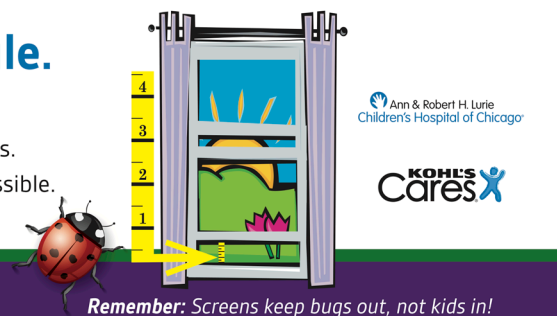
# STOP the Falls.

## Follow the 4-inch rule.

### *Small steps can save a child's life:*

- Never open windows more than 4 inches.
- Open windows from the top down if possible.
- Move furniture away from windows.

[playitsafewithkohls.org](http://playitsafewithkohls.org)

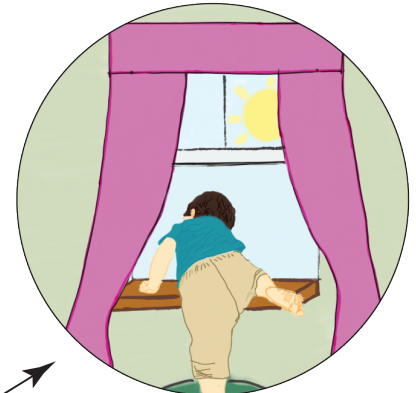


STOP THE FALLS is an education and product distribution campaign. Educational materials on window fall prevention are distributed regularly through brochures and annually through a robust public transportation campaign including signs, television and radio announcements, health fairs, and press conferences. Aldermen are provided posters and brochures to distribute within their communities and are alerted if a window fall occurs in their jurisdiction. Efforts to make buildings safer include educating property managers on window safety, distributing sash stops/stoppers, and offering window guards at reduced prices. Partnerships with buildings overseen by the Department of Housing and Urban Development allow for an even wider distribution of prevention information and sash stops.

## FINDINGS

Demographic data collected from 2007-2016 for all fall victims includes-- sex, age (less than 5 years), season and day of the week in which the injury occurred, type of injury and location of injury on the body (Table 1). Overall, males comprised 69% of the cases. The location of injury on the body was divided into 3 target areas: head, upper body, and lower body. The most common types of injuries, categorized according to National Electronic Injury Surveillance System (NEISS) criteria, included contusions/abrasions, fractures, and concussions.

**61%** | of cases occurred in the summer



**2<sup>nd</sup>** | story (11-20 ft.), had the highest overall frequency of window falls

**HEAD** | was the most common location of injury

**69%** | of victims were male

**TABLE 1.** Demographics of Window Fall Victims (N=107), 2007-2016.

Age (years), n(%)	
≤1	25 (23.4)
2	35 (32.7)
3	30 (28.0)
4	17 (15.9)
Day of the week of injury, n(%)	
Sunday	16 (15.0)
Monday	12 (11.2)
Tuesday	12 (11.2)
Wednesday	13 (12.1)
Thursday	19 (17.8)
Friday	17 (15.9)
Saturday	18 (16.8)
Type of Injury (NEISS), n	
Contusion/Abrasion	40
Fracture	35
Laceration	9
Concussion	13
Hematoma	12
Hemorrhage	6
Other (burn, dislocation, strain)	3

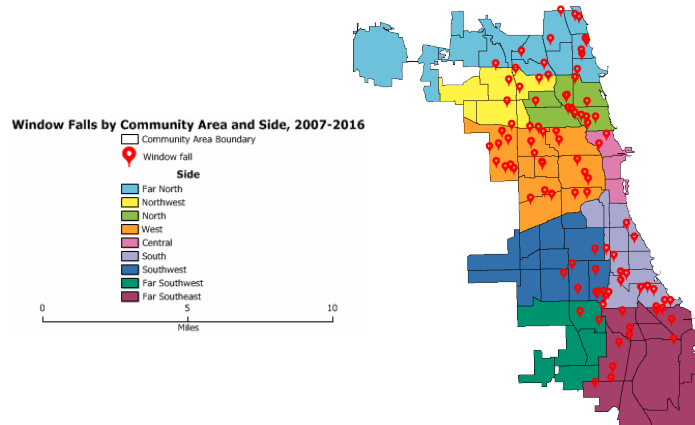


## FINDINGS

**FIGURE 1.** Window Falls by Chicago Community Area, 2007-2016.

The location of where the window fall took place was mapped by Chicago community area (Figure 1).

*Window falls occurred throughout Chicago Community Areas*



**FIGURE 2.** Window fall rates per 100,000 by year, 2002 to 2016.

Baseline data on the number of window falls was collected in 2001 prior to the implementation of the STOP THE FALLS campaign.

Demographics and circumstances surrounding each window fall were described and a

Poisson generalized estimating equations model with auto-regressive correlation structures was conducted to assess model fit.

Over time, there has been a **statistically significant** decrease in the rate of window falls per

100,000 people (Figure 2). The STOP THE FALLS campaign has likely contributed to the decrease in window falls.

*Significant decrease in window falls for Chicago children <5 years after start of the STOP THE FALLS campaign.*



*Prior to the start of the campaign, in 2001 there were 30 window falls in. By 2016, window falls had decreased by more than 50%.*

# TYPES of WINDOW INSTALLATIONS

The installation of window guards, window sash stops, and/or window stoppers to keep window openings less than 4-inches can prevent window falls among for young children. These life-saving injury prevention devices are relatively inexpensive and available at local hardware stores.

Super Stopper

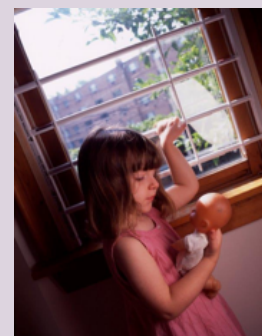


Do not open your windows wider than the 4" jar opener (left).

Window Sash Stop

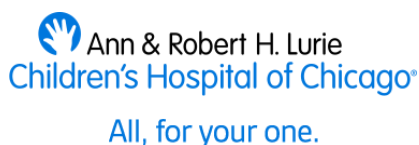


Window Guard



## RESOURCES

For more window safety tips and recommendations, please visit the following sites:



### [Ann & Robert H Lurie Children's Hospital of Chicago](#)

Each year, thousands of children are seriously injured or killed by falling out of windows. Lurie Children's and Kohl's have joined together to help stop the falls in Chicago. See our advice for making sure your windows are safe and preventing falls.



### [Injury Free Coalition for Kids](#)

The Injury Free Coalition for Kids is among the country's most effective injury prevention programs. We are a national program developed with funding from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation comprised of hospital-based, community-oriented programs whose efforts are anchored in research, education and advocacy.



### [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: Fall Prevention](#)

We all want to keep our children safe and secure and help them live to their full potential. Knowing how to prevent leading causes of child injury, like falls, is a step toward this goal.



### [Safe Kids Worldwide: Fall Prevention](#)

Safe Kids works to educate and spread awareness to parents and caregivers on the importance of creating a safe environment free of hazards that could contribute to serious fall-related injuries or death.

**For more information on the Injury Prevention & Research Center, please contact:**

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