



Live Well, Work Well

Health and wellness tips for your work, home and life—brought to you by the insurance specialists at Touchstone Consulting Group

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CHILDREN'S HEALTH: FURNITURE SAFETY

A home might seem like one of the safest places for a child to play, but household furniture carries many unforeseen dangers, especially for young children.

Deadly Consequences

A child is killed every two weeks due to falling furniture in the United States—70 percent are caused by TVs alone. Injuries are even higher, with over 25,000 per year. Preventive measures should be taken to ensure children are safe at home.

Preemptive Protection

Parents will often “baby-proof” their house when expecting a child. This typically includes rounding off sharp table corners and installing baby locks. Surprisingly, properly anchoring heavy furniture is often overlooked.

Preventing Tip-overs

- Use sturdy furniture to hold your TV and other appliances.
- Mount flat-screen TVs whenever possible.
- Closely follow assembly instructions for TVs and furniture.
- Secure top-heavy furniture with anti-tip brackets.
- Remove enticing objects from the top of heavy furniture to discourage children from climbing.

Furniture Tip-over Myths

- **Heavy furniture will not fall over.** This is a common misconception. Even base-heavy furniture can be hazardous when children open the drawers and climb on them.
- **Rooms where children aren't allowed don't need precautions.** Even a brief opportunity to wander in a

bedroom or office can end in tragedy if the child plays on heavy furniture. Tip-overs happen quickly, and it is dangerous to leave a room unprotected.

- **Latched dresser drawers are sufficient.** Latches made for cabinets are not a substitute for an anchor. Young children can figure out the latches or even open drawers wide enough to begin climbing.
- **Older children know they shouldn't climb.** Children aren't masters of reason and can be compelled to climb if they see a toy sitting on top of a dresser. Additionally, children do not commonly think of shelves or dressers as dangerous, so climbing seems low-risk.
- **Sturdy furniture is safe.** No matter the weight, no matter how sturdy, all furniture can pose a risk if not properly anchored. The quality of furniture does not lower the danger.

Remember, taking a few extra precautions now can save a child's life in the future. Play it safe and anchor heavy furniture.