**Window Safety Task Force of the National Safety Council**

**2015 Window Safety Week Media Kit**

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9. **Why Window Safety Week is so important**

Windows are one of the few things we enjoy both inside and outside our homes and businesses. Windows serve an important role in our lives by letting in natural light and fresh air when open, and by keeping out the elements when they’re closed. Some windows ─ larger units called egress or emergency escape and rescue windows ─ can take on an even greater role if we need to escape quickly in the event of a fire or other emergency, or if rescue workers need to enter through them in emergency situations.

**First full week in April recognized as Window Safety Week**

Recognizing the essential role windows play in the lives of consumers today, the Window Safety Task Force of the National Safety Council proudly observes Window Safety Week each year during the first full week in April. Our goal is to encourage caregivers to take steps to observe window safety throughout the year.

This kit contains materials you can use to promote window safety awareness in your own community, club or service organization, company or with the media. Developed by the Window Safety Task Force of the National Safety Council, you’ll find these helpful tools and tips of use year-round.

1. **About the Window Safety Task Force**

The Window Safety Task Force of the National Safety Council was formed in 1997 to promote greater awareness of window safety. Members include representatives of the American Architectural Manufacturers Association (AAMA), the Window & Door Manufacturers Association (WDMA) and the Screen Manufacturers Association (SMA) in cooperation with the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB) and other organizations, as well as leading manufacturers of windows, doors and screens.

**About Window Safety Week**

This observance is held annually during the first full week in April. Window Safety Week is designed to heighten the awareness of what parents and caregivers should do to help keep their family safer from the risks of window falls or injuries in the home, and how they can use their windows for emergency escape and rescue purposes. Additional safety education occurs throughout the year.

**Purpose**

The Window Safety Task Force of the National Safety Council strives to provide educational information and heighten safety awareness to help parents and caregivers take the necessary actions to prevent window falls and to understand the vital role windows and doors play in fire safety.

**Key Elements**

The task force emphasizes the life-saving role that doors and windows play as the primary exits and secondary means of escape in the event of a fire or other emergency. Doors serve as exits, while windows provide an alternate means of escape.

The group also reminds people that insect screens are designed to keep insect pests out, rather than hold a child's weight. Therefore, children should not be left unattended around open windows, with or without an insect screen in place. In homes with young children, for greater safety, windows within a child’s reach should remain closed and locked. When double hung windows are available, the bottom sash should remain closed, while the top sash is opened to provide ventilation.

In addition, the task force reminds parents and caregivers to avoid placing furniture under windows. Young children can use furniture to climb to and potentially fall from an open window. Responsible adult supervision at all times is an essential element in keeping children safe around open windows and doors.

**Participants**

Working in conjunction with the National Safety Council, trade associations and their representatives from the window, door and screen manufacturing industries voluntarily team up to help educate and inform the public of the importance of taking proactive measures to enhance safety in the home. The team focused on safety issues is a joint effort of the membership of the American Architectural Manufacturers Association (AAMA), the Window & Door Manufacturers Association (WDMA) and the Screen Manufacturers Association (SMA), in cooperation with the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB), to promote safety awareness.

1. **What you can do to help promote window safety**

No matter where you live or what you do, whether you own or rent your home, live in a townhouse, apartment or standalone home in the city or the country, or are visiting in the home of another person, we all play a vital role in promoting window safety. Window safety starts with learning the actions you can take to observe window safety and encouraging others to do so. Responsible adults are the key to window safety. There’s no substitute for adult supervision when it comes to keeping children safe.

**Here’s how to get started…**

Window safety is a topic that relates to people of all ages. So what can you do to help? Consider ways you can share this information with your friends, family, club and community members, co-workers and media representatives. Taking a few minutes now to review and share the information in this kit can help save lives by conveying important safety information.

1. **Window safety tips**

* Set and enforce rules about keeping children's play away from windows or patio doors. Falling through an insect screen, open window or glass can be fatal or cause serious injury.
* Keep furniture - or anything children can climb - away from windows. Children may use such objects as a climbing aid.
* Keep your windows closed and locked when children are around. When opening windows for ventilation, open windows that a child cannot reach, or in the case of a double hung window, open the top sash only.
* The degree of injury sustained from a window fall can be affected by the surface on which the victim falls. Shrubs and soft edging like wood chips or grass beneath windows may lessen the impact if a fall does occur.
* When performing spring repairs, take care to make sure that your windows are not painted or nailed shut. You must be able to open them to escape in an emergency.
* Do not install window air conditioners in windows that may be needed for escape or rescue in an emergency. The air conditioning unit could block or impede escape through the window. Always be sure that you have at least one window in each sleeping and living area that meets escape and rescue requirements.
* Install building code-compliant devices designed to limit how far the window will open or install building code-compliant window guards. Code-compliant opening control devices and guards can help prevent a child’s fall but are also equipped with release devices to escape in case of a fire or other emergency. Check the manufacturer’s product information to make sure they comply with the ASTM F2090 standard for these types of devices.
* Some homes may have window guards, security bars, grilles or grates already covering their windows. Those windows are useless in an emergency if the devices on them do not have a functioning release mechanism. Time is critical when escaping a fire. Take time to update these devices to make sure they comply with industry standards and have appropriate release mechanisms.
* Doors serve as the primary exits. Windows provide a secondary means of escape from a burning home or for other emergencies. Determine your family's emergency escape plan and practice it. Remember that children may have to rely on a window to escape in a fire. Help them learn to safely use a window under these circumstances.

1. **News release on window safety as it relates to Window Safety Week- for consumer audiences**

**Observe Window Safety Year-Round**

**Eight Tips from the National Safety Council for Window Safety Week, April 5-11**

As spring arrives, the Window Safety Task Force of the National Safety Council encourages everyone to recognize the importance of practicing window safety year-round. Window Safety Week is observed April 5-11. However, open windows can be dangerous any time of year for young children who are not properly supervised.

Each year, the Window Safety Task Force of the National Safety Council takes the first full week in April to educate on the importance of practicing window safety year-round. National Window Safety Week is designed to increase awareness on helping to prevent window falls and the proper use of windows for emergency escape purposes.

Falls from a window can result in serious injury or death and pose an especially dangerous threat for children. About [eight children under age five die each year from falling out a window](http://www.cpsc.gov/en/Newsroom/News-Releases/2000/New-Standards-for-Window-Guards-To-Help-Protect-Children-From-Falls-/), and more than 3,300 are injured seriously enough to go to the hospital.\*

“It only takes seconds for a preventable window fall to occur,” said Amy Artuso, program manager for the National Safety Council. “To avoid these needless tragedies, it is very important for parents and caregivers to take steps to prevent home falls.”

To protect children, the Window Safety Task Force offers the following tips:

1. When young children are around, keep windows closed and locked.
2. When opening a window for ventilation, use those located out of a child’s reach. For example, the upper sash of a double hung window.
3. Avoid placing furniture near windows to prevent young children from climbing.
4. Don’t allow children to jump on beds or other furniture to help reduce potential falls.
5. Don’t rely on insect screens to prevent a window fall. Insect screens are designed to keep bugs out, not to keep children in the home.
6. Supervise children to keep child’s play away from windows, balconies or patio doors. Keep play in the center of a room, if possible.
7. Install code-compliant devices designed to limit how far a window will open or window guards (with quick-release mechanisms in case of fire) to help prevent a fall.
8. Teach your child how to safely use a window to escape during an emergency, such as a fire.

Visit [www.aamanet.org/windowsafety](http://www.aamanet.org/windowsafety) to learn more.

*\* According to Safe Kids Worldwide’s 2015 Report to the Nation: Protecting Children in Your Home*

<http://www.safekids.org/research-report/report-nation-protecting-children-your-home-february-2015>

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**About the National Safety Council**

Founded in 1913 and chartered by Congress, the National Safety Council, [nsc.org](http://nsc.org), is a nonprofit organization whose mission is to save lives by preventing injuries and deaths at work, in homes and communities, and on the roads through leadership, research, education and advocacy. NSC advances this mission by partnering with businesses, government agencies, elected officials and the public in areas that can make the most impact – distracted driving, teen driving, workplace safety, prescription drug overdoses and Safe Communities.

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1. **News release on window safety as it relates to fire safety - for consumer audiences**

**Plan and Practice Fire Escape Drills**

***Window Safety Task Force Offers Seven Tips***

Though many of us practice fire drills in the workplace, most deaths and injuries from fire each year are the result of home fires. When it comes to a fire emergency, the Window Safety Task Force of the National Safety Council reminds everyone that doors and windows are the primary and secondary escape routes.

**How prepared are you to escape safely in a fire?**

“In the event of fire or other emergencies, you may have little time to escape safely,” says (insert your name/title). “It is essential to develop and test an escape plan at least twice a year with everyone in your home, including individuals with special needs and pets.”

**Consider these seven safety tips**

1. Home fire escape plan should include two exits from every room in your home, through a door and a window.
2. Conducting drills during the day and at night, as many home fires occur at night.
3. Keep windows closed and locked when not in use for ventilation. Practice opening and closing windows that may be designated as emergency exits.
4. If you must exit through a window in an emergency, first attempt to open it, rather than break the glass.
5. If your home features windows with impact-resistant glass, like that used in some hurricane-prone areas, you must either open the window to escape or choose another exit route.
6. If you are remodeling your home, check with local code officials to understand emergency escape and rescue (egress) building code requirements in your area. Egress windows are those designated by code as large enough for you to escape through or for rescue workers to enter in emergency situations.
7. If you equip windows in your home with window guards or fall prevention devices, consult your local building code official to determine proper placement.

Visit [www.aamanet.org/windowsafetytaskforce](http://www.aamanet.org/windowsafetytaskforce) to learn more.

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1. **Social media information**

**Social Media for Window Safety Week**

**Twitter and Hashtag Information**

* Twitter handle: @WindowSafetyTF
* Please use these hashtags
* #WindowSafety
* #WindowSafetyWeek (between April 5-11)

**Sample Tweets**

1. April 5-11 is #WindowSafetyWeek. Raise awareness today and prevent window falls tomorrow.
2. Follow @WindowSafetyTF to raise awareness and help prevent window falls. #WindowSafety
3. The @WindowSafetyTF works to inform homeowners on how to protect their families from window falls. #WindowSafety

**For More Information**

Contact [socialmedia@aamanet.org](mailto:socialmedia@aamanet.org).

1. **Window Safety Task Force Contacts**

For more information,visit the National Safety Council website at [www.aamanet.org/windowsafety](http://www.aamanet.org/windowsafety)

Or contact these Window Safety Task Force representatives.

[**Angela**](mailto:jcharletta@aamanet.org) **Dickson, Task Force Chair**  
American Architectural Manufacturers Association (AAMA)  
1827 Walden Office Square  
Suite 550  
Schaumburg, IL 60173-4268  
Phone: 714-596-3574

Email: [adickson@aamanet.org](mailto:adickson@aamanet.org)

**Jeff Inks, Past Task Force Chair**

Window & Door Manufacturers Association (WDMA)  
2025 M Street, NW  
Suite 800

Washington, DC 20036

Phone: 202-367-1217

Email: [jinks@wdma.com](mailto:jinks@wdma.com)

**Tammy Washington**National Safety Council  
1121 Spring Lake Drive  
Itasca, IL 60143-3201  
Phone: 630-775-2227

Email: [tammy.washington@nsc.org](mailto:tammy.washington@nsc.org)