

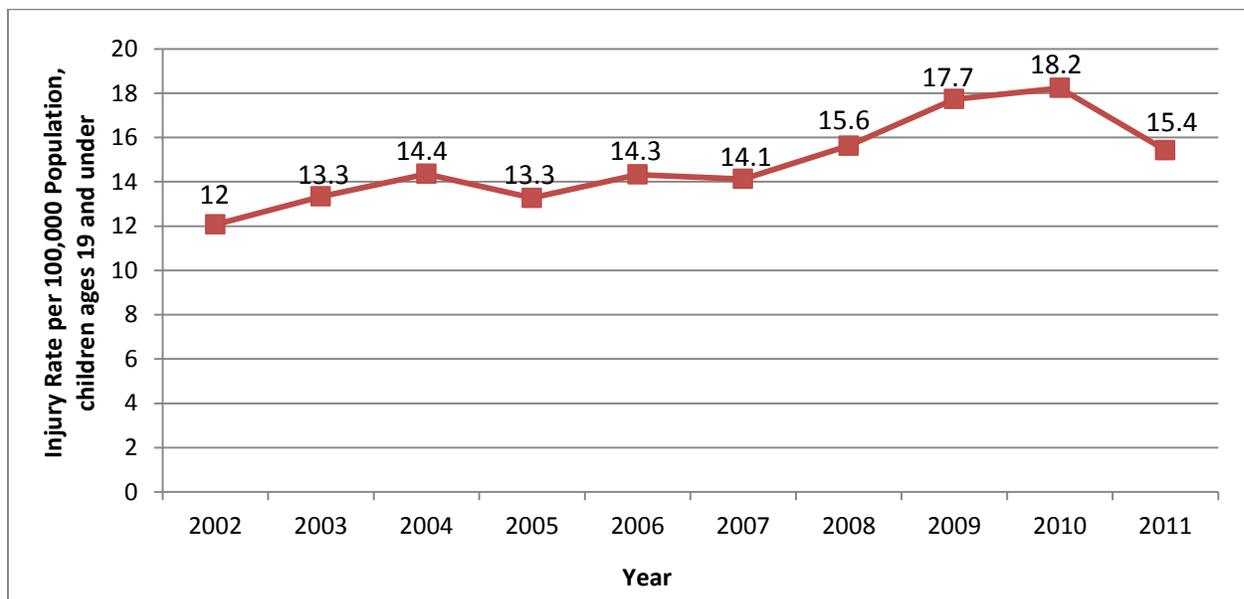


USA Facts: Television and Furniture Tip-Over Safety

Key Facts

- Every three weeks between 2000 and 2010, a child died from a television tip-over.¹
- Every 45 minutes, or less than the length of a Sesame Street episode, a child is sent to the emergency department.²
- The estimated number of emergency room visits for kids aged 19 and under has increased 31% over the last decade, from 9,800 in 2002 to 12,800 in 2011.²
- Between 2000 and 2010, 245 children died from televisions, furniture and appliances tipping over on them. Of these, 169 children (69%) died from television tip-overs.¹
- Between 2008 and 2010, there were an estimated 25,300 injuries annually to children aged 17 and under from televisions, furniture and appliances tipping over on them. 54% (13,700) of these injuries involved a television.¹
- In 2011, an estimated 12,800 kids aged 19 and under were seen in emergency departments for injuries caused by televisions tipping over. Over the last decade, an estimated 122,300 children were seen in emergency departments for these injuries.²
- The overall rate of these injuries has increased from 12 injuries per 100,000 children in 2002 to 15.4 injuries per 100,000 children in 2011.²

**2002-2011 Rate of Television Tip-Over-Related Injuries Among Children
(United States, Ages 19 and Under)²**



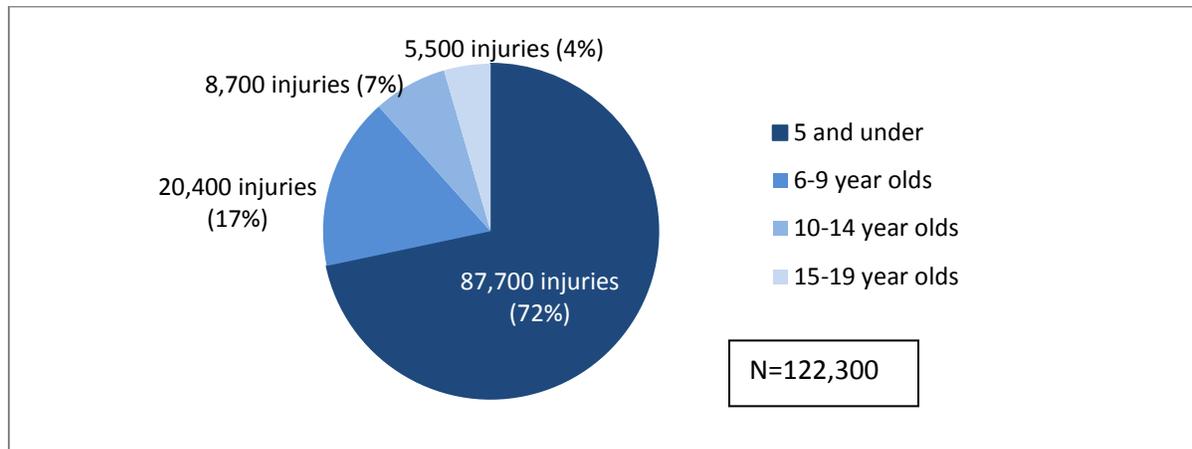
Where, When and How

- TV sets are often placed on high, unstable or narrow-based platforms. Outmoded cathode ray tube (CRT) TVs have centers of gravity weighted near the front of the set, while modern flat screen sets have high centers of gravity balanced on narrow bases. With TV sets reaching over 80 kg (176 pounds) in weight, the possible consequences of a tip-over could be serious, if not fatal.³
- A study in Canada found that injuries were more common on weekdays (66%), and half of the injuries occurred in the early evening between 4:00 PM and 8:00 PM. Most injuries occurred in the home environment, most commonly in the living room, with a very small minority in educational or recreational spaces.⁴
- The most common (70.2%) mechanism of injury among all age groups was a fall/tip-over of furniture with no stated impetus for the fall (70.2%). Pulling the furniture onto oneself (18.2%) was the second most frequent mechanism among children of all age groups and was especially common among children ≤4 years, accounting for 24.4% of the injuries in that age group.⁵
- Only 28% of parents report that they secure their flat screen televisions to the wall, and only 2% of parents with a CRT television secure it to the wall.²
- 26% of parents report that they had not mounted their flat screen televisions because they were worried about damaging the wall, and 22% did not think that it mattered.²
- The increase in digital television sales from 1998 to 2007 correlates very strongly with the increase in television-related injuries in the same period.⁶
- The top five injuries caused by television tip-overs that are seen in emergency departments among children aged 19 and under are bruises and scrapes (53,750 injuries from 2002 to 2011), internal organ injuries (23,650), fractures (15,200), lacerations (13,400) and other/not stated (5,700).²
- There has been an increase in the number of injuries to the head in children aged 5 and under between 2002 and 2011, from an estimated 1,950 injuries in 2002 to 4,220 injuries in 2011.²
- Because of its weight, a 36-inch CRT television falling three feet creates the same momentum as a 1-year-old child falling 10 stories.⁷

Who

- 7 out of 10 (72%) of children who are injured by a TV tipping over are 5 years old or younger.²

2002-2011 Television Tip-Over-Related Injuries Among Children, by Age (United States, Ages 19 and Under)²



- 9 out of 10 (88%) of children who require hospitalization for an injury caused by a TV tipping over are 5 years old or younger.²

Proven Interventions

- Parents can minimize risks to children by strapping televisions to a stable stand and/or wall, and attaching large furniture, such as dressers or bookshelves, to the wall using safety straps, L-brackets, or other appropriate attachment devices. Safety straps are available that do not require drilling holes in furniture, and can secure items up to 100 lbs.⁵
- Parents can help prevent furniture climbing-related injuries by removing desired items, such as toys or remote controls, from high places, such as the top of the television or a shelf.⁵
- Manufacturers and parents can reduce the risk of dresser-related tip-over injuries by installing stops on all drawers to prevent them from being pulled more than two-thirds of the way out.⁵

Costs

- The average cost of an emergency department visit for an unintentional injury to a child aged 19 and under is \$682.⁸
- Approximately \$8.34 million is spent in medical costs each year to treat children aged 19 and under in emergency departments for injuries from TV tip-overs.^{2,8}

Laws and Regulations

- In 2007, legislation was introduced at the federal level to help prevent furniture tip-over-related injuries to children. This bill would have required certain furniture being sold to be equipped with anchoring devices. This bill did not get passed into law.⁵

Suggested Citation: Safe Kids Worldwide (SKW). USA Facts: Television and Furniture Tip-Over Safety. Washington (DC): SKW, 2012.

¹Gipson K, Suchy A. *Instability of Television, Furniture, and Appliances: Estimated Injuries and Reported Fatalities, 2011 Report*. Consumer Product Safety Commission, September 2011. Available at <http://www.cpsc.gov/library/foia/foia11/os/tipover2011.pdf>. Accessed 10 November 2012.

²Ferguson RW, Mickalide AD. *A Report to the Nation on Home Safety: The Dangers of TV Tip-Overs*. Washington, DC: Safe Kids Worldwide, December 2012.

³Marnewick J, Dansey R, Morreau P, Hamill J. Television tip-overs: the Starship Children's Hospital experience and literature review. *Injury*. 2011;42(5):534-8.

⁴Mills J, Grushka J, Butterworth S. Television-related injuries in children--the British Columbia experience. *J Pediatr Surg*. 2012;47(5):991-5.

⁵Gottesman BL, McKenzie LB, Conner KA, Smith GA. Injuries From furniture tip-overs among children and adolescents in the United States, 1990-2007. *Clin Pediatr (Phila)*. 2009;48(8):851-8.

⁶Murray KJ, Griffin R, Rue LW 3rd, McGwin G Jr. Recent trends in television tip over-related injuries among children aged 0-9 years. *Inj Prev*. 2009;15(4):240-3.

⁷Bernard PA, Johnston C, Curtis SE, King WD. Toppled television sets cause significant pediatric morbidity and mortality. *Pediatrics*. 1998;102(3):E32.

⁸Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. WISQARS Cost of Injury Reports, 2005. Available at <http://www.cdc.gov/injury/wisqars/cost/cost-learn-more.html>. Accessed 14 November 2012.