

HOME INJURY

Unintentional injury is the leading cause of death among children ages 14 and under. In 2001, 5,526 children died from unintentional injuries; approximately 45 percent of these deaths occurred in and around the home. Unintentional home injury deaths to children are caused primarily by fire and burns, suffocation, drowning, firearms, falls, choking and poisoning. Young children are at increased risk from unintentional injuries in the home because it is where they spend most of their time. As children grow older, they spend less time in the home and the incidence of home injury death diminishes. The percentage of nonfatal unintentional injuries that occur in the home also decreases with a child's age.

DEATHS IN THE HOME

In 2002, approximately 2,100 children ages 14 and under died in the home from unintentional injuries. More than 70 percent of these deaths occurred among children ages 4 and under.

Fire and flame burns

- In 2002, at least 330 children ages 14 and under died from fires and burns in the home. Of these children, 45 percent were ages 4 and under.

Suffocation

- In 2002, an estimated 620 children ages 14 and under suffocated in the home. Of these children, nearly 90 percent were ages 4 and under.

Drowning

- In 2002, an estimated 420 children ages 14 and under drowned in or around the home. Of these children, more than 80 percent were ages 4 and under.

Choking

- In 2002, an estimated 160 children ages 14 and under choked to death in the home. Of these children, nearly 90 percent were ages 4 and under.

Falls

- In 2002, an estimated 20 children ages 14 and under died as the result of falls in the home. Of these deaths, 10 were children ages 4 and under.

Poisoning

- In 2002, an estimated 50 children ages 14 and under died from poisonings in the home.

Unintentional firearm injury

- In 2002, an estimated 80 children ages 14 and under died from unintentional shootings in the home. Of these children, nearly 75 percent were ages 5 to 14.

INJURIES IN THE HOME

Each year, more than 4.5 million children ages 14 and under are treated in hospital emergency departments for injuries incurred in the home. Nearly two-thirds of all injuries among children under age 3 requiring emergency department visits occur in the home. Conversely, one-third of the injuries among children ages 12 to 14 requiring emergency department visits occur in the home.

Suggested Citation: National SAFE KIDS Campaign (NSKC). Home Injury Fact Sheet. Washington (DC): NSKC, 2004.