

## **The Tipping Point: TVs, Furniture, and Appliances**

Most parents understand basic childproofing and protect their kids from obvious hazards, such as by using a car seat, installing gates on stairs, latches on cabinets, and putting covers on electrical outlets. But many parents are unaware of the deadly danger of this hidden hazard “tipping points” of TVs, furniture, and appliances. Sylvia Santiago, of West Haven, Connecticut, who lost her two-year old daughter in 2008, “You may think your home is safe, but everyday things like a television can hurt your child. I was right there and it happened.” Tipping Points (video clip): [www.cpsc.gov/cpsc/pub/prerel/prhtml09/09345.html](http://www.cpsc.gov/cpsc/pub/prerel/prhtml09/09345.html)

Typically, children climb onto, fall against, or pull themselves up on television stands, shelves, bookcases, dressers, desks, chests, and appliances that tip-over which cause a child to suffer traumatic and sometimes fatal injuries. Injuries from falling televisions have been increasing; you might think that the rise in injuries from falling TVs is simply because more people have large screen TVs, a study by Dr. Todd Maxson found that most of the televisions involved had just 20 to 30 inch screens. The fact that many newer TVs are ‘front heavy’ and easy to tip-over, may be the reason for the rise in injuries.

The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) estimates that in 2006 16,300 children 5 years old and younger were treated in U.S. hospitals emergency rooms because of injuries associated with TV, furniture, and appliance tip-overs. Additionally, between 2000 and 2006, CPSC staff received reports of 134 tip-over related deaths involving this same age group. Tip Over Dangers: [www.cpsc.gov/cpsc/pub/prerel/prhtml09/09345.html](http://www.cpsc.gov/cpsc/pub/prerel/prhtml09/09345.html)

Recent revisions to the voluntary safety standards for clothing storage units provide for the inclusion of warning labels and additional hardware to secure furniture to the floor or wall.

To prevent tip-over injuries consider these inexpensive suggestions:

- Furniture should be stable on its own. For added security, anchor chests or dressers, TV stands, bookcases and entertainment units to the floor or attach them to a wall.
- Place TVs on a sturdy, low-rise base. Avoid flimsy shelves.
- Push the TV as far back as possible.
- Place electrical cords out of a child’s reach, and teach kids not to play with them.
- Keep remote control and other attractive items off the TV stand so kids won’t be tempted to grab for them and risk knocking the TV over.
- Make sure free-standing ranges and stoves are installed with anti-tip brackets.

For additional safety information go to [www.palmbayflorida.org](http://www.palmbayflorida.org)

Click on City Departments (Fire-Rescue)

Scroll down to Safety in your Home 24/7

or visit [www.cpsc.gov](http://www.cpsc.gov)

Sources:

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