***Newsletter/Blog Article***

Beyond Baby Gates: Safety on the Stairs Starts with You

When it comes to prepping a home for children, what we think of as common knowledge isn’t always as common as we might think. Example: the stairs. Most people think they know what to do about the stairs when kids arrive, but data show that they really don’t: in the U.S., a child is treated in an emergency department for a stair-related injury *every six minutes*.

While many of these injuries happen to toddlers struggling through the task of learning to walk, in other cases, it’s a parent or caregiver who falls while carrying a child up or down stairs. In fact, for children younger than 12 months, one in every four stair-related injuries occurs when a parent or caregiver falls or drops the child they are carrying.

It’s easy to see how it happens: if you’re taking your child upstairs for a nap, you might grab the pair of shoes that’s sitting by the steps so you don’t have to make two trips. Or you’re bringing in the groceries, and you have your baby in one arm and a handful of bags on the other. You trip or slip on the steps, and with both your hands occupied, you have no way to grab a railing to prevent a fall. The force of an adult falling onto a child is strong enough to break bones and cause other serious injuries, so it’s not a hazard to take lightly.

Fortunately, there’s an easy fix for this danger: leave the extra items like laundry and the groceries for another trip. When you’re going up or down steps, carry only your child, leaving one hand free to hold on to the railing. It might be less convenient, but it’s much safer for everyone.