

## HIGH WINDOW TREATMENT

### High windows a threat to children, rescuers warn:

Plano Star Courier by: Shannon Womble

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Dan Burks, Plano Fire Apparatus Operator and paramedic, said he always will remember administering emergency treatment to a young child who had tumbled from a second-story window.

"It is the kind of thing that sticks with you," the Plano Fire Department veteran said. "The first time we saw this was like eight or nine months ago -- and then it happened twice in a row."

Burks and other fire department officials are concerned about the recent number of children who have accidentally fallen from high windows and fear it could easily happen again.

On May 3, emergency personnel responded to a call for a child who had fallen from a window onto a grassy lawn.

Two weeks later, paramedics treated a 3-year-old female who had fallen from a second-story window and landed on a stone porch patio.

"We transported her to Columbia Medical Center of Plano with life-threatening injuries," said Monique Cardwell, fire department spokeswoman. "This is something that just sticks out in your mind. Parents need to be careful."

May 31, just four days after the 3-year-old fell, emergency personnel were called to a home where a 4-year-old boy plunged from a window onto a concrete patio.

Cardwell said the boy had been released from doctors' care after treatment at two local hospitals. The parents of the children declined to comment. Police did not file charges in the incidents.

"Kids are just going right through the screens," she said. "This kind of problem is happening with the new style of window -- those that are a foot off the floor."

Paramedics say children who fall out of windows most commonly receive very serious head injuries.



"Parents need to remember that screens are flimsy," Burks said. "They are designed to keep insects out and not to keep kids in."

He did suggest keeping second-story windows closed when young children are upstairs, or building some kind of sturdy barricade across the lower part of the screen if windows must be opened.

"The injuries are severe (when a child falls out of a window)," Cardwell said. Parents need to be aware that this kind of thing can happen."

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