

**Title of Intervention:** The Children Can't Fly program

**Intervention Strategies:** Campaigns and Promotions, Environments and Policies, Supportive Relationships

**Purpose of the Intervention:** To reduce falls from windows

**Population:** Children and their parents

**Setting:** Housing districts in the five boroughs of New York; community-based, school-based, faith-based, health care facility-based, home-based

**Partners:** Health centers, hospitals, pediatric clinics, police precincts, community councils, child health stations, family health care centers, day care centers, head start programs, community school boards, parent teacher associations, child welfare agencies, offices of neighborhood services, community corporations, supermarket chains, church pastors, block associations, tenant groups, offices of community services and housing rehabilitation groups, media firm

**Intervention Description:**

- Campaigns and Promotions: The media campaign was to raise awareness of the hazards of open, unguarded windows and to recommend ways to prevent accidents. The campaign used public service time slots, special news programming, children's TV programs and newspapers. There was widespread distribution of bi-lingual posters and multi-lingual flyers (English, Spanish, Chinese and Haitian) through a network of community-based, faith-based, school-based and health care facility-based organizations.
- Environments and Policies: A voluntary reporting system was put in place. Staff contacted hospital emergency rooms and police precincts to monitor falls. Free window guards were provided each year.
- Supportive Relationships: Public health nurses made follow-up home visits to window-fall victims. The visits involved supportive counseling and referral services. The nurse also assessed the home for other hazards.

**Theory:** Not mentioned

**Resources Required:**

- Staff/Volunteers: Public health nurses
- Training: Not mentioned
- Technology: Audio, visual, and print media production
- Space: Not mentioned
- Budget: The window guards were purchased by the New York City Health Department in open competitive bid, generally for less than \$3 per guard.
- Intervention: Audio, visual and print media, window guards
- Evaluation: Access to reporting systems

**Evaluation:**

- Design: Pre- and post-evaluation
- Methods and Measures:
  - Number of falls was measured through review of falls reporting systems.

**Outcomes:**

- Short Term Impact: Not measured
- Long Term Impact: In the Bronx, the area of highest risk, the decline in falls was 50% after the campaign was launched. During the critical summer months, a highly significant decline in reported falls was recorded. There were no falls reported from windows where guards had been installed.

**Maintenance:** Not mentioned

**Lessons Learned:** The program is one solution to an urgent urban problem that other cities might consider to avoid the loss of life and limb and the financial burden for hospitalization, rehabilitation and maintenance of the injured and permanently disabled.

**Citation(s):**

Spiegel CN, Lindaman FC. Children can't fly: a program to prevent childhood morbidity and mortality from window falls. Am J Public Health. Dec 1977;67(12):1143-1147.