



## NEWS RELEASE

---

For Immediate Release  
May 21, 2008

BC Ambulance Service

### **Paramedics work to prevent falls from windows and balconies**

**BRITISH COLUMBIA** – Every year across Canada, many children and even adults fall from windows, balconies and decks. These types of falls are preventable and so too are the injuries that result from them. May 21, is National Safety Day and British Columbia Ambulance Service (BCAS) paramedics are supporting the national Partners Promoting Window and Balcony Safety program. As a member of this program, the BCAS offer information and demonstrations on how to prevent falls from windows, balconies or decks.

“Paramedics are the ideal group to educate the public about window and balcony fall prevention since it is their life-saving skills that are called upon whenever a child falls,” says Chief Bruce Farr president of the Emergency Medical Service Chiefs of Canada. “Paramedics are highly motivated to prevent these tragedies and near tragedies which occur far too often.”

Children between the ages of 1 and 4 are at the highest risk of falling from a window or balcony, but falls occur among people all ages, including seniors. Here is what you can do to prevent falls from windows and balconies in your home:

- Direct supervision of children is the single most effective way to prevent window and balcony falls.
- Move furniture or other items away from windows and from balcony railings and decks to prevent climbing hazards.
- Install devices on windows that allow for a maximum opening of 10 cm. Install similar devices or child-proof locks on balcony doors. These devices are inexpensive and can be purchased at hardware stores.
- Make sure that safety devices have emergency release mechanisms so windows can be used for escape in the event of fire.
- Screens are not adequate safety devices. They keep bugs out but do not keep children in.

“I’ve been involved with this public safety partnership between Emergency Medical Services and the Canadian Window and Door Manufacturers Association for many years,” says BCAS paramedic Marilyn Oberg. “Education is the key in promoting a safe environment for our children.”

Safety tips, activities for children, an educational video and contact information are available on the Partners Promoting Window and Balcony Safety website [www.windowandbalconysafety.ca](http://www.windowandbalconysafety.ca) or contact the BCAS for further information or demonstrations.

-30-

Contact: Sarah Taylor  
Communications Officer, BCAS  
(250) 953-3125

Marilyn Oberg  
BCAS, Special Operations  
(604) 660-1759