



HOME CHILD INJURY CASE STUDIES

Falls

The following are 'Real life' cases:

- Six-month-old on change table. Mother turned away to get clean nappy. Baby rolled off table, suffering concussion. "First time she rolled."
- Boy, 20 months, suddenly stood up in highchair (no shoulder harness) and fell out; concussion.
- Ten-month-old in baby walker. Child changed direction and tipped over change in floor level before mum could reach him; skull fracture.
- 2 year old climbing on sofa; fell off and onto coffee table edge. Fracture of eye socket.
- 4 year old using trampoline at friends house - bounced off and onto nearby paving. Closed head injury.

Drowning

A Christmas Story

A couple of families joined together to celebrate an Australian Christmas around the swimming pool. There were lots of adults, brothers, sisters, aunts, uncles, nieces, nephews, grandparents, cousins and children of all ages. The pool was filled with blow up floats, balls, and beanbags. Sounds of laughter and splashing filled the air. Swimming always works up an appetite. All the family moved indoors, keeping safely out of the midday sun to enjoy a family Christmas lunch. Suddenly, someone noticed the 2 year old missing. Everyone searched the house. He was found floating in the swimming pool. This pool had an isolation fence; the toddler was still wearing his floaties. How did this happen? The gate was not shut properly, which allowed the child access to the pool area. How he came to be in the water is unclear, he either jumped in or fell. Children naturally topple forward when wearing floaties. The toddler also became stuck underneath the pool floats and toys.

Poisoning

The following are examples of how children have accessed poisons:

- "Sam" climbed onto the kitchen bench top and reached a container off the top of the fridge and drank the paracetamol liquid.
- At Grandma's, "Thomas" was found playing with an empty sleeping tablet container.
- In games room at home, "Jack" was found playing with mum's handbag, swallowed heart tablets.
- "Anna" drank insecticide stored in a Coca-Cola bottle
- "Bailey" crawled into the laundry, opened the cupboard and was found eating Napisan.
- At home in kitchen, "William" swallowed dishwasher detergent while parent was packing the dishwasher

Burns & Scalds

The following are examples of burns and scald injuries:

- Playing, toddler knocked coffee table; scalded by cup of tea.
- Three-year-old accidentally pushed into mum while she was making formula; scalded by hot water.
- Six-month-old in baby walker reached up and pulled on cord of kettle; spilt boiling water over self.
- Watching grandmother, toddler pulled handle on pot with boiling water.
- Crawling in kitchen, 10 month old pulled self up using tablecloth; hot soup fell on her.

Fire

The following is Kim & Leo's story:

By the time four-year-old Kim and his younger brother Leo were found by fire-fighters in the lounge of their Auntie's home it was too late.

The boys had been staying over, and had woken up early and headed for the lounge. According to the fire report, they appear to have found and started a fire with a cigarette lighter, found near their bodies. It is believed the curtains by the sliding doors caught fire first.

By the time Kim and Leo's Auntie woke up, the kitchen, dining room and lounge were full of smoke and flames. She couldn't get into the lounge to get them out.

Kim and Leo's bodies were found huddled in a corner between the sofa and the wall. They had died of smoke inhalation.

There had been visitors in the home the evening before. One of them smoked, and it is thought he might have left his lighter by mistake.

A smoke detector installed in the home would almost certainly have saved the boys.

Dog Attacks

Boy Bitten By Savage Dog

A six-year-old boy was attacked and bitten by a large Staffordshire cross dog, while riding a bicycle outside his grandmother's home in a Perth suburb. The boy was admitted to hospital after being bitten on the face and head. The dog is believed to have been roaming around the area before the incident occurred.

Driveway Run Overs

The following is a 'Real life' case:

One-year-old Estelle was helping her mum wind up the hose in the backyard of her home, when her dad accidentally reversed his car over her. Her mum had realised that the garden hose was caught and she momentarily took her eyes off Estelle.

When she turned back, there was Estelle lying underneath the car. Her head was free of the car wheels, but she could see that she'd obviously been run over. She was having a lot of difficulty breathing. She was very blue.

Incredibly, Estelle escaped serious injury, but her parents remain haunted by their close call. They find it hard to believe that the car ran right over her middle and she's still with them today.

Choking & Suffocation

The following are example of choking cases for children under five:

- Eating apple in home bedroom, choked
- Rolling on bed, inhaled plastic pen top, went into lung
- Given a chocolate-coated peanut, inhaled it
- Eating apple in kitchen laughing, aspirated apple
- Tidying up crayons with mother, ate crayon, inhaled a piece
- Eating popcorn and sultanas in kitchen, stood up, knocked by sister, gagged and coughed
- Playing with toys, swallowed broken plastic sock hook
- Boy inhaled peanut given by sister in restaurant
- Playing, swallowed metal bolt. Was removed by ambulance officers
- Eating peanuts. Choking episode. Mum cleared the peanuts, but child got second degree pneumonia
- Watching TV in lounge room, put coins in mouth.

Electrical

Child poked screwdriver into power outlet. Fortunately RCD in place so house was blacked out and had a scorch mark up the wall and the child was knocked across the room.

5 year old received burns to hands after playing with damaged power cord.

Nursery Equipment

The following are 'Real life' cases:

- Four-month-old caught head between bars of cot and the mattress; suffocated.
- Twelve-month-old in cot became entangled in nearby curtain drawstring; strangled.
- Six-month-old girl sleeping in pram in quiet corner of lounge. When mother looked, child had moved back and become trapped in the head of the pram; asphyxiated.