

news & notes

SLIP AND TRIP STATISTICS

Slips, trips, and falls make up the majority of general industry accidents. They cause 15 percent of all accidental occupational deaths, second only to motor vehicles.

Furthermore, in most years, slips, trips, and falls result in somewhere between 15 percent and 20 percent of all nonfatal workplace injuries, the highest frequency of injury of any single regulated activity.

In one recent year, for example, the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reported that more than 230,000 workers in the United States sustained nonfatal injuries from slips, trips, and falls, each resulting in one or more days away from work. Although some of those injuries were only temporarily disabling, others left workers permanently disabled.

You don't have to fall from a great height to get injured. Many fall injuries occur on level ground when people trip over unexpected objects in their path.



"Jack and Jill have registered an official complaint about some trip hazards on the hill."



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LEARNING
COMMUNITIES INC.

November 2015

Don't slip up!

Avoid slips, trips, and falls

Slips happen when there is a loss of grip between a person's shoe and the floor. Trips happen when a person's foot hits a low obstacle in his or her path, causing a loss of balance. Here are several situations and actions that can cause slip and trip hazards:

- Floor contaminants such as water, oil, grease, and dust;
- Floor surfaces, which require sufficient grip to prevent slipping;
- Uneven flooring, trailing cables, loose mats, and changes in floor surface level;
- Poor visibility caused by inadequate lighting, including burned out lights in halls, stairwells, and outside;
- Other environmental factors, including unexpected loud noises;
- Behaviors such as talking on a cell phone or not holding the handrail on stairs;
- Footwear, which should be suitable for the type of work and environment and comfortable with adequate nonslip sole and tread pattern;
- Not picking things up off the floor;
- Not watching where you're going, or carrying something you can't see over;
- Running or walking too quickly;
- Spills and wet or slippery floors;
- Clutter on stairs or in walkways;
- Open drawers; *and*
- Lack of caution on ladders.

Here are several ways to help eliminate slip and trip hazards:

- **Practice good housekeeping.** Don't leave boxes, toys, or other materials on the floor.
- **Clean properly** to ensure that contaminants are effectively removed and there is no buildup of cleaning product residue on walking surfaces.
- **Step over or around obstructions,** not on them.
- **Walk and change directions slowly,** especially when carrying a load.
- **Watch for changes in floor level.**
- **If lighting is inadequate or bulbs are burned out, report the problem to the Principal right away.** Never enter a dark room or area before turning on a light. Outside, use a flashlight at night if you need more light coming to or going from the workplace.
- **Don't block walkways** with hand trucks, carts, cords, or other equipment.
- **Don't place anything on stairs.**
- **Don't leave drawers open.**

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COPING WITH STRESS

Much of what you feel as stress is really tension in your body. That's because your thoughts are sending a message around your body saying, "Something's up. Get ready for trouble." Even if things aren't really that bad, as far as your body's concerned, it's time to run or fight for its survival.

While there are no miracle cures, breathing is a key to relaxation. Try slowing your breath and allowing your stomach to expand and then your chest. Focus on each breath for a minute or two, and you'll find your whole body relaxing.

Try these tips to ease daily stress:

- **Get enough sleep and rest.**
- **Take time out to play.** Do whatever you find the most fun, preferably an activity that's not competitive.
- **Don't bottle up your feelings.** Talk to friends you can trust. Tell them how you're feeling and what's going on. Bad feelings can fester and increase your stress level. If your issue is work-related, talk to your Principal or Assistant Principal as opposed to colleagues that may not be involved.
- **Don't try to be perfect.** You're not a machine. Doing your best is more than enough.
- **Do something for others.** Give someone a helping hand or some deserved praise. It's amazing how much better you'll feel.



"No, you fool -- it's feed a cold, starve a FEVER!"

A good night's safety sleep

Be committed to safety—even in your sleep

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), "Good sleep is as important as proper nutrition and exercise." During sleep, the body repairs wear and tear and gets you in shape for a new day.

Lack of sleep can lead to safety and health problems, including:

- Slower reactions, a cloudy mind, or a bad mood;
- Weakening of body defenses, increased risk of infection, high blood pressure, and diabetes; *and*
- Increased appetite, overeating, and obesity.

The CDC recommends the following strategies for improving sleep quality:

- **Block out all light.** Close curtains or use an eye mask.
- **Block out noise.** Use earplugs or a white noise machine to block out sounds. Silence phones and minimize distractions.
- **Make sure your mattress and pillow are comfortable.** We spend one-third of our lives in bed and a good mattress is probably worth the cost.
- **Avoid heavy or spicy meals or liquids before bedtime**—especially alcohol, caffeine, nicotine and other stimulants.
- **Get 7 to 9 hours of sleep each day and exercise regularly.** Any daytime exercise that does not take away from sleep time can actually improve sleep.

Clean Hands = Cold Free

With cold and flu season just around the corner now is a good time to think about how to avoid illness this winter. According the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), frequent and careful handwashing is one of best ways to prevent infection.

When washing hands with soap and water, the CDC says you should:

- Wet your hands with clean running water and apply soap. Use warm water if it is available.
- Rub hands together to make lather and scrub all surfaces.
- Continue rubbing hands for 15 to 20 seconds. How long is that? Imagine singing "Happy Birthday" twice.
- Rinse hands well under running water.
- Dry your hands using a paper towel or air dryer. If possible, use your paper towel to turn off the faucet.

If soap and clean water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand rub to clean your hands. Alcohol-based hand rubs significantly reduce the number of germs on skin and are fast acting. When using an alcohol-based hand sanitizer:

- Apply product to the palm of one hand.
- Rub hands together.
- Rub the product over all surfaces of hands and fingers until hands are dry.