

Slips, Trips & Falls

- A lifeguard slips while climbing onto the lifeguard stand and injures her back.
- A housekeeping employee trips while taking out the trash, fracturing his patella.
- An employee slips on a stage curtain while preparing for a program, resulting in three months of missed work.

Slip, trip and fall accidents aren't always the most serious type of workplace accident. But they *are* the most common. Whether it's a sprained ankle or a broken collar bone, the resulting injuries can have a serious impact on your quality of life and ability to serve. And on rare occasions, more severe injury and even death can be the result.

Avoiding slips, trips and falls ultimately comes down to being aware of your surroundings. Have you seen someone—probably around here—preparing for an event and multi-tasking while walking too fast? Maybe talking or texting on their phone and trying to carry balloons and other items obstructing their view? We might all be guilty of being distracted and not paying attention, but it really doesn't get the job done faster if you fall down and get hurt.

Distracted Walking

Always pay attention to the surface you are walking on—especially if you are going from tile to carpet. Look at your surroundings and know what is happening around you. If you are texting, you might miss the “slippery when wet” signs. It's also a good idea to always keep one hand free for balance when walking on slippery or icy surfaces. This might mean making multiple trips, but just think of the extra steps and exercise you can get in.

Cleaning Up Spills

A big trip and fall hazard is unexpected wet spills. You should immediately clean up any spill you see—even if you did not spill it yourself. This includes water, juice, ice cream, oil or any other material that might cause someone to slip.

Team Talks are intended to provide ready-to-use content for facilitated safety discussions on key topics. Whether you use this copy as an exact script, or as a set of talking points for creating your own talk, is up to you. We hope it provides a useful starting point for discussion. As always, we would love to hear feedback on how your talk goes, and what more we can do to support you in creating a true culture of safety.

The Redwoods Group

Avoiding Clutter

Another hazard on floors includes random dropped or loose items on the floor—especially in the childcare areas—like toys, crayons, paper or trash. Keeping the floors clean and free of trash and unwanted items is everyone’s job. If you see a trip and fall hazard clean it up or pick it up.

If you are unable to clean it immediately—maybe you are the only adult supervising kids—mark the area with cones or signs and report it to your supervisor.

Stair Safety

Falling down the stairs is probably one of the more dangerous consequences of a slip, trip or fall accident, and it can even be deadly. So it’s very important to enforce rules that include no running, jumping or skipping steps, and don’t try carrying heavy or bulky items down the stairs that may obstruct your view. Also, please don’t forget to use the handrail.

The bottom line is that we need you healthy and safe to fulfill our mission and meet the needs of our members. We think it’s a great idea to take your time and take in your surroundings to get where you are going to safely.

Let’s take a quick true or false quiz on slips, trips and falls for review.

It’s not your responsibility to clean up a spill on the floor—especially if it’s not in your area and you did not make it.

FALSE - It does not matter where the spill came from—if you see the spill, it is your job to immediately clean it up so that it is not a slip and fall hazard.

The best way to avoid trips and falls is to be aware of your surroundings.

TRUE - Look around and check walking surfaces and watch where you are going.

Mark any spills that you can not immediately clean up with cones or signs and report them to your supervisor.

TRUE - There might be a time when you are supervising children and cannot stop to clean a spill, but it is still your responsibility to limit the hazard and report it.