



# Stair Accidents—How to Avoid Them

Each year, teachers/staff fall down stairs, sustaining serious injuries. The leading contributors or causes of stair accidents are from missteps, improper foot placement, poor stair design or maintenance and environmental factors (water/contaminants).

Data from accident and injury reports indicate many factors that can cause stair accidents: talking on cell phones, walking while reading, and carrying objects that obstruct your vision, as well as having personal conversations while on the stairs. All these actions divert your attention from using the stairs properly; they lead to missteps or improper foot placement, thus contributing to stair accidents and injuries.

Most, if not all, stairway accidents can be avoided. To prevent accidents, staff should follow these simple rules for proper stair use.

- Pay close attention to foot placement when going up or down the stairs.



Avoid distractions while using the stairs.



Watch for hazardous conditions on stairs, such as excessive mold and deterioration of the cement.

- Avoid distractions at all times while using stairs.
- Use handrails when traversing stairs. Handrails can assist with balance/coordination.
- Do not skip steps or run up or down stairs.
- Do not carry objects that obstruct your vision or ability to use the handrail.
- Make solid contact with each stair step or tread.
- Report hazardous conditions on stairs/stair landings, such as water accumulation, excessive dirt, algae, loose surfaces, loose handrails and deterioration of the stairway.
- Watch out for fellow colleagues/staff that are not paying attention when using stairs. Politely get their attention to avoid a stair accident.