



# OH&S TIPSHEET

Health and Safety in Early Childhood Services

## Slips, trips and low-level falls

No work should be undertaken by an employer or employees if it involves the possibility of an involuntary fall greater than 2 metres (this is defined as a 'fall hazard' in the Victorian OHS Regulations 2007).

Under no circumstances should the employer permit any persons (other than an appropriately qualified and specialist person) to walk on or access tops of roofs or inside ceiling cavity areas.

Studies quoted by the European Union have shown that changes in level as little as 8 millimetres can potentially pose a hazard for the normal walking of fit, healthy people.



When you trip, the forward motion of the foot is stopped suddenly by an obstacle, such as a toy, a cable, a cleaning bucket or even a paper folder, but your body continues its forward motion. You may be unable to recover your balance; as a result, you may fall forwards and injure your head, leg or wrist.

Some general risk controls that the employer and employees can take are provided below:

- lead by example in adopting these behaviours
- encourage all persons – including families of children, visitors and contractors – to also adopt these behaviours
- take time and attention to focus on where you are going
- ensure you inspect your work area before you start work
- ensure your work area is well lit
- ensure you are familiar with the work area and what furniture, objects and possible obstructions are in it
- switch on lights as required in areas you enter, including

storage cupboards and stairways if applicable

- avoid wet cleaning where possible
- take care to reduce slip and trip hazards when cleaning; for example, reduce the amount of water used and sponge or mop up residual wetness as much as possible
- avoid trailing cables
- wear appropriate footwear
- sign post spills and wet areas and, where practicable, have a person in attendance to keep lookout if there is a spill or wet area while you gather the spill response equipment
- do not carry equipment on stairs, or at minimum always have one hand free and hold the stair handrail
- never hurry across a wet floor
- always step from a wet floor or carpet to a dry floor with caution.



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