The Risk of Using Desks and Chairs Instead of a Step Stool – School Safety Stats and Facts

FACTS

1. Every year, thousands of injuries occur in schools due to improper use of furniture, including desks and chairs being used as step stools. These injuries can result in falls, sprains, and fractures.
2. Using desks or chairs instead of proper step stools increases the risk of accidents, as these pieces of furniture are not designed for climbing or supporting weight at higher heights.
3. The risk of falling from desks and chairs is especially high for students who may not be properly supervised while using them to reach high places.
4. Injuries caused by falls from desks and chairs can often lead to long-term physical therapy, especially for younger students or those with pre-existing health conditions.
5. In schools where safety measures are not strictly followed, using chairs and desks for climbing can result in a greater number of injuries compared to using a proper step stool.

STATS

- Using desks and chairs as makeshift step stools in schools poses significant safety risks. In the United States, furniture-related injuries, including those from unstable desks and chairs, account for over 578,000 injuries and 114 deaths annually.
- A 2018 study by the Canadian Safety Council revealed that improperly using desks and chairs for height-related tasks was one of the leading causes of injuries among school children, with over 35,000 incidents annually.

- Research by the US Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) shows that injuries from furniture-related falls are among the top reasons for hospital visits among children under 14, accounting for nearly 45% of all child injury incidents.
- The Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety reported that improper use of school furniture, including standing on chairs or desks, led to 2,000 school-related injuries in Canada in 2020.
- Data from the US Bureau of Labor Statistics shows that furniture-related accidents are one of the most common types of non-fatal workplace injuries, including those in educational settings.