

avoid prolonging the bottle-feeding habit. Toddlers should be encouraged to drink from a cup at the first birthday and weaned from a bottle by 14 months old. Nurses are in an excellent position to counsel parents regarding the dangers of this habit and other aspects of dental care.\*

## Safety Promotion and Injury Prevention

Unintentional childhood injury was the leading cause of death among children 1 to 19 years old in 2009, accounting for 37% of all deaths in this age-group (Gilchrist, Ballesteros, Parker, 2012). Unintentional death rates among newborns and infants from suffocation nearly doubled from 2000 to 2009. Likewise, unintentional poisoning death rates doubled for adolescents 15 to 19 years old during the same time period (Gilchrist, Ballesteros, Parker, 2012). These deaths and injuries are preventable, and they highlight the need for public health action and education. There is evidence that one-on-one and face-to-face education as well as safety interventions and safety equipment are effective in reducing the number of unintentional childhood injuries that can have catastrophic results (Kendrick, Young, Mason-Jones, et al, 2012). A major factor in the critical increase of injuries during early childhood is the unrestricted freedom achieved through locomotion combined with an unawareness of danger within the environment. Toddlers delight in the repetitive use of gross motor skills, and with increasing age, these skills are refined. This age group is also very curious about how things work and exploration of previously unknown or unseen objects and places is common. Toddlers also have not fully developed or understand the cause-and-effect principles and often are unable to gauge danger; poorly developed depth perception may also contribute to falls and tumbles as does the general bodily structure of toddlers. Specific categories of injuries and appropriate prevention are best understood by associating them with the major growth and developmental achievements of this age (Table 11-2). The discussions of injuries in Chapters 10 and 13 are also relevant to safety concerns at this age.

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**TABLE 11-2**  
**Injury Prevention during Early Childhood**

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