Many children are injured each year in incidents related to bunk beds. Many of these injuries are minor and result from falls. Horseplay is another common contributor to these injuries. More serious or even fatal injuries can result from children being trapped in the pinch point between the bed and the wall surface.

Some basic safety concerns for Bunk Beds include:

1. **Guardrails**: Guardrails should be securely attached to the bed to prevent them from falling onto children if the bed is bumped or is being moved. They should also be spaced so that children cannot easily slip through or be trapped or suspended between the rails. If a gap is commonly present between the bed and the wall surface; you should install guardrails on both sides of the bed to prevent entrapment and possible suffocation incidents.

2. **Mattress foundation**— Mattresses should be secured in the beds to prevent the top mattress from falling onto the lower bunk. Such an incident could result in a suffocation incident or serious trauma injury. It is also possible for this type of injury to occur with the mattress of a single bed if a child commonly plays under the bed and pushes up on the mattress. Multiple support slats should be installed on both the top and bottom bunk to provide multiple supports to secure the mattress and prevent it from falling. It is also important to assure that the beds have the right size mattress for the frame. If the mattress is too small, it may easily fall through the frame cause an entrapment.

Select the right bed and maintain it in good condition:

1. **Selection**

Choose bunk beds that have:

   a. Guardrails on all sides which are screwed, bolted or otherwise firmly attached to the bed structure.

   b. Spacing between bed frame and bottom of guard rails that is no greater than 3-1/2 inches (89 mm).

   c. Guardrails that extend at least 5 inches (127 mm) above the mattress surface to prevent a child from rolling off.

   d. Cross ties under the mattress foundation which can be securely attached.

   e. A ladder that is secured to the bed frame and will not slip when a child climbs on it.

   f. A feature which permits the beds to be separated to form two single beds if you have children too young to sleep safely on the upper bunk.

   **Assure Proper Mattress Size—See note in Mattress Foundation tip above.**

2. **Use**

   a. Always use two side guardrails on the upper bunk.

   *Keep guardrails securely in place at all times no matter what the age of the child. Children move about during sleep and may roll out of bed.*
b. Do not permit children less than 6 years of age to sleep in the upper bunk.

c. Be sure crossties are under the mattress foundation of each bed and that they are secured in place even if bunks are used as twin beds.

d. Teach children to use the ladder and not chairs or other pieces of furniture to climb into or out of the top bunk and enforce the rules! Provide a light so that children can easily see to access the ladder.

e. Do not allow horseplay on or around the bed—train the children about the dangers.

3. Maintenance or Safety Repair
Maintain the bed in accordance with the manufactures original specifications and use original parts or equivalent.

- Consult the internet site of the manufacturer of child safety websites when in doubt.
- Replace broken or worn parts immediately and make other temporary sleeping arrangements for the children while repairs are in progress.

Web Resources include:

http://www.safesleep.org/safety/bunkbed.html


http://www.keepkidshealthy.com/welcome/safety/bunk_beds.html