

Fall Prevention Obstacle Course

Overview

This activity allows participants to survey a mock room filled with potential hazards for falling. The participants walk around the room and write down their observations to identify possible risks. Staff members monitor and help with the identification to raise awareness of falling dangers within the participant's own home.

Recommended Location

The best location is a medium one-room space. Best if those waiting in line to preview the room do not see the room before it is their turn. A few people can walk through the room at a time. If people are waiting outside, the blinds can be drawn or a barrier can be put up.

Recommended Staff

- Staff members needed to fulfill jobs:
 - Registration
 - Question and Answer
 - Floaters/Monitoring
- 2:1 staff member to participant ratio (if at least one of the staff members is a senior aide)
- 3:1 staff member to participant ratio (if no senior aide is present)
 - Staff and/or volunteers can be trained in monitoring participant actions and answering questions

Recommended Obstacles

- Small chair or piece of furniture in middle of room
- Unstable or wobbly furniture
- Pile of newspapers or magazines
- Puddle of water

- Broken lamp
- Poor or no lighting
- Extension cords or wires
- Loose carpet/rug
- Obstacles on floor or in middle of room
 - Blankets, boxes, shoes, books
- Uneven steps
 - Objects on steps

Materials

- Clipboards
- Pens
- Walkie-talkies for staff communication
- Falls Prevention Checklist (included)
- Falls Prevention Questionnaire (included)

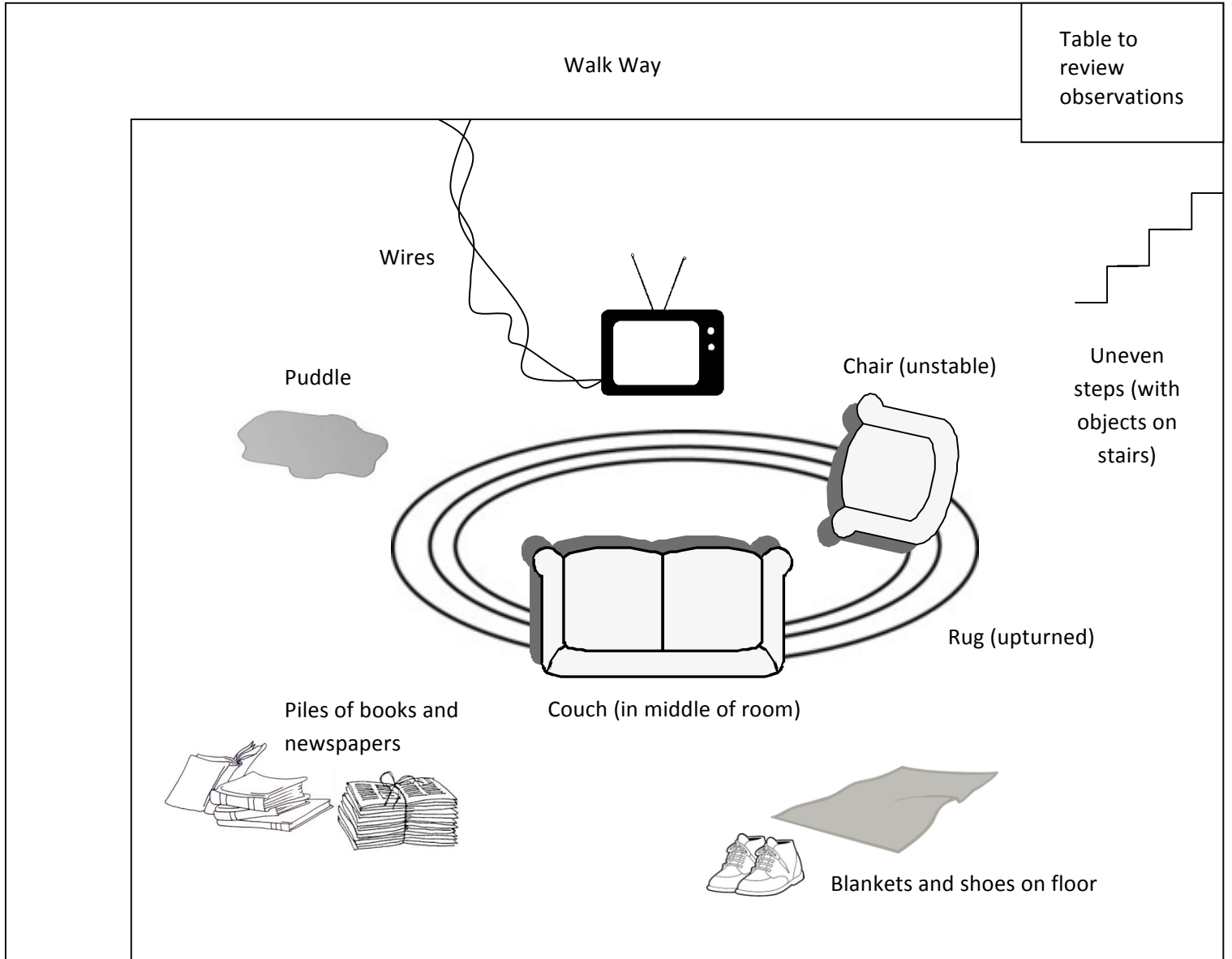
Method

Estimated Time: 5 minutes per observation

1. Staff member brings in participant
 - a. Depending on staff and room capacity, more than one participant can observe the room at a time.
2. Staff member describes the activity and hands out “Falls Prevention Checklist”
 - a. Sample Script: *“This is a sample living room. We will be walking through and observing any potential risks of falling for the person living in the house. Examples of potential hazards are items you could trip over or have to maneuver around. Anything you see that could be a possible risk for falling, write it down on the sheet provided.”*
3. Staff member describes rules for the activity

- a. Sample Script: *“Please do not attempt to move through the sample room but walk around the room to observe. I will be with you the whole way.”*
4. Staff member leads participant around the mock room
 - a. Staff member can ask prompting questions such as *“Is there anything in here you could see someone slipping or tripping on?”*
 - b. Staff members should be careful that participants do not attempt to walk around or over the items placed.
5. Staff member leads participant towards end of room and reconvenes over what the participant observed
 - a. Staff member can review the participant’s list and if they have missed anything, mention the items they have missed.
 - b. Staff member congratulates participant on their observations
 - c. Sample Script: *“Congratulations on recognizing so many possible hazards for falling in our sample living room. Situations like upturned rugs or low lighting can all contribute to increased risk for falling.”*
6. Staff member hands out “Falls Prevention Questionnaire” for participant to complete once they go home
 - a. Purpose of this is for the participant to identify hazards in their own home.
 - b. Staff members can suggest possible risks within participant’s home to watch out for and encourage participants to apply what they learned to identify risks in their own home.
 - c. Sample Script: *“Please take some time once you get home to observe your own home like you did with this sample room and fill out this questionnaire about risks in your home. Do you have furniture you have to move around? Do you have books or boxes lying around? Do you have rugs that could be tripped over?”*
7. Hand out Falls Prevention Resources and answer any questions participants may have.

Sample Room Layout



Barrier to block view of those in line (maybe blinds or sheets)