

Challenges for Safety and Injury Prevention for Families Living in Low-rental Housing

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Presentation Overview

- Background
 - Child Safety Link
 - Falls prevention
- Research project
 - Purpose & Goal
 - Methodology
 - Data collection & analysis
 - Findings
 - Challenges
 - Recommendations
- Conclusion & next steps



Background – Child Safety Link (CSL)

- Maritime-wide children’s injury prevention program
 - [IWK Health Centre](#)
- Priority areas: home safety, helmet safety, poisoning prevention, playground safety, car seat safety
- Ages & stages approach
 - [Resources](#)





Injury is responsible for *more deaths to Atlantic Canadian children age 1 to 14 than any other cause.*

Rates of injury - Influenced by Social Determinants of Health

FALLS continue to be the leading cause of hospitalization to children.

Falls (44%)

- Each year on average 722 children aged 14 and under were hospitalized due to an injury from a fall.
- 38% take place at home, school & elsewhere
 - 17% of falls are associated with chairs, beds, stairs and steps.
- 6% playground

**Child & Youth Unintentional Injury Report Atlantic
Canada (2009)**



Rationale

Considerations:

- Social Determinants of Health correlate with higher injury rates
- Higher risk of injury for families living in low-rental housing environments.
- Low socioeconomic status + live in poor neighborhoods = more likely to die as a result of injury!

• WHO, 2009

Addressing the Socioeconomic Safety Divide

Rationale

- “Focus on reducing disparities in the entire population as well as in the sub-populations of families where the greatest disparities in injury are evident”

- *Child and Youth Unintentional Injury in Atlantic Canada: 10 years in review*



Rationale

- Falls prevention
 - Complex, limited, lacks audience-specific initiatives
- Funding from Exxon Mobile (2009):
 - Phase 1 – Investigation and framework created
 - Phase 2 – On-line tools to support professionals
- Phase 3 of Children’s Falls Prevention Strategy
 - Began in 2011
 - Research Power Inc.



Research project

Purpose:

- To investigate the barriers and needs re: the prevention of injuries among families who live in low-rental housing.

Goal:

- To identify:
 - Professionals who work with population;
 - Individuals who live in low-rental housing



Research project

- Intention of the research:
 - To learn more about the challenges for safety and injury prevention for children, as well as the needs of families in improving safety and enhancing injury prevention.



Research project

- Outcomes
 - Identify stakeholders
 - Assess current fall's prevention needs
 - Collate results and provide recommendations
- Deliverables
 - Contact information, roles
 - Develop questions and conduct interviews/focus groups
 - Comprehensive report including next steps

Methodology

- Five interviews and seven focus groups conducted
 - 5 Key informants (Family Resource Centre staff, researchers, etc.)
 - 7 focus groups (6 within HRM; 1 in Bridgewater, NS)
 - 65 parents living in low-rental housing
- Key informant telephone interviews took place in September and October 2011.
- All focus groups took place in person between November 2011 and August 2012.

Key Informant Interview Guide

- Introduction and Purpose
- Series of 8 Questions
 - *What are the challenges to preventing injuries in children for families living in low-rental housing?*
 - *What supports do families living in low-rental housing need in order to increase safety and prevent children's injuries?*
 - *Probes: Who should provide these supports?*

Data collection

- Focus groups
 - Held in FRC/organization sites
 - FRCs/organizations recruited focus group participants, provided other supports (e.g. childcare, meals, transportation assistance, etc.)
 - Organizations received an honorarium for their assistance
 - Each focus group participant received a \$25 grocery store gift card to thank them for their participation

Focus Group Guide

- Welcome, Introductions and Purpose
- Series of 5 Discussion Questions
 - *What challenges do you see in your community/neighbourhood to preventing injuries or increasing safety for children?*
 - *Please tell me about the things you do to help prevent injuries and keep your children safe.*
 - *Are there any topics related to safety or injury prevention on which you would like more information?*

Findings

- Existing supports identified
 - Supportive organizations and programs
 - FRCs, Enhanced Home Visiting Programs, CSL
 - Community and/or Social Supports
 - Advocating for Safety Improvements
 - Physical Environment and Equipment

“All the dressers and that are bracketed to the wall...because the floor is so uneven.” (Parent)

Findings

- Challenges for Increasing Safety and Preventing Injuries
 - Physical Environment
 - *“In many low-rental buildings, the infrastructure is crumbling.” (Key informant)*
 - Community/Neighbourhood
 - Crime, violence, drug use and its influence on children
 - Lack of Supportive Policies and Actions by Authorities
 - *“They go back-and-forth arguing – it’s Housing’s problem, it’s the HRM’s problem, it’s the school’s problem—and that’s the problem, the three of them argue back and forth.” (Parent)*

Challenges (cont.)

- Challenges for Increasing Safety and Preventing Injuries
 - Supervision
 - Lack of Social Networks
- Less frequently mentioned
 - Access to Information
 - Insufficient financial resources
 - Accessing public transportation
 - “Kids will be kids”

Findings

Additional Supports Needed

- # 1 by Parents AND Key Informants:

Access to Education, Training and Information

- FREE or low-cost learning opportunities, information on equipment standards, home management skills
- Key Informants also suggested:
 - Not sufficient to create behavior change
 - Should be accompanied by other resources and supports
 - Messaging is sensitive to circumstances of parent
 - Use multiple channels



Findings

Supports from Other Jurisdictions

- Key Informants also suggested:
 - Best Start in Ontario
 - Nobody's Perfect and Head Start parenting programs in BC
 - Safe Kids Canada's Child Safety Good Practice Guide



Conclusion

- Although many supports exist to help families address safety and injury prevention, families still face a number of challenges.
- Issues in physical environment, and concerns about safety in the neighbourhood were among greatest challenges to safety identified.

Recommendations

- Provide More Safety Education Opportunities
 - Integrate safety and injury prevention information into existing programming
 - Provide to those who interact with families
 - Ex. Landlords
- Ensure Appropriate Supports for Behavior Change
- Increase Neighborhood Safety
- Support Advocacy
 - Safe, affordable housing
 - Parents/Themselves



Future research & Next steps

- Examine uptake and effectiveness of different safety interventions.
 - Example: CSL to determine how frequently website tools are being used, for what purpose, and by whom.
 - CSL could then develop strategies to reach out to audiences that were not previously accessing existing tools and resources.
- 2012-2013 fiscal
 - Forum/discussion on how to best proceed with this evidence
 - Include Tenant's Association members, FRC staff
 - Maintain partnerships, support advocacy

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ExxonMobil



CHILD Safety LINK

IWK Health Centre
Primary Health

Questions or Comments?

For more information about
children's safety contact:

Child Safety Link

470-6496

Or visit

www.childsafetylink.ca



Thank You!

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