
INJURY UPDATE

*A Report to Oklahoma Injury Surveillance Participants**

April 18, 2003

INJURY PREVENTION MONTH

Injuries are the leading killer of Oklahoma's children and young adults from 1-44 years of age. According to Oklahoma State Department of Health Vital Statistics data, from 1997-2001, injuries accounted for 55% of *all* deaths to children 1-14 years of age, and 81% of *all* deaths among adolescents 15-19 years of age. After the first year of life, more children died from injuries than all other causes of death combined.

Overall, injuries are the third leading cause of death in Oklahoma, following heart disease and cancer, accounting for 2,300 deaths each year. Oklahoma's death rates due to traffic injuries, drownings, fire/burns, and suicide are higher than national rates. Injuries result in more than 55,000 hospitalizations and an estimated 791,907 emergency department visits each year. The costs of hospitalization, lost work and productivity, lives lost, and disabilities due to injuries total \$2.6 billion annually. These figures are tragic given that injuries are preventable. To increase awareness that injuries can be prevented, the Oklahoma Legislature passed HB 2714 designating May as Injury Prevention Month in Oklahoma.

The Injury Prevention Service (IPS) at the Oklahoma State Department of Health collects and analyzes data for hospitalized and fatal burns, drownings/near drownings, traumatic spinal cord injuries, traumatic brain injuries, and intimate partner violence injuries, as well as for suicides and suicide attempts and fatal occupational injuries. The IPS utilizes the injury surveillance system to identify high-risk populations and to develop, implement, and evaluate community-based prevention programs.

Prevention efforts are designed to bring about change. The first step in developing an effective program is to involve the community. Community-based prevention is a process that recognizes that no two communities are exactly alike and each prevention effort needs to be focused to reach those in need or at high risk. Community-based prevention programs need to utilize the community's strengths to produce the desired result.

Because each community is different, with unique weaknesses and strengths, programs and projects should be developed that best fit the community's needs. Programs that use a variety of approaches are most likely to be successful. Public education, product distribution (bicycle helmets, smoke alarms, child safety seats, etc.), comprehensive legislation, effective enforcement, and modified environments are a few examples of a multi-faceted approach to a successful injury prevention program.

For more information about injury prevention and assistance in implementing prevention programs, contact the Injury Prevention Service at 1-800-522-0204 or 405/271-3430.

*The INJURY UPDATE is a report produced by the Injury Prevention Service, Oklahoma State Department of Health. Other issues of the INJURY UPDATE may be obtained from the Injury Prevention Service, Oklahoma State Department of Health, 1000 N.E. 10th Street, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma 73117-1299, 405/271-3430 or 1-800-522-0204 (in Oklahoma). INJURY UPDATES and other IPS information is also available at www.health.state.ok.us/program/injury.

RESOURCES

The Injury Prevention Service is available to provide technical assistance in implementing injury prevention programs and has materials and resources available to assist organizations and individuals. Below is a partial list of these resources. To obtain copies of these materials, please call the Injury Prevention Service at 1-800-522-0204 or 405/271-3430.

FACT SHEETS

- Bicycle Safety Tips
- Correct Bicycle Helmet Fit
- Skateboarding, Scooter, and In-line Skating Safety Tips
- Top Ten Mistakes Parents Make With Car Seats
- What Car Seat Is Best For Your Child?
- Motor Vehicle Crashes in Oklahoma
- Teenage Traffic Injuries
- Oklahoma Motorcycle Crash Injury
- Impaired Driving
- Warning Signs for Suicide
- Unintentional Poisoning
- Hot Facts About House Fires
- Young Childhood Drowning
- Older Child and Adult Drowning

EDUCATIONAL CURRICULA

Oklahoma Vocational Rehabilitation Training Curriculum for Brain Injury. November 2000.

PTA Guide to Bicycle Helmet Projects. January 1999.

Breaking Away--Teaching Injury Prevention to Young Bicycle Riders. October 1995.

Injury Prevention Lessons for Preschool-Aged Children. November 1995.

Oklahoma Elementary School Safety Education Program. The Curriculum - Integrated Safety Unit for Teachers. September 1995

SPECIAL REPORTS

Oklahoma Injury Facts.

(<http://www.health.state.ok.us/PROGRAM/injury/okfacts2000/index.html>)

Top Ten Leading Causes of Death in Oklahoma, 1992-1996, by Cause, Age Group, Race, and Sex. Second Edition. September 1998.

Community-Based Prevention Workshop Guide. Oklahoma Community-Based Fire and Burn Prevention Alliance. March 1995.