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57 **IF IT'S ABOUT YOUTH, INVOLVE YOUTH: CREATING OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUTH ENGAGEMENT IN INJURY PREVENTION**

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**Policy Research** Teenagers represent a disproportionate percentage of intentional and unintentional injuries in Canada. Policies,

programmes and strategies designed to reduce the rates of injury among youth rarely involve young people in their development despite strong evidence that youth engagement will improve the outcomes of those policies, programmes and strategies. Provincial graduated license guidelines have never included youth feedback even though the majority of new licenses go to teenagers. School-based injury prevention resources have rarely been developed with youth involvement. Alcohol policies have been created by exclusively by adults even though the negative consequences of those policies impact youth most acutely. The Nova Scotia government is working to change the relationship between government and young people by being more open and inclusive so they can become more meaningfully involved in youth health work. Several innovative mechanisms have been established to facilitate greater youth engagement and improve the interphase between government policy makers and young people. Work already underway that is connected to injury includes a provincial as well as a municipal alcohol strategy, a programme to curb driving while stoned, effective strategies to reduce youth suicide and cyberbullying, and a provincial crime prevention strategy. An oral presentation will provide an overview of the Nova Scotia experience—the barriers to meaningful youth involvement, effective youth engagement strategies and success stories to date.

**Background Information** It has become a common practice in Lagos Metropolise and other major cities in Nigeria to see commercial vehicles and motor bikes driving on public pedestal walkways especially during rush hours when there is heavy traffic. Some motor bikes and motor vehicle drivers especially the commercial vehicle drivers drives on pedestal walkways even in the presence of law enforcement official around without any sanction, thereby forcing school children and other people walking to jump into the main road to avoid being knock down. Sometimes children walking on the pedestal walkways are knock down and are injuried.

**Aims/Objectives/Purpose** This study was conducted to: Analyse the impact of driving on Pedestal walkways on children safety in Nigeria; Capture children perception of their safety while walking on the pedestal walkways; Draw the attention of the government and policy makers to put in place laws, regulations and appropriate sanctions to deter motor vehicle drivers from driving on pedestal walkways; Draw the attention of the law enforcement officials to the danger that motorbikers and motor vehicles driving on the pedestal walkways pose to children and others.

**Methods** The study was carried out in 5 out of the 20 Local Government Areas (LGAs) in Lagos State. The study involved the documentation of accidents involving children being knock down by of motor vehicle and motorbikes on pedestal walkways for a period of 1 year from February 2010 to January 2011. The study was carried out with the aid of shop attendants that work in shops located close the pedestal walkways. The shops attendants were recruited to monitor and document incidents of motor bikes and motor vehicles driving on pedestal walkways and accidents involving children between age 1–10 years old. The second part involve using key informant interview to determine the perception of children about their safety while walking on pedestal walkway daily to and from school. All 10 children (mainly school children) were interviewed in each of the five LGAs.

**Results/Outcome** The results show that commercial vehicles and motor bikes drives on the pedestal walkways daily especially when there is traffic. The data gathered from the study sites revealed that an average of 50 children are knocked down within the five Local Government by motorbikes and commercial vehicles monthly while walking on pedestal walkways. So for the 12 months that the study was carried out about 600 children were knocked down by motor bikes and motor vehicles. The result of the key informant interview shows that 89.3% of the total number of children interviewed said their are not safe walking on the walkways while motor bikes and motor vehicles drive on the same pedestal walkways while 10.7% said they do not know whether they are safe walking on the pedestal walkways while motorbikes and vehicles drive on the walkways.

**Significance/Contribution to the Field** The study was able to monitor and document accidents that happened in the pedestal walkway involving children, capture children perception of their safety while walking on the pedestal walkways; draw the attention of the government and policy makers to put in place laws, regulations and appropriate sanctions to deter motor vehicle drivers from driving on pedestal walkways, thus improving safety for children as they walk to and fro school daily in the streets of Lagos metropolise.

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