

0709 CHILD HOME SAFETY: ARE WE TACKLING A WICKED PROBLEM WITH TAME SOLUTIONS?

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Unintentional injury to young children often occurs at home. Common causes have been identified and a few interventions proven, but many injuries still occur that appear predictable and preventable. The home is a complex, interactive environment that operates within a dynamic social setting. Child home safety, therefore, could be considered a wicked problem, a concept described in the 1970s by Rittel and Webber. Wicked does not denote an unethical problem, but one that exists in complex ecological systems in which social, cultural, economic and political factors operate concurrently. Solving such problems by using tame solutions that address simple causes and their effects is not effective. The ongoing lack of success in reducing some child home injury at least, suggests that an analysis using a wicked problem approach offers an alternative lens that may help find resolutions. In a qualitative study that explored child home injury, the subject was examined in light of the wicked problem model. Using data obtained from in-depth interviews with health professionals, community family workers and parents of young children, opinions and experiences regarding what influenced keeping children safe were analysed and the wicked problem framework applied. This presentation examines a few of the issues that emerged as being potentially critical to keeping children safe at home, for example, parental fatigue and being time poor. Implications for developing and delivering effective health promotion programmes to reduce child home injury are discussed.