

0609 **A CONTROLLED EVALUATION OF THE WHO SAFE COMMUNITIES MODEL APPROACH TO INJURY PREVENTION: INCREASING CHILD RESTRAINT USE IN MOTOR VEHICLES**

G R Istre, M Stowe, M A McCoy\*, B J Moore, D Culica, K N Womack, R J Anderson *Correspondence: Injury Prevention Center of Greater Dallas, P.O. Box 36067 Dallas, TX 75235, USA*

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**Objective** We sought to measure the effectiveness of the WHO Safe Communities Model approach to increase child restraint use in motor vehicles. The effort involved schools, day care centres, neighbourhoods and a local public clinic, with child safety seat classes and a low-cost distribution program.

**Methods** Pre (2003)- and post (2005)-intervention observations of restraint use in motor vehicles in the target area and a comparison community, among children 0–8 years of age, compliant with state law, and adjusted for age, gender, ethnicity, site, type of vehicle, location, number of children in the vehicle, in a multivariable, multi-level analysis.

**Results** Child restraint use in the target area increased among all ages and at all sites (day care centres, grocery stores, schools); the adjusted child restraint use increased by 27.3% points (vs 10.9 in comparison area) and driver seat belt use increased by 15% points (vs 5.2 in comparison area). Multivariable, multi-level analysis showed that the increase in the target area was significantly greater than the comparison area for child restraint use (OR 2.2, 95 % CI 1.6 to 3.0), as well as for driver seat belt use, children riding in the back seat and use of child safety seats.

**Conclusions** The Safe Communities approach was successful in promoting the use of child restraints in motor vehicles through a multi-faceted intervention that included efforts in various community settings, instructional classes and child safety seat distribution.