

Transport Safety (Vulnerable Road Users)

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RISK FACTORS FOR ROAD TRAFFIC INJURIES AMONG SCHOOL CHILDREN IN RURAL BANGLADESH

doi:10.1136/injuryprev-2012-040590v.1

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Introduction Road traffic injuries (RTIs) are a major health problem internationally, causing illness, deaths and disabilities among young people. Research on RTIs in developing countries has been limited.

Objective The objective of the study is to investigate risk factors for RTIs in school children.

Method We surveyed 845 grade IV & V students (aged 9–12 years) in Raiganj using a survey questionnaire. The survey was conducted in 15 primary schools.

Result The prevalence of risk factors for RTIs among school children were estimated. The results from the 820 completed questionnaires were: 18.8% reported they had RTIs in the last 12 months and most of these incidents occurred on the school journey (after school). Boys reported RTIs 1.61 times more than girls (95% CI 1.35 to 1.91). More than 80% of the travellers to and home from school were pedestrians and boys were more likely to travel on their own and girls to travel with peers. Pedestrian were exposed to greater risk than vehicle user in journeys to (relative risk 1.13 (95% CI 1.06 to 1.20) and home from school (relative risk 1.15 (95% CI 1.09 to 1.22)). Younger children were more at risk on journeys after school (relative risk 0.8316 (95% CI 0.6607 to 1.0467)). 60% reported they had received no information regarding road use.

Conclusions The results are in accordance with the high rates of RTIs and huge exposure of risk factors among school children, reinforcing the need for integrated inter-sectoral actions, including training and awareness rising among school children.