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SOURCE OF SAFETY INFORMATION—THE IMPORTANCE OF A PERSONAL APPEAL FOR SERVICE UTILISATION AMONG URBAN FAMILIES

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Background Interpersonal dialogue and the Internet have been established as sources of health information. However, little is known about how urban families learn about community programmes.

Aims The aims of this study are to determine: (1) sources of information for community programmes among urban residents and (2) if source of information is associated with utilising a free smoke alarm distribution programme.

Methods Surveys were conducted with a random sample of city residents to measure safety information. χ^2 tests were used to determine differences between sources of information and knowledge and utilisation of the smoke alarm programme.

Results Of the 603 participants interviewed most received information from friends/neighbours (64%), newspapers (54%), and the Internet (35%). Women compared to men were more likely to use personal (88% and 81%, respectively, $p=0.01$) and sources of information (78% and 67%, $p=0.01$). Compared to those with a high school diploma, those without one were less likely to identify the Internet ($p=0.01$) as an informational source. Those who cited personal and print sources were more likely to have heard about the smoke alarm programme (89% and 79%, respectively, $p=0.01$) compared to those who cited Internet or television and radio (34% and 58%, respectively, $p=0.01$). Individuals who used personal sources were more likely to have participated in the smoke alarm programme ($p=0.01$).

Significance This work underscores the continued importance of personal appeals to promote safety services in communities.