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YOUNG ROAD SAFETY ADVOCATE PROGRAM, THE "PEER TO PEER" APPROACH IN TEACHING PEDESTRIAN SAFETY

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Background In the Philippines, there are over 23 Million children who walk to and from the school and are at risk of being injured on the road. At least, 96,000 Filipino children under 14 years are injured or killed every year because of road traffic crashes and the majority of the victims (70–75%) are child pedestrians. There is a need to educate these children on safe walking.

Methods Safe Kids Worldwide Philippines (SKWP) developed the Young Road Safety Advocate Program (SKFYRSAP) the "peer to peer" approach in teaching pedestrian safety to children. SKWP first organised stakeholders meetings. The 600 students were chosen; twelve (12) young senior leaders and honoured students per school of ten (10) schools in five (5) cities were trained on the Walk This Way, the pedestrian safety program. After the training, they were fielded to teach young students in their own school. Each trained student was able to teach one to three sections of Grades III and IV.

Results The program reached 79,788 students from the 5 Cities. It successfully trained 600 students who taught their "peers" about pedestrian safety with the guidance of a teacher-coordinator in each school. The results of the pre and post tests administered to 5,067 students revealed that the knowledge about safe road behaviours among participants increased. For example, the number of students who answered the question on looking left right left direction before crossing the street increased from 24 percent to 69 percent in post-tests. Students also showed an increase in their recognition and understanding of road signs.

Conclusions It is successful in teaching pedestrian safety to children as shown in the results of the pre and post-tests where there was an increase of knowledge on pedestrian safety. It maximises the young senior leader students to teach younger students especially if we work closely with their teacher-coordinators. It can be considered as a sustainable program and can be easily replicated.

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MOBILE DEVICE USE INCREASES ODDS OF SELF-REPORTED PEDESTRIAN CRASH HISTORY AMONG TEENAGERS IN US

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Background It is hypothesised that distraction caused by mobile device use contributes to the higher rate of pedestrian fatalities among teenagers compared to younger children in the U.S. The purpose of the research was to understand relationships between frequent device use and self-reported pedestrian crash history among teenagers. Results were used to develop targeted interventions.

Methods 1,040 teens aged 13 to 18 yrs were surveyed online (n = 964) or through a mobile platform (n = 76) from June 26–July 3, 2014. A quota was set for each age (n = 200), with 17- and 18-yr-olds combined. The survey was comprised of 38 items and 3 open-ended questions.

Results 39.9% of respondents reported having been hit or almost hit by a car, bicyclist, or motorcyclist while walking. 70.7% of respondents reported use of a device when walking or crossing "all of the time," "often," or "sometimes." No significant difference was found in self-reported crash history by grade level (p = 0.068), ethnicity (p = 0.059), or race (p = 0.052). However, there was a significant difference in crash history by time spent walking to school (p = 0.000), number of streets crossed (p = 0.014), rural/urban (p = 0.009), walking in the dark (p = 0.000), and frequent device use when walking/crossing (p = 0.000). When controlling for these factors, there was a positive relationship between frequent device use and crash history (OR = 1.66, 95% CI: 1.15, 2.39, p = 0.006). Findings were used to build the "Take Action Against Distraction" program, which uses social media and peer-to-peer education to prevent distracted walking among teens.

Conclusions Frequent use of mobile devices while walking or crossing the street resulted in increased odds of self-reported crash history among survey respondents.

Traffic Safety

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ROAD SAFETY STATUS IN THE AMERICAS

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Background In the Americas, road traffic injuries are the second leading cause of death for people ages 15 to 24. Most of these deaths occur in low-and-middle income countries and have an immeasurable impact on families and communities throughout the Region. To monitor the progress of road safety situation, WHO and its regional offices (including PAHO) publish periodic reports.

Methods Data were collected from and agreed upon by experts from different sectors in 31 countries, validated at the regional level, and analysed by WHO. Data include variables that reflect the magnitude of road safety problem. In addition, legislative documents related to road safety were collected through online databases and government websites, analysed by a lawyer, and validated by the country's representative.

Results In 2013, there were 153,789 road traffic deaths in the Americas, with a death rate of 15.8 per 100,000 people. Inequalities exist; death rates are higher in middle-income and low-income countries (19.5 and 15.1 per 100,000, respectively) than in high-income countries (10.3). Almost half of all traffic deaths are among vulnerable road users (VRU): pedestrians (22%), motorcyclists (20%), and cyclists (3%). Deaths among motorcyclists have increased 5% since 2010. Motorization rates are distributed unevenly across countries. Car ownership is on the rise, as is motorcycle ownership in some subregions. The report highlights that less than half of the countries have comprehensive road safety laws on the risk factors (speed and drink-driving) and protective equipment (seat-belts, helmets, and child restraint).

Conclusions More attention should be paid to low and middle-income countries, especially in promoting the development of policies and infrastructure conducive to safe transit for VRU.

Additionally, more efforts should be made to improve and enforcement legislation on risk and protective factors.