

## NEWS AND NOTES

### Revised injury control manual from AAP

The new injury control manual from the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) is now available and by all accounts is well worth looking at. It contains new chapters on violence, sports injuries, agricultural injuries, and injury control in child care, preschool, school, and camp settings. A hands-on reference tool for professionals, it includes statistical information as well as strategies for injury prevention. For details of how to buy a copy of *Injury Prevention and Control for Children and Youth*, 3rd edition by the Committee on Injury and Poison Prevention, editor Mark Widome, contact AAP (tel: (from USA and Canada) 800 433 9016 or (from elsewhere) +1 847 228 5005; fax: +1 847 228 1281; e-mail: pubs@aap.org).

### US-Nordic conference on rural injury prevention

The papers presented at the Stockholm conference on rural childhood injury prevention in November 1996 have been published. The meeting compared approaches to prevention in Scandinavia with those in the US. *Further details:* Kungl Skogsoch Landbruksakademien, Drottninggatan 95 B, Box 6806, 113 86 Stockholm, Sweden (fax: +46 (0) 8 32 21 30).

### ... and more on farm safety

Canada's first national database program on farm injuries has produced its premiere report, *Fatal Farm Injuries in Canada, 1991-97*, which analyzes these fatalities by cause, age, and location. Not surprisingly, children of farm owner-operators are among the high risk groups. Tractors caused close to half of the work related farm deaths over all ages, and preteen children as well as youth are well represented in those numbers. Drownings and injuries from recreational vehicles were the leading cause of non-work related deaths, mostly to younger children. Copies of the report cost C\$10 from Lisa Hartling, National Coordinator, Canadian Agricultural Injury Surveillance Program, Department of Emergency Medicine, Queen's University, Kingston, Ontario K7L 3N6, Canada (fax: +1 613 548 1374; e-mail: LH12@post.queensu.ca).

### Helmet laws debate

"Laws enforcing helmet-wearing for cyclists do more harm than good". This was the motion for a written debate in *Australian Doctor* in February 1998, with Dorothy Robinson of the University of New South Wales proposing the motion and Brisbane surgeon and ISCAIP founder member Caroline Acton putting the case against.

### ... while in Canada, helmet laws knocked

As summer approached, the debate over bicycle helmets in Canada was heating up. Countering a growing movement to get helmet laws passed in every province is an organization called the Ontario Coalition for Better Cycling whose web site applauds the failures of helmet law lobbyists and the watering down of Ontario's law (only cyclists younger than 18 must wear helmets or face a fine in that province). The group argues that the government should instead mandate cycling education in schools, on the grounds that more crashes and injuries can be prevented "by getting children to appreciate the need to cycle responsibly".

### ... and CPSC issues new standard for bike helmets

The US Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) has voted unanimously to issue a new federal safety standard for bike helmets. The new standard will for the first time in the US provide one uniform mandatory safety standard that all bike helmets must meet. About 900 people, including more than 200 children, are killed annually in bicycle related incidents in the USA, and about 60% of these deaths involve a head injury. In addition, more than 500 000 people are treated annually in US hospital emergency rooms for bicycle related injuries. Research indicates that a helmet can reduce the risk of head injury by up to 85%. Beginning February 1999, all bike helmets manufactured or imported for sale in the US will have to meet the new federal safety standard set by CPSC. The new standard ensures that bike helmets will adequately protect the head and that chin straps will be strong enough to prevent the helmet from coming off in a crash, collision, or fall. In addition, the new standard requires that helmets intended for children up to age 5 cover more of the head to provide added protection to the more fragile areas of a young child's skull.

### Traffic calming guide from Belfast

Under the auspices of the Belfast Healthy Cities Project, brief guidelines have been published to provide members of community groups with information to explain the concept of traffic calming, whether it is right for them and how to set the wheels in motion to get their area calmed. The guidelines give examples of calming methods and explain how decisions on installing calming measures are taken by the local authority. A series of case studies from around the city highlight the processes and the problems encountered. *Traffic Calming: A Guide for Community Groups* can be obtained from Belfast Healthy Cities Project, The Beeches, 12 Hampton Manor Drive, Belfast BT7 3EN, UK (fax: +44 1232 643723).

### BC Injury Free

A comprehensive report, *BC Injury Free—A Framework for Action*, was published in February 1997 by British Columbia's provincial government. Its aim is to prevent unintentional injury among children and youth by providing a framework for coordi-

nated efforts. It sets targets for the reduction of deaths and injuries requiring hospitalisation for traffic collisions, fires, drownings, and those in the workplace and home. Recognising the lack of information on sport and recreational injuries the report notes that this area requires further attention. *Further details:* Minister's Injury Prevention Committee, c/o Office for Injury Prevention, Environmental Health Assessment and Safety Branch, BC Ministry of Health, 7-1 1515 Blanshard Street, Victoria BC V8V 3C8, Canada (fax: +1 250 952 1342).

### Our Healthier Nation

A Contract for Health is how the UK government subtitled this consultation paper setting targets for health in England. It proposes four main areas of health that require particular attention, including accidents. The government is seeking to reduce the rates of unintentional deaths and injuries that need medical attention by a fifth by the year 2010 compared with 1996. The paper identifies responsibilities for central government and other national players, local agencies and communities, and the population at large. Addressing inequalities in health and social exclusion are major planks in this strategy. *Our Healthier Nation* can be visited at the Department of Health's web site, [www.open.gov/doh/ohn/ohnhome.htm](http://www.open.gov/doh/ohn/ohnhome.htm). The consultation period ended on 30 April and will lead to the publication of policy statement (a white paper) during the summer.

### The CVIC Safe Communities Program

Recognizing the need to better serve communities, a Safe Communities Program has been established at the Center for Violence and Injury Control (CVIC) in the Allegheny University of the Health Sciences, Pittsburgh Campus. Directing this program is injury control specialist Samuel N Forjuoh, MD, DrPH. The first project to start under this new program on 1 April 1998 is a replication of the Seattle bike helmet campaign in the city of Pittsburgh using the Safe Communities approach. Funded by a local foundation, the Federation of Independent School Alumnae, a program coordinator has recently been hired to begin an expanded coalition building. *Further details:* Dr Samuel N Forjuoh, Center for Violence and Injury Control (fax: +1 412 330 6122; e-mail: sforjuoh@pgh.auhs.edu).

### ICE web site

"Take a moment to visit *AdvICE on Injury Statistics*, the new web site for the International Collaborative Effort on Injury Statistics", extols Lois Fingerhut. It will be found by beginning under international activities on this page: [www.cdc.gov/nchswww/about/otheract/otheract.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/nchswww/about/otheract/otheract.htm).

### Poison control centers save lives

National Poison Prevention Week was observed on 15-21 March 1998. Speaking at the news conference to launch the week, Dr George Rodgers, President of the American Association of Poison Control Centers, emphasized the lifesaving advice provided by the nation's poison control centers. "Poison control centers save lives and health care costs.

Every dollar spent on a poison control center saves about \$7 in medical expenses. Without poison centers, victims would have to go to emergency rooms. Without immediate intervention, some victims might die". Another participant at the National Poison Prevention Week news conference was 2 year old Amy Spangenberg, from Centreville, VA. She was poisoned when she swallowed some mothballs a neighbor had scattered on the ground to repel animals. Through quick action advised by a poison control center, the girl recovered completely.

#### Suicide web site

An Australian web site, [www.reachout.asn.au](http://www.reachout.asn.au), has been launched intended to assist in suicide prevention. It has sections for young people and also for professionals with information, links and discussion.

#### Kidsafe moves

The National Office of Kidsafe Australia has moved to Suite 4, Level 1, 230 Church St, Richmond, Victoria, Australia (tel: +61 3 9427 1008; fax: +61 3 9421 3831).

#### New US Surgeon General confirmed

Dr David Satcher, head of the Centers for Disease Control, has been confirmed as Surgeon General of the US Public Health Service and Assistant Secretary for Health of the Department of Health and Human Services.

#### Canadian photos available

The Healthy Images project from the health promotion branch of Canada's national health department provides photos for free use by the news media. The images show children and parents practising injury prevention. Kids and parents wear sports helmets, seat belts, sun hats, and flotation devices, for example, and young children are shown being supervised on playgrounds, in farm yards, and crossing streets. The photos are now available on CD by contacting Health Canada's Childhood Injury Prevention Program in Ottawa (fax: +1 613 952 6032). The Safe Seasons calendar is another project of this office. Each month features a particular safety issue (the dangers of outdated, secondhand products in May when yard sales are popular in Canada; toy safety in December). The 1998 calendars are distributed by the Canadian Public Health Association (fax: +1 613 725 9826). More information on Health Canada programs for children and youth can be found on its web site, [www.hcsc.gc.ca](http://www.hcsc.gc.ca).

#### Nordic report on testing products used for and by children

The consumer institutions in the Nordic countries have worked with product safety and standardisation for the past 20 years. However, it has only been during the last five years that standardisation has become one of the main means of influencing the safety of consumer products. This report links with the work of a number of European standardisation committees, including those working on child care and use articles, toys, playgrounds, children's furniture, and child

resistant packaging. The projects aims were to evaluate test methods to produce documentation to assist decision making on the proposed child care and use standard; increase the general competence on child safety in the participating institutions; develop proposals for reproducible and valid test methods; learn and draw experience from panel tests; evaluate whether the panel test is a relevant technique for testing packages; try out panel test for testing child protection products other than child resistant packaging; and develop further cooperation between the Nordic laboratories working in the field of child safety. The study concentrated on entrapment of head and neck, protrusion and snagging hazards, sharp edges and points, and poisoning, burns, and entrapment. The report, entitled *Child Safety: Testing Mechanical Requirements on Products used for and by Children, TemaNord 1997:578*, is available for purchase through agents world wide. Contact Nordic Council of Ministers, Store Strandstræde 18, DK-1255 Copenhagen K, Denmark (fax: +45 3396 0202) for further details.

#### Safety Net

The Autumn 1997 edition of *Safety Net*, the consumer safety newsletter of the UK Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), carried features on carbon monoxide poisoning, toy safety, research on packing opening, and pictograms. It highlights the availability of new DTI reports on residual current devices, crumb foam, pictograms, access towers, packaging, ergonomic design, and volatile substance abuse. These reports are available from DTI, 1 Victoria Street, London SW1H 0ET, UK. To receive *Safety Net*, write to DTI Consumer Safety Publications, Admail 528, London SW1W 8YT, UK.

#### Safety home design

The September 1997 edition of *Hazard*, the newsletter of the Victorian Injury Surveillance System (VISS), took a comprehensive look at injuries associated with home design. Four pages of recommendations for prevention strategies and programmes round off this excellent publication. Recent issues of *Hazard* and other reports from Monash University Accident Research Centre can be found at [www.general.monash.edu.au/muarc](http://www.general.monash.edu.au/muarc). Contact VISS at Building 70, Accident Research Centre, Monash University, Wellington Road, Clayton, Victoria 3168, Australia (fax: +61 3 9905 1809).

#### CISE

The first issue of *CISE* (Consumer Safety Institute's (CSI) Injury Surveillance Exchange) appeared from the Dutch CSI in February. CSI Director Wim Rogmans writes that the publication aims to respond to the growing need for an international exchange of experiences in injury epidemiology. The first issue reviewed a range of injury topics and invites contributions from readers. *Further details:* CSI, PO Box 75169, 1070 AD Amsterdam, The Netherlands (fax: +31 20 669 2831; e-mail: [h.toet@consafe.nl](mailto:h.toet@consafe.nl)).

#### CPSC recalls

It has been a busy time for the US CPSC. Recalls have been announced for a range of child related products including:

- 13 000 oak cribs. The cribs have a drop gate (a rail that folds down) on the front of the crib, rather than a rail that slides up and down. A baby's fingers can be trapped in the folding drop gate and injured.
- 108 000 high chair gym toys. The clacker balls hanging from the center of the toy present a choking hazard to young children.
- 21 000 cookie shaped refrigerator magnet toys and 49 000 crib mobiles. The magnet can come apart and release small plastic pieces, presenting a choking hazard to young children. Part of the mobile can detach and fall into the crib, presenting a risk of injury to young children.
- 800 000 infant car seats/carriers because of a defect that can cause serious injuries to children while the seats are being used as infant carriers.

#### ANEC News

ANEC, the European Association for the Coordination of Consumer Representation in Standardization, reported in its March 1998 newsletter that the German consumer organisation AgV was calling for a ban on children's toys made of soft PVC after Greenpeace research showed that small children continue to be at risk of poisoning. It also notes that a ministerial order has suspended the sale of seating buoys intended for children since swimming teachers had to save several children from drowning when this type of buoy overturned. These buoys have two holes to allow the legs to pass through so when they overturn the child cannot right itself. It is not stated where this ban has been implemented.

#### New Eurorisc newsletter

Issue 1 of a newsletter linked to the Eurorisc project appeared in December 1997. It contains graphic comparisons of injury mortality rates (E800-949) in European Union states, revealing that rates range from 55 deaths per 100 000 population in France to 21 in the UK. It also lists the national and local injury surveillance systems in the EU. *Further details:* Carolyn Roulston, The PEACH Unit, Department of Child Health, Yorkhill Hospital, Glasgow G3 8SJ, UK (fax: +44 141 201 0837).

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