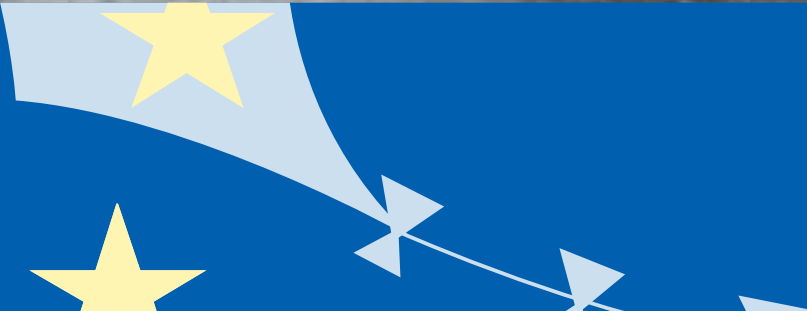
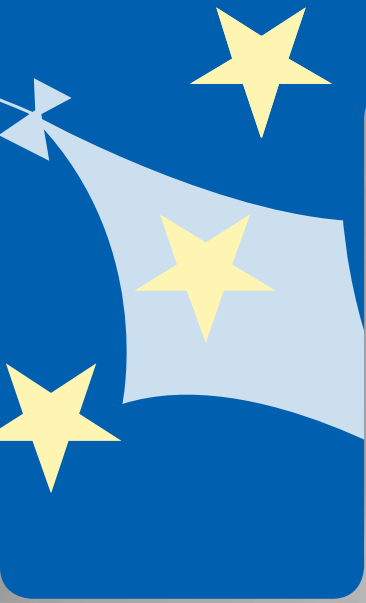




Child Safety Good Practice Guide:

Good investments in unintentional child injury prevention and safety promotion

Executive Summary



Background

The need for knowledge of what works is growing every day among those working to reduce the burden of unintentional injuries amongst Europe's children; the number one cause of death for children in every country. Recent developments calling for Member States to develop national action plans to prevent injury has increased the demand to deliver effective interventions at the national and local level. Good use of evidence is central to achieving this and knowing 'what works' is at the heart of developing good policy and programmes.

The European Child Safety Alliance a programme of the European Association for Injury Prevention and Safety Promotion – EuroSafe, believes in the value of 'good practice', which to us combines the best available research evidence with the practical expertise of professionals in the 'real world'. This approach requires that professionals are aware of both best evidence and practical aspects of transferring policies and programmes from one setting to another. With so much to do to address the safety of European children and so little time and limited resources, there is a need to focus on good investments, those strategies that are most likely to reduce childhood unintentional injuries. These strategies must also address the uniqueness of children taking into account that children are a vulnerable group in the world in which they live, address their growth and development stages and have children themselves as the focus of the action, not adults.

What is good practice?

For the purpose of the Child Safety Good Practice Guide 'good practice' is defined as:

- 1) A prevention strategy that has been evaluated and found to be effective (either through a systematic review or at least one rigorous evaluation) OR
- 2) A prevention strategy where rigorous evaluation is difficult but expert opinion supports the practice and data suggest it is an effective strategy (e.g., use of personal floatation devices (PFD) to prevent drowning) OR

- 3) A prevention strategy where rigorous evaluation is difficult but expert opinion supports the practice and there is a clear link between the strategy and reduced risk but a less clear link between the strategy and reduced injuries (e.g., secure storage of poisonings) AND
- 4) The strategy in question has been implemented in a real world setting so that the practicality of the intervention has also been examined.

The Guide builds on previous work by the Alliance and child safety researchers from around the globe and is a further step in supporting Member States in moving toward evidence-based good practice. Its purpose is to enable Member States to examine strategy options for unintentional child injury, move away from what has 'always been done' and move toward good investments – strategies that are known to work or have the greatest probability of success. These strategies are in the broad approaches of environmental and product modification; legislation, regulation and enforcement; promoting use of safety devices; supportive home visits; community based interventions; and education and skills development.

Recommended Good Practice Strategies for Child Safety

The following table provides an overview of the good practice strategies supported by current evidence and recommended within the Good Practice Guide. Adoption and implementation of these strategies will provide the best investments for reduction of the leading cause of death and greatest health and environmental burden to children in Europe. The strategies are colour coded to provide an indication of which of the 3 E's of injury prevention is the focus –

- Engineering (modification of a product/ environment),
- Enforcement (policy/legislation and measures to ensure compliance), or
- Education (education/behaviour change strategies).

Good practice for child passenger safety

Child passenger restraints

Legislation of safe child passenger restraints

Community-based interventions combining information dissemination on child passenger restraint safety with enhanced enforcement campaigns

Community-based interventions combining child passenger restraint distribution, loaner programmes or incentives with education programmes

Seat belts

Legislation requiring seat belt use in older children

Good practice for child pedestrian safety

Area wide engineering solutions to reduce pedestrian risk (including pedestrian facilities and/or traffic calming infrastructure)

Vehicular modifications to reduce the risk of pedestrian fatalities (e.g., safer car fronts)

Legislation / policy reducing vehicle speeds in residential areas

Enforcement of legislation / policy reducing vehicle speeds in residential areas

Community-based education / advocacy programmes to prevent pedestrian injuries in children 0-14 years

Pedestrian skills training to improve child pedestrian road crossing skills.

National implementation plans which comprise a wide range of measures: low speed limits, speed reduction measures, promotion of secondary safety and publicity aimed at both children and their parents and drivers.

Good practice for child cyclist safety

Use of bicycle helmets

Area wide engineering solutions and traffic calming measures (e.g., speed reduction zones)

Area wide engineering solutions to reduce cyclist risk (including cycling lanes and pathways)

Legislation of bicycle helmets

Community-based education / advocacy programmes around child helmet wearing

Cycling skills training to increase knowledge and riding skills in the children

Good practice for child water safety

Use of a personal floatation devices (PFD) for boating and other water recreational activities

Signage regarding safe behaviours around water displayed using clear and simple signs

Legislation requiring isolation fencing with secure, self-latching gates for all pools, public, semi-public and private including both newly constructed and existing pools

Safety standards for swimming pools

Lifeguards (adequately staffed, qualified, trained and equipped)

Community-based education / advocacy to increase PFD use

Water safety skills training (including swimming lessons) to improve swimming performance.

Good practice for fall prevention in children

Window safety mechanisms to prevent children from opening windows, such as bars and position locking devices.

Stair gates at the top of stairs in households with small children.

Surfacing materials such as sand or wood chips to a depth of 23-31 cm (9-12 inches) under playground equipment. Optimal equipment height to reduce risk of head injury is 1.5 m (5 feet).

Legislation banning baby walkers OR requiring product modification to remove the mobility issue

Enforcement of standards requiring safe depth of specified types of surfacing materials under playground equipment and regular maintenance of those materials

Educational programmes encouraging use of fall prevention safety devices such as window safety mechanisms to prevent children from opening windows and down stairs

Good practice for burn & scald prevention in children

Product modification, specifically child resistant cigarette lighters and self-extinguishing cigarettes

Legislation requiring a safe pre-set temperature for all water heaters

Legislation requiring installation of smoke detectors in new and existing housing combined with multi-factorial community campaigns and reduced price coupons

Legislation regulating flammability of sleepwear

Legislation banning the manufacture and sale of fireworks combined with enforcement

Smoke detector give away programmes targeting high-risk neighbourhoods and multi-faceted community campaigns with specific objective of installation of working smoke detectors.

Education / advocacy campaigns around fireworks are useful as supplemental efforts and can be used to build support for legislation.

Fire safety skills training to increase knowledge and behaviour of both children and parents.

Good practice for poisoning prevention in children

Secure storage for poisons

Legislation of child resistant packaging

Poison control centres with education of public regarding the use of centre.

Good practice for choking / strangulation prevention in children

Product modification of existing entrapment hazards such as crib/cot design and enforcement through legislation

Product banning of unsafe products through legislation

Legislation requiring product warning labels to include an explanation of the specific hazard

Good practice for general child home safety

Home safety counselling (addressing issues such as using window bars, stair gates, other home safety equipment and not using baby walkers, bath seats and other injury hazard producing equipment)

Home based social support, such as home visiting programmes for new mothers

Individual-level education/counselling on unintentional childhood injury prevention in the clinical setting

Good practice for general community-based child injury prevention

School based injury prevention education to increase safety-related knowledge and behaviour

Interactive education and training approaches for children

Good practice for country leadership, infrastructure and capacity to support child injury prevention

Capacity building activities, such as conferences, workshops and continuing education programmes

National leadership to establish direction and develop a vision of the future, develop change strategies, align people, inspire, energise.

The collection and dissemination of data to support monitoring and evaluation of injury prevention programmes and the development of policy and practice.



Why do we not implement good practice?

There are several reasons why as a field the injury prevention community fails to select and implement good practice. The most common challenges include: resistance to change from what is currently being done; competing priorities; failure to plan solutions effectively; lack of capacity or expertise; and a lack of time or resources to undertake the proven good practice.

How do we implement what works?

Experts acknowledge that knowing what worked in one setting is not enough. There are in fact three areas of information to be considered when selecting strategies during strategic and action planning

- 1 Is there evidence that the approach has been effective elsewhere?
- 2 Is the current political and social environment ready and able to take on the injury prevention strategy?
- 3 Is there a realistic and clear understanding of the process required to undertake the injury prevention strategy?

The transfer and implementation points and European case studies included in the full version of the Guide are there as information to consider when looking into these three areas and as illustrations of good practice in action. It is hoped that the information will begin to provide initial thoughts on why a strategy worked and provide some guidance for transfer to new settings. More work is needed to understand all the factors that influence the success of a strategy that is transferred from one setting to another.

What else can be done to support a culture of good practice in child injury prevention and safety promotion?

It is hoped that by ensuring awareness of effective strategies the injury prevention community

can better encourage policy makers to adopt evidence-based good practice into their setting and begin work to implement those changes. However, if the injury prevention community is to make the best use of limited resources and have the greatest impact on the lives of European children, action and commitment is required on many levels. Thus in closing the action and commitment needed by international organisations, the European Commission and national governments, injury researchers and injury practitioners themselves is summarised.

International organisations can:

- Encourage and facilitate national governments and organizations to systematically exchange information on good practice and transferability issues for child injury prevention programmes.
- Assist countries and regions in building capacity to address child injury using good practice.
- Work cooperatively with other international agencies to promote good practice in child injury prevention and safety promotion.
- Encourage evaluation of all child injury prevention initiatives in order to identify new examples of good practice and facilitate exchange of information on good practice between stakeholders.

National governments and the European Commission can:

- Support and fund good practice injury prevention measures that reduce child injury deaths and serious injury in a combined approach of education, engineering and enforcement of standards and regulations, specifically through:
 - * the exchange of information on good practice and transferability issues regarding child injury prevention programmes.

- * enhanced development and increased enforcement of child safety standards and other safety legislation.
 - * supporting a culture of good practice and ensuring evaluation of all child injury prevention initiatives.
 - * making and following through on commitments to adopt good practices.
- Integrate good practice strategies for child injury prevention into European and national public health programmes and prepare and implement a European and national strategy on child injury prevention with appropriate good practice-based action plans and dedicated resources.

Injury researchers can:

- Conduct research to better understand the processes by which strategies/interventions are identified, adopted, implemented and maintained; and to understand the facilitators and barriers of transferring good practice between settings.
- Evaluate the childhood injury prevention strategies that have not been proven effective or ineffective in order to build our knowledge of what is good practice.
- Conduct cost effectiveness studies to provide decision makers with more information to assist in making decisions between good practices.
- Help translate research results into key evidence statements that are easy to understand.

Disseminate these evidence statements and take a more active role in advocating for policy choices that result in the implementation of good practice.

Injury practitioners can:

- Communicate the evidence/facts of what really works and show the examples of this success.
- Build and extend networks of collaboration with other NGO's with an interest in safety and with major stakeholders in business, government and academia in order to promote and facilitate the adoption of a culture of good practice in child injury prevention.
- Provide expertise in the field of child injury prevention on what works and on the implementation of effective good practice, standards and regulations in various settings and cultures.
- Act as advocates with government and industry for the implementation and evaluation of good practice in child injury prevention across all sectors.
- Evaluate all NGO led child injury prevention initiatives in order to identify new good practice and facilitate exchange of information on good practice between stakeholders.

Contacts and Further Information

To obtain a complete version of the Child Safety Good Practice Guide contact the European Child Safety Alliance at: secretariat@childsafetyeurope.org or download from the website at: www.childsafetyeurope.org

Reference

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