

Hello AIPN Member

I suppose you are wondering why this edition is so late? Those of you on email would have seen that I didn't get enough articles to print a newsletter for March. Now there is a flood.

In this issue, I have organised some articles on Indigenous Injury Prevention. Responses arrived from NSW, WA and Qld, but I'm sure there is a lot more out there. If you know of other interventions that are in progress, could you please get them written up and send them in. Perhaps we could have a regular section on Indigenous Injury.

Announcing Crime Prevention Victoria

On 8 May 2001, the Victorian Minister for Police and Emergency Services, André Haermeyer, launched a new agency within the Department of Justice, Crime Prevention Victoria.

CPV's role is to develop and implement a comprehensive crime prevention and anti-violence strategy and provide information and support on best practice models of crime prevention. A central focus is on targeted research and data analysis and evidence-based policy development.

The key functions include:

- developing and implementing an integrated whole-of-Government, evidence-based crime prevention strategy for Victoria;
- working with local communities to develop effective local responses to community crime and safety concerns within a statewide

framework;

- providing support and advice to local communities and other agencies on crime trends, issues and best practice in crime prevention to assist and support local program development;
- developing, implementing and funding innovative and cost-effective programs to reduce crime; and
- conducting strategic data analysis, research and evaluation to inform the development and implementation of Victoria's crime prevention strategy.

Crime Prevention Victoria works closely with local and state government, police, community and non-government organisations, as well as relevant national bodies.

The director of Crime Prevention Victoria, Michael Bourne, has long experience in the road safety

Inside This Issue !

- ♦ **Aboriginal Injury Surveillance**
- ♦ **Child Restraint Training**
- ♦ **Aboriginal Life Expectancy**
- ♦ **Child Injury Death**
- ♦ **Mobile Phones**
- ♦ **Bullying is everywhere**

AIPN WEBSITE

<http://www.nisu.flinders.edu.au/aipn>

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aipn-unsubscribe@www.nisu.flinders.edu.au

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MID NORTH COAST ABORIGINAL INJURY SURVEILLANCE PROJECT

Report soon to be released!!!

Little is known about the prevalence, nature and cause of injury experienced by Aboriginal people, nor the impact injury has on the individual, family and community. Until recently the most comprehensive analysis of injury in Aboriginal communities in Australia, was the "Study of Injury in Five Cape York Communities" which was completed in April 1997.

Following the success of the Cape York Study, the NSW Health Department's Injury Prevention Policy Unit sought to resource two projects in NSW to replicate apposite elements of the methodology used in the Cape York Study.

These projects attempt to describe the injury patterns and subsequent 'risk factors' among Aboriginal people residing within various coastal regions of NSW. These include the Shoalhaven region and the entire Mid North Coast. They are also attempting to determine the usefulness of this data to local Aboriginal decision-making structures, and in consultation with Aboriginal communities and community representatives, identify opportunities in which communities could use this data to plan injury prevention strategies and/or initiatives.

It is envisaged that the findings from this study will adequately enable the various decision-making bodies and the Aboriginal communities of the Mid North Coast with the required information to establish appropriate programs to reduce the prevalence and

impact associated with injury. This report will also provide sound base line information that will assist in the development of a much needed NSW Aboriginal Injury Prevention Strategy.

Project Aims:

The Mid North Coast Aboriginal Injury Surveillance Project has attempted to describe the incidence, nature and causes of injuries experienced by people treated at three selected hospital emergency departments on the Mid North Coast, over a 12 month period. This includes a data validation methodology to assess the accuracy of the identification of Aboriginality.

In addition, with the support of the Mid North Coast Aboriginal Health Partnership, the project has used qualitative methods to describe the injury experience of the Aboriginal people and communities as a whole.

Project Objectives:

- To identify the patterns of injury experienced by Aboriginal communities on the Mid North Coast, and where possible identify where particular lifestyle issues in the communities have a direct relationship to the injury patterns;
- Identify local Aboriginal decision making structures and determine the usefulness of the data to these groups;
- In consultation with community representatives, identify opportunities in which communities could use the data to plan injury prevention activities;
- Provide evidence to inform the development of a state-wide injury prevention strategy for Aboriginal people in NSW;
- Promote the need for identification of Aboriginality in

Decline in Aboriginal Life Expectancy

Associated with the risk of injury death there is evidence that the life expectancy among Australian indigenous communities is falling. Unpublished data from the Australian Bureau of Statistics indicates small falls in life expectancy in contrast to increases in life expectancy for other Australians. Because of data reliability issues, the calculations are based on data from three

states, and show that the black-white divide in life expectancy is worse than that for native Americans and for Maori. Aboriginal males can now expect to live to 55.6 years, about 20.6 less than men generally; for Aboriginal females the figures are 63 years and a gap of 18.8 years. The ABS has previously indicated that the Indigenous death rates are probably understated because the information is patchy.

Child Car Restraint Training for Indigenous Workers

By Michelle Rowcliffe, Injury Prevention Officer

A Health Department of WA's observational study noted that only 60% of children assessed were using a restraint appropriate for their size and weight. Child car restraints if used correctly are effective in reducing injuries or death in children involved in motor vehicle crashes.

Last year a program sponsored by Bankwest aimed at increasing the number of children in the Upper Great Southern (Western Australia) who were correctly restrained in cars. Sadly, Indigenous Australians have been identified as a high-risk group, who was not reached by the Bankwest program.

A Child Car Restraint training day was organised after an Upper Great Southern Aboriginal Liaison Officer commented on the lack of involvement of Indigenous Australian workers in the Car Child Restraint Programs. Last year attempts had been made to involve Indigenous Australian workers, however, funerals had prevented them from attending the information and training sessions. With enthusiasm and interest arising from within the indigenous community about Child Car Restraints, more workers were keen to help organise and attend the training session.

On the 1st of May Indigenous Australian health, child and police liaison workers were trained to check car child restraints. The training session involved theory topics such as the legal position, Australian design rules and standards, correct Child Car Restraint types, second hand restraints, anchor points and fittings. The practical component involved correctly fitting a child car harness, baby capsule and reversible child car seat into cars.

Seven Indigenous Australian workers attended the training session. The people trained will be assisting with future checking stations held in the Upper Great Southern region. The number of restraints used correctly by the


UNICEF Report Card on Child Injury

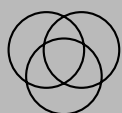
In February 2001 UNICEF released its latest Innocenti Report Card which is a league table of child deaths by injury in the world's richest countries, the 26 members of the OECD. Reporting that in every single industrialised country, injury is now the leading killer of children aged 1-14 years and that 20,000 children will die from injury in the next twelve months.

From an Australian point of view the worst aspect of the report card is the continuing high death and injury rates for indigenous children, the report illustrates this by noting that the risk of death by fire is 75 times greater for indigenous children. 

Action on Injury - Vietnam, Malaysia

The rates of child injury death in the developed world can be easily put in context by comparing the UNICEF League of Child Death figures to those in developing countries. The UNICEF report shows that 20,000 children a year are likely to die from injury in the 26 OECD countries, contemporary estimates from UNICEF Vietnam put the child injury death figures at 50,000 deaths a year.

The good news is that the hard task of prevention is being undertaken. Vietnam is developing a National Injury Prevention Strategy, and within this UNICEF Vietnam is supporting the development of a Child Injury Prevention Strategy in association with the Vietnam Committee for Child Protection. The strategies are expected to be further developed at a national injury conference in the second half of 2001. Reports on the results of the mandatory requirements for the use of helmets on motorcycles and of trial promotion programs should be available at that time. 



**INJURY
INCIDENCE**

Vol 5. No 1. June 2001

Mobile phone link to accidents

In Malaysia Dr Krishnan has been commissioned, along with colleagues, to develop an injury prevention strategy which should also be ready in the second half of 2001.

Anna Salleh - ABC Science Online
Tuesday, 29 May 2001

The risks of talking on mobile phones, handheld or handsfree, whilst driving, was emphasised in a new report and has renewed expert concern about Australian regulations.

Writing in the Canadian Medical Association Journal Donald Redelmeier and Robert Tibshirani said their previous research underestimated the dangers of mobile phone use when driving.

Their previous study in 1997 published in the New England Journal of Medicine found that drivers using mobile phones faced a four-fold increase in their chances of having a collision, and handsfree kits offered no safety advantage.

In the new report, Redelmeier and Tibshirani said "Making calls on a cellular phone is distinctly more risky than listening to the radio, talking to passengers and other activities commonly occurring in vehicles."

The publication of another paper emphasising the risks of talking on mobile phones - hand-held or hands-free - whilst driving, has renewed expert concern over current Australian regulations.

Commenting on the latest study, Australian experts said the current policy which banned the use of handheld mobile phones while driving but still allowed the use of

handsfree kits may not be enough to prevent accidents.

According to Professor Tom Triggs of Monash University's Accident Research Centre, keeping your hands on the wheel and making sure you don't drive off the road is the least demanding task when driving a car.

He said the most demanding tasks are things such as scanning the road ahead, the surrounding environment, using the rear vision mirror and deciding what path to take.

"You have to decide how and when to give attention to give each of these tasks," he says, adding this capacity for "attentional allocation" is a skill that needs training and experience.

Consequently, he said, drivers that are younger or less experienced have less processing capacity, and are more easily pushed to overload by additional tasks. Unlike changing a CD, playing with the radio or even talking to another person in the car, mobile phone conversations even handsfree require a very high level of processing ability.

"There's a relentlessness about mobile phone conversations," he said. "They demand we listen all the time. You have to continue the conversation even when it's difficult to hear because of a poor or degraded signal."


He adds that while a person sitting in the car can usually judge when you're too busy to continue a conversation, a person on the other end of a phone cannot. The reduction in such conversational cues make phone conversations

Bullying is everywhere!

In the first week of February 2001 Australians could not help but be confronted with the widespread nature of bullying:

- A highly publicised court case had two former student boarders from an elite private school facing charges for assault and the atmosphere at the school described as having an "entrenched culture" of bullying;
- A member of Federal Parliament publicising an event

in which he was "stood over" and threatened by three other members of Parliament; and

- After a series of serious incidents and legal cases involving victimisation, intimidation, violent inductions and sexual harassment the entire armed forces of Australia stood down for two hours to attending meetings and watch a video from the Commanding Officer stating that these practices were 

At the Nov 2000 Conference !



DEADLINES FOR NEWSLETTER CONTRIBUTIONS IN 2001.

15 September
8 December
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"Bouncy Castle" death

A child in Adelaide Australia was killed and an adult and five other children significantly injured when a "bouncy castle" amusement device broke its restraints and became airborne.

The devices are inflated plastic with three sides and a floor in which children play, they are commonly used at shows and community events. Kidsafe Australia has been able to identify at least four other occasions in which the wind has caused these devices to become airborne and caused significant injury. Other injuries identified have been with children falling from the open side and with body clashes between children.

A detailed investigation is under way prior to a Coronial hearing. It is thought likely, on the basis of letters to the BMJ that "Bouncy castles" are an injury risk in other jurisdictions.



MP advocates Fire reduced cigarettes

A New Zealand MP, Grant Gillon, a former firefighter, attempted to introduce a Bill to the NZ Parliament in November 2000, requiring the Standards Council draw up a safety standard for cigarettes.

The idea for comes from the US, where a government study revealed it is possible to manufacture a cigarette that is less likely to start fires. Manufacturers can reach the standard by reducing the diameter of the cigarette, reducing the density of tobacco packaging and reducing the porosity of cigarette paper (which allows less air to flow through the paper).

Grant Gillon says that about six hundred fires a year start because of the careless disposal of cigarettes.

"This is simply about making cigarettes safer and saving lives.

Cigarettes are the largest single cause of fire deaths. Twenty people are killed or injured in fires caused by cigarettes each year (in NZ).

A ban on disposable lighters that were not child resistant resulted from Grant Gillon's 1998 member's bill. Fire Service figures indicate a dramatic fall in the number of fires caused by lighters since the ban was introduced.



AIPN is a professional organisation bringing together all Australians and New Zealanders concerned with injury issues. Please feel free to contact us for more information.

AIPN undertakes to collate information from contributors, and has not been responsible for the research reported in this newsletter

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