



TO: Chair and Members of the Board of Health

FROM: Graham L. Pollett, MD, FRCPC
Medical Officer of Health

DATE: 2012 September 13

BECAUSE INJURIES ARE PREDICTABLE AND PREVENTABLE CAMPAIGN

Recommendation

It is recommended that Report No. 103-12 re BeCause Injuries are Predictable and Preventable Campaign be received for information.

The Issue

Unintentional injuries (UI) are a serious public health concern. In Canada, injuries are the leading cause of death for individuals between the ages of 1-34 years and the fourth leading cause of death for Canadians of all ages. In 2004, 81% of injury costs (\$16.01 billion) were attributable to UI in Canada. UI include those related to: transportation, falls, drowning, fire/burns, poisoning, and sport. Of all unintentional injuries, falls are the most common cause of emergency department visits, hospitalizations and deaths in Middlesex-London. Motor vehicle collisions are the second most common cause.

The Campaign

In 2009, The Health Unit partnered with the Children's Hospital of London Health Sciences Centre to plan, develop, and implement the BeCause Injuries are Predictable and Preventable Campaign (BeCause Campaign). The purpose of the campaign is to increase public awareness that injuries are predictable and preventable and that individuals have the capacity to prevent injuries. This campaign addresses the Prevention of Injury and Substance Misuse Standard within the Ontario Public Health Standards.

During the campaign development phase, focus groups in Middlesex-London were held to determine the general understanding of predictability and preventability concerning injury prevention, as well as to gather information regarding social marketing preferences. Using the recommendations from the focus group report, the campaign materials and dissemination strategy were created.

Between 2009 and 2011, three phases of the campaign were launched in the City of London and Middlesex County through media such as newspapers, magazines, transit shelters, billboards, movie theatres and website promotion. The content of the messages was selected based on local statistics and new legislation. Each campaign phase highlighted the tag line "BeCause Injuries are Predictable and Preventable" and focused on the following topics:

- Distracted Driving (Fall of 2009, and Fall of 2010)
- Bike Helmets (Spring/Summer 2010); and
- Childhood Falls Prevention (Spring/Summer 2011)

Evaluation

An evaluation was conducted over the course of 2009 and 2010 through the Rapid Risk Factor Surveillance System (RRFSS) to measure whether or not there was increased awareness. The evaluation found no significant differences between baseline perceptions and perceptions following the first and second phase of the BeCause Campaign. However, it did identify subgroups within the population with lower awareness levels. These subgroups included individuals who were caregivers, and those with low income and education. The evaluation report provided considerations for future programming and identified the need for further injury prevention education throughout the Middlesex-London community. Other recommendations included:

- Segment the intended audience, especially the identified subgroups
- Revise the communication strategy to include social media
- Consider a fourth phase

Research about the public's belief that injuries are preventable indicates that individuals who are able to provide countermeasures for an injury are more likely to believe that injuries can be prevented. This research also suggests that injury prevention messages need to increase perceptions of susceptibility and severity of risk, but they also need to increase self efficacy.

Implications and Future Directions

Using the recommendations from the evaluation report, together with other available evidence, the Childhood Falls Prevention Phase (falls are the number one reason young children visit the emergency department) was expanded to include educational videos targeting the identified subgroup, parents and caregivers of young children, based on their social marketing preferences. These videos have been promoted through various means, including social media and the local Rogers TV Listings channel. They were also integrated into Health Unit program materials such as the Just Beginning's Program and the Let's Grow Program to further reach the intended audience. To date, the videos have had over 900 views.

Further evaluation of the video is planned for 2012 so that decisions and plans can be determined for the next phase of the BeCause Campaign.

This Report was written by Ms. Megan Georgieff, Public Health Nurse, and Ms. Marylou Albanese, Manager, Healthy Communities and Injury Prevention Team.



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This report addresses the following requirement(s) of the Ontario Public Health Standards:
Prevention of Injury and Substance Misuse, Societal Outcome: There is change in the public's cultural norms towards viewing injuries as predictable and preventable.