

INJURY PREVENTION CENTER OF GREATER DALLAS

FACTS

The Reality

- Injuries are the leading cause of death for children and young adults in Texas through the first four decades of life.
- The injury death rates in Dallas County exceed the state rates.
- More than 700 individuals are treated in the Emergency Department at Parkland hospital for injury-related causes every month.
- The cost of injury admissions in Dallas County costs the county over \$220 million a year in inpatient medical expenses.
- The economic burden of injuries is shared by individuals, families, employers and communities.

Injury and Violence Prevention Saves Lives



In 1991, Dallas was facing a crisis. Injuries and trauma-related deaths had increased by 38 percent over previous years. Trauma-related injuries were growing at such a rate that by 1995, the number of trauma patients would eventually exceed the capacity of Dallas area hospitals to treat them.

Something had to be done – but not the same things that had always been done.

In 1992, more than 100 area health, government and business leaders examined the issue and developed a unique plan to address the problem and established the Injury Prevention Center of Greater Dallas (IPC). Why? Because prevention works and saves money.

When evidence-based injury prevention strategies are implemented, the estimated economic return on investment is substantial. For instance, home visitation programs have been demonstrated to be particularly effective in reducing child abuse and injury, and provide a cost savings of nearly \$2.88 to \$5.70 per dollar spent. Other proven cost-effective injury prevention strategies include booster seats for children, bicycle and motorcycle helmets, smoke alarms, and the enforcement of laws associated with preventing drunk driving, maintaining curfews for teen drivers, and wearing seat belts.

- Every \$46 spent on a child safety seat, saves \$1,900 in societal costs
- Every \$31 spent on a booster seat, saves \$2,200.
- Every \$33 spent on a smoke alarm, saves \$940.
- Every \$10 spent on a bicycle helmet, saves \$570.

The Safe Communities Approach

The international Safe Communities movement grew out of the First World Conference on Accident and Injury Prevention, held in Stockholm, Sweden, in 1989. The Manifesto for Safe Communities, emerging from that conference, states that “All human beings have an equal right to health and safety.” This is a fundamental aspect of the World Health Organization’s (WHO) “Health for All” strategy. The WHO recognizes that safety is a universal concern and responsibility of each community. The Safe Communities model understands that no single approach to injury prevention and safety promotion can be as effective as collaboration among community organizations and community members. Also paramount to the Safe Communities model is the recognition that the leading role is played by the community itself, an entity that is larger than any of its parts. This proven, sustainable model creates an infrastructure in local communities to increase action on injury prevention and safety promotion through the building of local partnerships.

Communities that can document a systematic approach to defining local injury prevention and safety issues, a collaborative process to address them and a commitment to evaluate the effectiveness of their efforts are eligible to be designated as a Safe Community by the World Health Organization’s Collaborating Centre on Community Safety Promotion.

“Safety and security don’t just happen; they are the result of collective consensus and public investment.”

-Nelson Mandela

FACTS

What can you do?

Efforts to reform the health care system in our nation must address injuries and violence in order to improve health, increase public safety, reduce health care costs and allow all Americans to live to their full potential.

Forward-thinking donors understand that only when we focus more money and energy on prevention will we solve our nation's health care problems. They can know that their support of the Injury Prevention Center is putting prevention into action. Funding of \$400,000 or a gift to establish an endowment will help the IPC more aggressively and efficiently reduce child abuse, injury and death due to motor vehicle crashes, falls and fires. It is a mission well worth our time and resources.

For more information, contact:

Shelli Stephens Stidham

Director

214.590.4461

SLSTID@parknet.pmh.org

The IPC in Action

In 1996, the IPC assisted Dallas in becoming the first WHO designated Safe Community in the United States. Dallas was re-certified by the WHO in 2007. The IPC has received numerous local, national and international awards for excellence in injury prevention including:

- NOVA Award sponsored by the American Hospital Association
- International Safe Community Special Achievement Award presented by the World Health Organization and National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
- Safe Community Award presented by the U.S. Department of Transportation
- International Distinguished Safe Community Award presented by the World Health Organization



More importantly, since the IPC was established, injury death rates have decreased in Dallas and safe behaviors have increased (e.g., seat belt use, car seat use, the prevalence of smoke alarms in homes, etc.). For example, a controlled evaluation of a program the IPC implemented to increase child safety seat use among a high risk population in southeast Dallas found that child safety seat use increased by 15 to 30 percentage points following the program. Additionally, residential fire injuries have decreased by 60 percent in areas where the IPC and Dallas Fire-Rescue have installed smoke alarms and more than 36,000 lives have been protected.