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Accidental Injuries Report Consumer Products

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Product Safety



Canada



Consumer and
Corporate Affairs
Canada

Consommation
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Canada

Introduction

The Canadian Accident Injury Reporting and Evaluation (CAIRE) project was initiated by the Product Safety Branch of Consumer and Corporate Affairs Canada in January 1982. The objective of the project is to provide a data bank of accident/injury information which, in turn, will help organizations concerned with product safety to establish priorities and evaluate programs.

A series of reports will be published twice yearly, in April and October. The April report will summarize the data collected in the period April to September inclusive of the previous year, and the October report will summarize that collected in the period from the previous October to March inclusive.

Methodology

Five hospitals are participating in the data collection:

Isaac Walton Killam Hospital, Halifax, N.S.
Montréal General Hospital, Montréal, Québec
Toronto Hospital for Sick Children, Toronto, Ontario
Pasqua Hospital, Regina, Saskatchewan
Prince George Hospital, Prince George, B.C.

As part of the patient registration procedure at the hospitals, all admissions with accidental injuries that are consumer product related are specially coded. The product coding used is identical to that of the National Electronic Injury Surveillance System (NEISS) used in the United States. Data about the nature of the injury is also collected at the same time according to the International Classification of Diseases (ICD-9N) code, the cause of injury according to the ICD-9E code, and the age group of the casualty. The data is collated and tabulated by the Hospital Medical Records Institute (HMRI) on a quarterly basis.

All admissions to the participating hospitals, including emergency cases, that result from accidents involving consumer products are reported to HMRI. The statistics, therefore, exclude accidental injuries not requiring hospital treatment. Other exclusions are injuries that are not directly related to a product, such as long-term exposure to toxic chemicals, and accidents occurring in industrial settings or at the place of work.

The small size of the sample (*five hospitals out of more than 1,000 medical institutions in Canada*) precludes any reliable extrapolation of the results but is sufficient to provide a good indication of trends. Two of the five participating hospitals specialize in child care — this increases the bias of the sample from a statistical point of view but is of particular interest to the Product Safety Branch because of its commitment to the safety of children's products. The participating hospitals are representative of various community sizes and are strategically located geographically.

The NEISS code used to classify products divides the range of consumer products into some 1,000 classifications. Some of these are very specific, for example, waffle irons, and others much more general, such as stairs and steps. The codes referring to sports injuries are intended to be used only when sports equipment is involved, but, in practice, it is difficult to distinguish between injuries inherent to the sport and those related to the equipment used. In a more general sense, the mention of a product does not imply that the product caused the accident, but only that the product was associated with the accident. To define the cause of an accident requires a detailed investigation into the circumstances and environment of the accident, as well as the nature of the injury. Special investigations of this type are initiated whenever necessary to meet the requirements of the Product Safety Branch.

The tables include the number of accidents by age group, those products or activities most frequently associated with accidents and the place of occurrence of the accidents.

For further information address your request to:

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CAIRE Highlights — Summer 1982

- Because two out of the five hospitals reporting accidents specialize in the treatment of children, there is a greater representation of younger age-groups involved in accidents (*64 per cent*) than is true for the population as a whole.
- Bicycles are associated with over 11 per cent of accidents in the under-15 age groups but only three per cent of accidents to adults. The majority of injuries were head wounds.
- Stairs and steps are associated with a consistently high number of accidents. For the under-five-years group they are the highest classification by a considerable margin; this is also true for the over-65-years group, although the sample size is much smaller. In the latter age group, stairs and steps are associated with one-sixth of all reported accidents.
- Accidents associated with home and car repair and maintenance are also prominent. The combined total of accidents associated with motor vehicles and parts; metal parts and pieces; lumber, boards and panel pieces; and nails, screws and carpet tacks represent approximately 15 per cent of all accidents to adults. The number of accidents associated with ladders is approximately one per cent of the adult total.
- Playground apparatus including swings and slides are associated with six per cent of the accidents to the under-15-years group. The injuries requiring in-patient treatment included 13 fractured skulls.
- Household furniture such as beds, chairs and doors were associated with 6.5 per cent of accidents to the under-15-years group. Again, head injuries were the most frequent type of injury.
- Baseball (*including similar sports such as softball and fastball*) is the most dangerous summer sport, being associated with 5.5 per cent of accidents to adults, and 3.5 per cent of those to children. Football, soccer and ice hockey are also included among the activities most frequently associated with accidents.

Figure 1
Number of Accidents by Age Category
April - September 1982

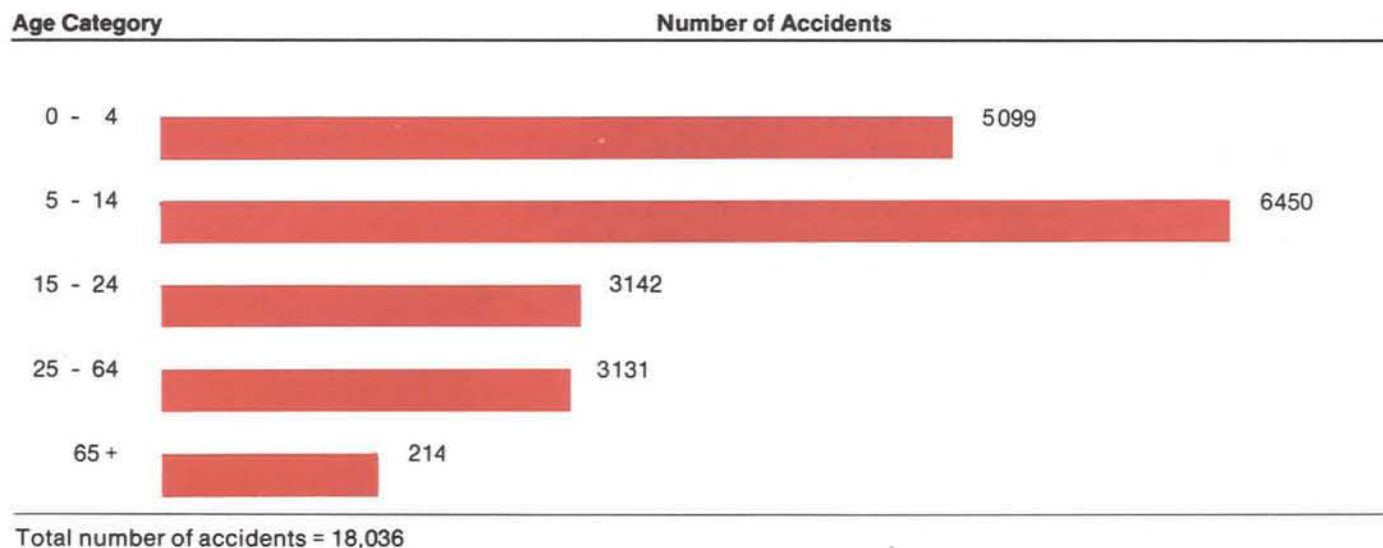


TABLE 1
Top 20 Products or Activities
Involved in Accidents by Age Category
April - September 1982

Product/Activity	Age Categories											
	OVERALL		0 - 4		5 - 14		15 - 24		25 - 64		65 +	
		%		%		%		%		%		%
Bicycles or Accessories	1,528	100	190	12.5	1,129	73.9	145	9.5	61	4.0	3	0.2
Stairs or Steps	1,043	100	545	52.3	255	21.6	108	10.4	129	12.4	36	3.5
Baseball	764	100	25	3.3	376	49.3	185	24.3	178	23.3	—	—
Glass Parts or Pieces	530	100	65	12.3	200	37.8	140	26.5	121	22.9	4	0.8
Motor Vehicles or Parts	432	100	67	15.5	96	22.3	127	29.4	129	29.9	13	3.0
Football	394	100	—	—	147	37.3	189	48.0	57	14.5	1	0.3
Knives	390	100	16	4.1	69	17.7	136	34.9	159	40.8	10	2.6
Doors	375	100	150	40.0	134	35.8	50	13.4	36	9.6	5	1.4
Nails, Screws, Carpet Tacks	367	100	48	13.1	149	40.6	73	19.9	94	25.7	3	0.9
Metal Parts or Pieces	345	100	20	5.8	34	9.9	94	27.3	194	56.3	3	0.9
Lumber, Boards, Panel Pieces	308	100	23	7.5	62	20.2	81	26.3	135	43.9	7	2.3
Beds	299	100	224	75.2	48	16.1	6	2.1	12	4.1	9	3.1
Swings or Swing Sets	299	100	125	41.8	168	56.2	3	1.0	2	0.7	1	0.4
Soccer	291	100	2	0.7	180	61.9	87	29.9	22	7.6	—	—
Hockey	238	100	3	1.3	119	50.0	84	35.3	32	13.5	—	—
Chairs	235	100	151	64.3	43	18.3	13	5.6	23	9.8	5	2.2
Roller Skating	216	100	2	1.0	165	76.4	39	18.1	10	4.7	—	—
Monkey Bars, Playground Apparatus	207	100	56	27.1	149	72.0	1	0.5	—	—	1	0.5
Foods	196	100	83	42.4	33	16.9	35	17.9	42	21.5	3	1.6
Slides	193	100	104	53.9	84	43.6	2	1.1	2	1.1	1	0.6
TOTAL	8,650	100	1,899	22.0	3,610	41.8	1,598	18.5	1,438	16.7	105	1.3
Relative percentage, by age category as compared to the total number of Accidents N= 18,036 (See Figure 1).												
	8,650	48.0	1,899	10.6	3,610	20.1	1,598	8.9	1,438	8.0	105	0.6

Figure 2
Place of Occurrence
Top 20 Products or Activities Involved in Accidents
April - September 1982

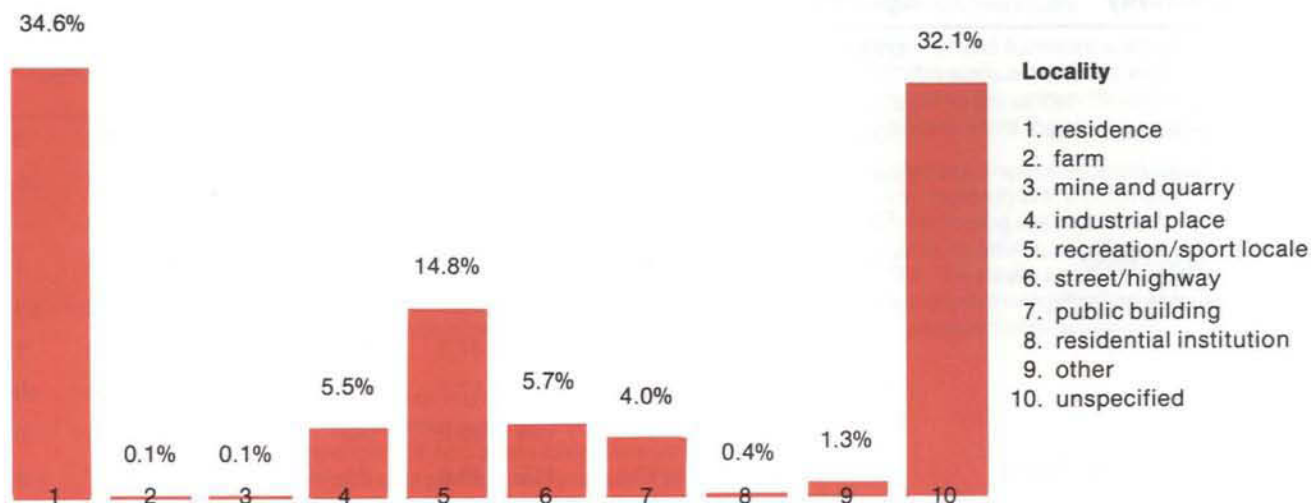


TABLE 2
Top 20 Products or Activities Involved in Accidents
April - September 1982

Product/Activity	Frequency	%
Bicycles or Accessories	1,528	8.5
Stairs or steps	1,043	5.8
Baseball	764	4.3
Glass Parts or Pieces	530	3.0
Motor Vehicles or Parts	432	2.4
Football	394	2.2
Knives	390	2.2
Doors	375	2.1
Nails, Screws, Carpet Tacks	367	2.1
Metal Parts or Pieces	345	2.0
Lumber, Boards, Panel Pieces	308	1.7
Beds	299	1.7
Swings or Swing Sets	299	1.7
Soccer	291	1.7
Hockey	238	1.4
Chairs	235	1.2
Roller Skating	216	1.2
Monkey Bars, Playground Apparatus	207	1.2
Foods	196	1.1
Slides	193	1.1
TOTAL	8,650	48.0%

Total number of accidents = 18,036

Note: Due to rounding, the total of the percentage column does not equal the sum of the components.