

**Strategy for Prevention of Unintentional Injuries in Children and Young People (0-19year)**

---

**Report of Anna Lynch, Director of Public Health County Durham, Children and Adults Services, Durham County Council**

---

**Purpose of the Report**

1. The purpose of this report is to present the Strategy for the Prevention of Unintentional Injuries in Children and Young People in County Durham attached at Appendix 2 for agreement.

**Background and Evidence base**

2. Unintentional injury is a leading cause of morbidity and death amongst children and young people aged 1–14years, second only to cancer. The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) guidance identifies several factors which make some children more vulnerable than others. These include the child's age, whether they are disabled, have a learning difficulty, the family income and their home environment. NICE guidance also provides evidence based recommendations for preventing unintentional injuries in children and young people.
3. Every year, 1 million children under the age of 15 are taken to accident and emergency (A&E) units after injuries occur in the home. Many more are treated at home or by their GP. In the UK, injuries that occur in and around the home are the most common cause of death in children over the age of one.
4. Children who are injured have to stay out of school and require a parent/carer to stay away from work to be with them. Caring for a child who has been seriously injured can stop a parent from returning to education or work, or plunge an already disadvantaged family further into poverty.
5. In 2010 - 2011, hospital admissions for unintentional injuries in County Durham were higher than both the regional and England averages.
6. Accidents & Emergency admissions due to unintentional injuries in the 0-18 years gradually increased in County Durham from 2008 - 2011.
7. Most of these injuries were due to non-transport causes and resulted from falls in the 0 -15 year olds. Most falls in the 0 - 5 year olds occurred in the home whilst the 6 -15 year olds occurred at outdoor play & leisure areas.

8. Transport injuries occurred predominately in the 6 – 15 year olds and resulted from 'pedal cyclist injured in transport accident'.
9. Child road casualties occurred mostly in the deprived wards of the county.
10. Injury has a wide and long-term impact on health including stress, physical disability, social impairment and lower educational attainment and employment prospects. As well as wider health care costs, there are social care costs, social security costs and productivity losses.
11. Prevention of all child road casualties over a five year period, 2007 - 2011, could have saved the County Durham economy over £36.5 million.

### **Current service**

12. A wide range of agencies are involved in unintentional injury prevention in children and young people and there are some examples of good practice and innovation. However there are areas where further improvements and action can be focused to improve outcomes for children and young people.
13. Consultation via Investing in Children was clear that children and young people report that, on average, they were well informed on road and fire safety but received very limited information on water safety. Parents and other families were identified as playing a significant role in the provision of such information. They suggest that safety messages need to 'get in their heads'.

### **What is being proposed?**

14. The strategy recommends that:
  - A local injury prevention strategy group should be developed with relevant partners to lead on implementing the strategic action plan. The strategy group to report to the Children and Families Partnership with links to the Local Safeguarding Children's Board through the Director of Public Health;
  - Explore child injury including prevention in relevant strategies;
  - Include child injury prevention into specifications for school nursing and health visiting services;
  - Monitor and evaluate data and feedback to relevant partners to support actions to reduce unintentional injuries in children and young people;
  - Focus on home safety issues with relevant multi-agency partners;
  - Continue to consult with children, young people and their parents when programmes are developed;
  - Support the development of clinical protocols across agencies to ensure quality of care for children and young people involved in accidental injury;
  - Explore how to promote safety education in areas that target parents and carers.

15. Successful delivery of the strategy will require strong partnership working to deliver the action plan. Currently there are no identified budgets to progress relevant actions and the strategy group will need to explore options to progress the strategy based on a prioritisation process and funding opportunities.

### **Recommendations**

16. The Health & Wellbeing Board is requested to:
  - Agree the Strategy for the Prevention of Unintentional Injuries in Children and Young People in County Durham

---

**Contact: Esther Mireku, Public Health Portfolio Lead, Durham County Council**  
**Tel: 03000 267665**

---

---

## **Appendix 1: Implications**

---

### **Finance**

The report makes reference to possible financial implications for commissioning. Implementation of the strategy will be an investment to save. This will be achieved from long term reductions in cost for hospital admissions, cost for respite and parent/carer time, and costs to social services.

### **Staffing**

There are no implications to staffing identified

### **Risk**

There is a potential risk of widening the health inequality gap for vulnerable families with young children if the actions identified in the strategy are not implemented.

### **Equality and Diversity / Public Sector Equality Duty**

There may be implications especially in relation to child poverty and increased risk for development of a disability for CYP of at risk families if the actions identified in the strategy are not implemented.

### **Accommodation**

There are no implications for accommodation

### **Crime and Disorder**

There are no implications for crime and disorder

### **Human Rights**

There are no implications for human rights

**Consultation** – Children and Young people were consulted as part of the process for developing the strategy. Colleagues in police, fire and rescue, health visiting, school nursing, voluntary sector and road safety were also consulted.

**Procurement** – There may be implications for procurement if new programmes are commissioned as a result of implementation of the strategy.

### **Disability Issues**

There are no issues for disability identified

### **Legal Implications**

There are no legal implications identified