

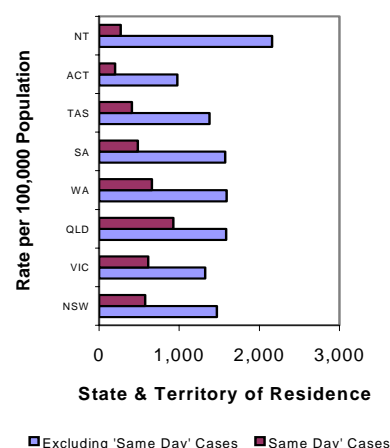
A National Perspective on Childhood Injury

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publication between:*



Hospital Separations Due to External
Causes by State or Territory of
Residence; (Australia) 1999-00



Summary

- "More Children die from Injury than die from Cancer Asthma and Infectious Diseases combined."
- Injury is the leading cause of child death and one of the main causes of ill-health in Australia¹.
- On an average day in Australia approximately 5000 children will require medical care as a result of an injury; about 1,500 will present at a hospital Emergency Department; 100 children will be admitted to hospital; and one child will die as a result of unintentional injury⁵.
- In the 2001, there were 266 child injury deaths in Australia. Over half of these were children under 5 years of age (56%)⁵.
- Four major causes continue to account for eight out of ten child injury death: deaths in motor vehicles, drowning, pedestrian deaths and deaths caused by fire, smoke or flames⁵.
- Boys are more likely to suffer from all types of injury than girls³.
- Fall-related hospitalisations are particularly common in the young (0-14 years) representing just over 38% of injuries in this group³.
- Western Australia has the second highest hospital separation rate for (external causes?) injury, after the Northern Territory³.
- Childhood development is rapid and dynamic. Accordingly, the type of injury children suffer is equally dynamic. Each type of injury has its own distinctive age demographic. Significant causes of injury in children aged 0-4 years also involve children of primary school age⁴.

NB. The rates for Western Australia, 1995-2000 are Age Standardised rates per 100,000 population; while the rates for the National data 1999-2000 are Hospitalisation rate per 100,000 children. As there is not a common basis for comparison, the available data has been used for this report but it must be noted that these rates are not absolutely comparable.

Introduction

More children die from Injury than die from Cancer, Asthma and Infectious Disease combined. Injury is the leading cause of death for children under the age of 15 years in Australia.

On average in Australia it is likely that for every one death about 5,000 children will need medical care because of injury⁵.

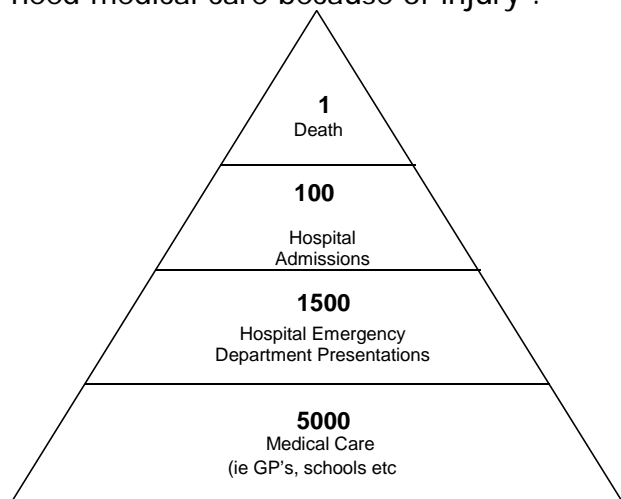


Figure 1: Ratio of Injury Deaths to Minor Treatment Injuries in Australia⁵.

An injury may be minor and require little or no care, or may be more serious, requiring treatment or hospitalisation and may result in permanent scarring, disability or death.

Method

Kidsafe WA reviewed currently available Injury reports from both national and West Australian sources to produce this report. The aim of this report is to show a comparison between national and West Australian child injury rates.

Results

In Australia, for the period 1999-2000, there were a total of 413,647 hospital separations due to injury and poisoning recorded. This accounts for 7% of total hospital separations for that time period. Injuries to children aged 0-14 years accounted for a total of 68,150 (16% of the total number of injury hospital separations in Australia)³.

The Australian rate of injury hospitalisation for children aged 0-14 years for the period 1999-2000 was 1,736.6 per 100,000 children¹. In comparison, the West Australian rate of injury hospitalisation for children aged 0-14 years, for the period 1995-2000, was 1,830.2 per 100,000 children².

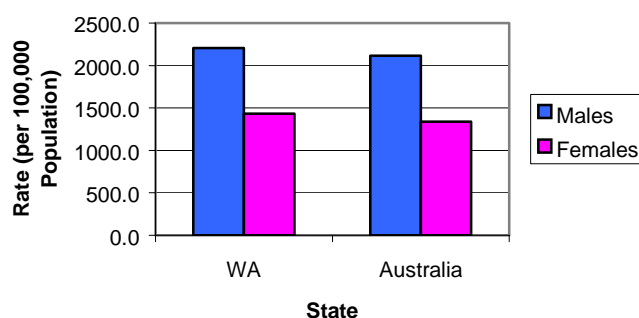
The following summary of data is shown by gender, age, aboriginality, cause of injury, and location, with a comparison of hospitalisation rates per 100,000 children against West Australian data for the same period.

Gender

In Australia, males were more likely to sustain an injury than girls, accounting for 2,114.8 hospitalisations per 100,000 during 1999-2000, compared to 1,338.9 for females¹. This gender difference was consistent for all age groups.

Western Australian data shows a similar gender difference². In WA, males were more likely to sustain an injury than girls, accounting for 2,207.4 hospitalisations per 100,000 during 1995 - 2000 compared to 1,431.5 for females².

Graph 1: Hospitalisation Rates by Gender for children aged 0-14 years per 100,000 population, Western Australia, 1995-2000 and Australia, 1999-2000



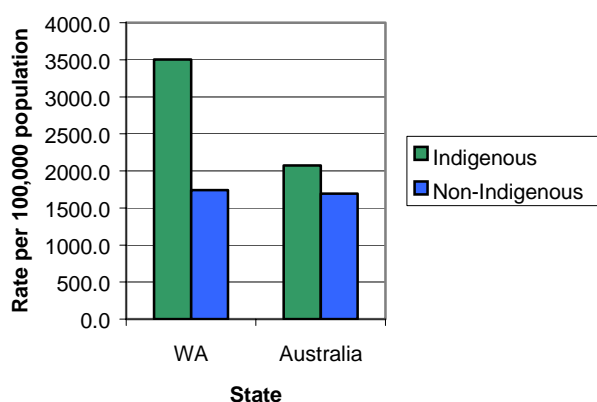
Age

For children aged 0-14 years in Australia during 1999-2000, children aged 1-4 years had the highest rate of injury hospitalisations with 2,019.7 per 100,000¹. Children aged 10-14 years ranked second with 1,719.1; followed by children aged 5-9

years with 1,619.8 per 100,000¹. Children aged <1 year were a separate age grouping under National data and had a hospitalisation rate of 1,145.5 per 100,000.

West Australian data for 1995-2000, shows a similar trend, with children aged 0-4 years having the highest rate of injury hospitalisations at 2,154.4 per 100,000². Children aged 10-14 years ranked second with 1,724.6; closely followed by children aged 5-9 years with 1,628.3 per 100,000².

Aboriginality



Graph 2: Hospitalisation Rates by Aboriginal Status for children aged 0-14 years per 100,000 population, Western Australia, 1995-2000 and Australia 1999-2000

In Australia, the rate of injury hospitalisation for Indigenous children was approximately 1.2 times higher than for the Non-Indigenous children. In Western Australia, the rate of injury hospitalisation for Indigenous children is 2 times higher than for non-Indigenous children^{1,2}.

Consistent with findings for all Australian children, Indigenous children in the 1-4 year age group had a higher rate of injury hospitalisation than children of other ages¹.

Usual residence

In Western Australia, Rural and Remote children had a 1.4 times higher injury rate than children in the Metropolitan area². This is consistent with National trends¹. Table 1 shows the number of National and Western Australian Injuries by residence.

Table 1: Number of Injury Hospitalisations by Usual Place of Residence, 1999-2000.

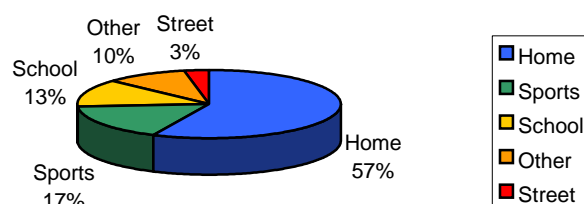
Usual Residence	National	WA ^a
Metropolitan	41,987	5,596
Rural	21,310	2,990
Remote	4,494	
Unknown	359	87
TOTAL	67,791	8,673

a. The total number of WA child injury hospitalisations for 1995-2000 were divided by 5 to obtain a yearly average for comparison for this table.

Location

The home is the most common location for injuries to occur to children aged 0-14 years in Australia¹. In 1999-2000, this accounted for 57% of all injury hospitalisations for this age group. This was followed by Sports ground (17%) and School (13%).

Figure 2: Percentage of Injury Hospitalisations by Location, 1999-2000, Australia.



For the selected time period there is no available data on the location of injury for Western Australia, however past evidence has shown that WA is consistent with National trends.

Major Injury Cause (Top 6)

Both in Australia and Western Australia, during the specified time periods, the ranking of injury cause hospitalisation rates are similar. Falls were the leading cause of injury hospitalisations for children aged 0-14 years. Children's falls were identified in the National Injury Prevention Priorities for 2001-2003, and continue to be recognised in the plan for 2004 & beyond.

Historical Perspective: Injury Surveillance Bulletin May 2004

Transport related injuries rank second, followed closely by poisoning and fire/burns/scalds^{1 2}. Table 2 shows both national and West Australian injury cause hospitalisation rates for the specified time periods.

Intentional Injuries had a hospitalisation rate of 21.8 nationally and 25.91 in Western Australia.

Table 2: Injury Hospitalisation Rates by Cause for Children Aged 0-14 years per 100,000 Population

Cause	National 1999 - 2000	WA 1995 - 2000
Falls	666.2	633.4
Transport	? is there a figure for here ?	266.3
a) Pedal Cyclists	107.5	
b) Pedestrian	29.1	
Poisoning	96.9	124.9
Fire/Burns/Scalds	61.4	84.53
Assault (Inflicted by Another)	21.8	25.91
Other Unintentional	753.8	547.8

* Rate per 100,000 population

"Other unintentional injuries" as a category represents a combination of injuries causes that are too small by number to record as individual groups as well as causes for which there are no cases recorded.

So What?

This first past perspective on child injury is provided to offer a comparison between Australia as a whole and Western Australia for injury to children aged 0-14 years.

References

- ¹ Al-Yamar, F, Bryant, M, and Sargeant, H. 2002. Australia's Children: Their health and well-being. Australian Institute of Health and Welfare.
- ² Gillam C, Legge M, Stevenson M, Gavin A. 2003. Injury in Western Australia: An Epidemiology of Injury 1989-2000. Injury Research Centre, Western Australia.
- ³ Helps Y, Cripps R, Harrison J. 2002. Injury Research and Statistics. Hospital Separations due to injury and poisoning, Australia 1999-00. Australian Institute of Health and Ageing, Canberra.
- ⁴ Pointer S, Harrison J, Bradley C. 2003. Injury Research and Statistics. National Injury Prevention Plan Priorities for 2004 and Beyond. Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, Canberra.
- ⁵ Scott I. Australian Child Injury 2003. Child Injury in Australia 2003.

While West Australian injury rates for children aged 0 – 14 years are consistent with Australian injury rates, there are some differences that should be further examined. For those working with children or in the injury prevention sector, action to prevent injury to the most vulnerable segment of our community requires good data to underpin programs and strategies and proper resourcing to implement interventions in the community.

For prevention strategies, resources, additional copies of these reports and additional child safety information contact Kidsafe WA (08) 9340 8509 or visit our website www.kidsafewa.com.au

Where to from Here...

A second past perspective on child injury, focussing specifically on Injury Surveillance has also been prepared to support the need to re-establish Emergency Department Injury Surveillance at Princess Margaret Hospital for Children.

The second report will provide an overview of the number of child injury presentations to Princess Margaret Hospital between 1999-2001 and an introduction to the types of reports soon to be available as part of this system.

We trust that these reports will assist you in your work in Child Injury Prevention in Western Australia.

PMH ISU will collect and analyse data from its emergency department injury presentations on behalf of Department of Health (Western Australia) from June 2004

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PMH ISU will produce Quarterly reports to be published as Injury Surveillance Bulletins to be disseminated by Kidsafe WA.