Patterns of Injuries among 0-19 year olds in the Midwest, 2001-2011

The Midwest region is located in the western middle section of WA, covering about a quarter of the state at more than 600,000 square kilometres.¹ Most of the population is concentrated around the coastal towns of Geraldton, Dongara, Kalbarri, Exmouth and Carnarvon. Other major towns include Morawa, Meekatharra and Mullewa.¹ There is a high Aboriginal and ethnic population with an overall low population density which can impact on health services.¹ Fishing, mining and agriculture are predominate industries in the region.

Geraldton offers both private and public hospital facilities, with a wide range of secondary and specialist services.² There are an additional 14 hospitals servicing the region with the Royal Flying Doctor Service playing a vital role in the regions health care and where necessary, patients are flown to Perth for treatment.²

Demographics³

18,314
Children reside in the Midwest region on average per year

18%
Aboriginal

82%
Non-Aboriginal

Child Injury Stats

About 1 in 23 WA child injury deaths occur in the Midwest

3,423
Midwest children treated each year for an injury

408
Midwest children hospitalised each year for an injury

Regional Childhood Injury Snapshot: Midwest

Child deaths due to injury each year

MIDWEST

3
The Midwest region recorded the fifth highest injury death rate (19.9 deaths per 100,000) and the fifth highest hospitalisation rate (2,231.9 per 100,000) among 0 to 19 year olds when compared to all other regions in WA. The Midwest region also recorded the third highest injury hospitalisation rate of Aboriginal children in WA with 3,405.7 per 100,000 compared to 1,965.3 per 100,000 for non-Aboriginal children.

When child injury hospitalisations are broken down by gender, males aged 0-19 years were more likely to be hospitalised for an injury in the Midwest region accounting for 2,854.3 per 100,000 compared to females with a rate of 1,574.5 per 100,000.

The majority of hospitalisations (87.5%, n=3,370) were due to unintentional circumstances. Causes of unintentional injury resulting in hospitalisation in the Midwest include:

- Falls (25%)
- Transport Accidents (20%)
- Poisoning (5%)
- Burns & Scalds (4%)

**PRIORITIES FOR PREVENTION**

- Raise awareness within the community of the causes of childhood injury and the extent of the problem.
- Convey to the community that childhood injuries are largely preventable.
- Involve key community stakeholders such as parents, carers, child care services, educators, health professionals and sporting organisations.
- Provide culturally appropriate information with a specific focus on injuries to Aboriginal children, children of low-socio economic status and those living in remote communities.
- Encourage supervision as the most important method in the prevention of childhood injuries.
- Promote the use of child car restraints and direct parents and carers to qualified type 2 child car restraint installers.
- Educate children and young people on how to stay safe on and around roads.
- Encourage community members to keep children away from hot items that could burn or scald such as camp fires, hot tap water and hot food and drink.

For further information on childhood injury prevention and resources that may be useful in your region please visit the Kidsafe WA website: [www.kidsafewa.com.au](http://www.kidsafewa.com.au)

**REFERENCES**
