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

The South West is WA’s smallest region covering 23,998 square kilometres. The major population centres include Bunbury, Collie, Busselton, Manjimup and Margaret River. The main industries in the South West are agriculture, forestry, mining, fishing, viticulture, retail and tourism, with a large number of tourists visiting the region’s rugged coastline, caves and wineries. The South West has a large population that has grown over the last five years and has an extensive road system between towns.

There are thirteen public hospitals throughout the South West region, as well as a private hospital located in Bunbury and a wide range of secondary and specialist services across the region.

Demographics

41,422
Children reside in the South West region on average per year

4% Aboriginal
96% Non-Aboriginal

Child Injury Stats

About 1 in 11 WA child injury deaths occur in the South West

4,911
South West children treated each year for an injury

820
South West children hospitalised each year for an injury

Government of Western Australia
Department of Health

Child Accident Prevention Foundation of Australia
Western Australia
The South West region recorded the second lowest injury death rate (18.1 deaths per 100,000) and the lowest hospitalisation rate (1,969.6 per 100,000) outside the Perth metropolitan area among 0 to 19 year olds when compared to all other regions in WA. The South West region also recorded the lowest injury hospitalisation rate of Aboriginal children in WA with 1,750.7 per 100,000 compared to 1,978.1 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 South West region accounting for 2,541.1 per 100,000 compared to females with a rate of 1,345.7 per 100,000.

The majority of hospitalisations (92.5%, n=7,072) were due to unintentional circumstances. Causes of unintentional injury resulting in hospitalisation in the South West include:

- Falls (29%)
- Transport Accidents (23%)
- Poisoning (3%)
- Burns & Scalds (3%)

**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**
