

Baby products injury

February 2010

Designed in partnership with the Public Health Agency of Canada, the Consumer Product Safety Bureau (CPSB) at Health Canada (HC) and the Canadian Paediatric Society, the CPSP conducted a one-time survey focused on the frequency and extent of injuries associated with cribs, baby walkers and strollers in Canada.

The response rate was 27% (658 responses of 2,466 participants). Overall there were 92 reported incidents, including some serious injuries as shown in the table.

Reported incidents with strollers, baby walkers and cribs (n=92)			
Injuries	Strollers n=58 (63%)	Baby walkers n=19 (21%)	Cribs n=15 (16%)
Concussions	4 (7%)	1 (5%)	1 (7%)
Skull fractures	1 (2%)	0	3 (20%)
Upper extremity fractures	2 (3%)	0	1 (7%)
Lower extremity fractures	1 (2%)	2 (11%)	1 (7%)
Abrasions/lacerations	16 (27%)	5 (26%)	2 (13%)
Minor injuries	34 (59%)	11 (58%)	7 (47%)

The CPSP also collected information on the dissemination and knowledge transfer of the bans/advisories and recalls issued on these products by HC.

In January 2010, a recall notice for certain stroller models was issued, after reports of finger amputations and lacerations were identified in association with specific models and an additional advisory followed reminding Canadians to exercise caution when using strollers with hinge mechanisms. Awareness of all respondents to these measures was indicated in the survey as follows: approximately 53% were aware of the stroller recall; 43% of the stroller advisory; and 36% knew both. Just over 75% of those respondents who reported how they learned of the recall and/or the advisory indicated it was through news media reports (i.e., newspaper, radio, TV, Internet).

The CPSB investigated reports of serious head injuries associated with falls while in baby walkers which ultimately lead to a ban on baby walkers in Canada. Since April 2004, it is illegal to import, advertise for sale, or sell baby walkers in Canada, including at garage sales, flea markets, or on street corners. The respondents indicated that 83% were aware of the prohibition of baby walkers. Approximately 40% of those respondents who reported how they learnt of the ban indicated it was through the news media.

Over 80% of the paediatricians surveyed reported spending time advising parents/caregivers of infants and young children on safety practices in their home; almost two-thirds provide advice on hazards associated with baby products.

Just over half of respondents indicated that 'yes' they required education materials on the selection of safe baby products for their patients; over 80% of these respondents preferred it in the form of a pamphlet/brochure. The majority of respondents (83%) indicated that improved communication of product hazards to the paediatric health professionals was necessary.

The CPSP survey confirmed that serious injuries associated with strollers, baby walkers and cribs are still occurring in Canada; that recall/advisory notices reached approximately one-half of respondents, while news media seemed more effective; and that frontline health care providers needed more education materials.

Principal investigators

Robin Skinner, MSP, Health Surveillance and Epidemiology Division, Centre for Chronic Disease Prevention and Control, Public Health Agency of Canada, Tunney's Pasture AL 1910C, Ottawa ON K1A 0K9; tel.: 613-941-9918; robin.skinner@phac-aspc.gc.ca

Anne-Marie Ugnat, PhD, Health Surveillance and Epidemiology Division, Centre for Chronic Disease Prevention and Control, Public Health Agency of Canada, Tunney's Pasture, AL 1910C, Ottawa ON K1A 0K9; tel.: 613-941-8498; fax: 613-941-9927; anne-marie.ugnat@phac-aspc.gc.ca
