

Title of Intervention: Reaching the hard to reach: Infant safety seat use

Intervention Strategies: Individual Education

Purpose of the Intervention: To improve the rate of correct infant safety seat use by parents

Population: Mothers of infants

Setting: Pediatric ward of a Michigan hospital; health care facility-based

Partners: A panel of experts on communication, learning, attitude and behavior

Intervention Description:

- Individual Education: A computer-assisted interactive video presentation was shown to new mothers. It allowed the content of the program to be directed by the choices and reactions of the mothers. Messages were tailored to the viewer but common themes such as the risk of infant fatalities, parental responsibility for infant safety and the impossibility of infants riding safely in adults' arms were used in all the messages. The viewer responded to questions in the presentation, altering the subsequent content of the message. The program consisted of an interactive video production, a hands-on demonstration of the use of infant safety seats, an opportunity to rent an infant safety seat and a set of reinforcing materials including bumper stickers, buttons, stickers and the participant's newborn pictured in an infant safety seat.

Theory: Not mentioned

Resources Required:

- Staff/Volunteers: Not mentioned
- Training: Not mentioned
- Technology: Interactive computer program
- Space: Room for computer station
- Budget: Not mentioned
- Intervention: Computer-assisted interactive video presentation, infant safety seats, bumper stickers, buttons, stickers, camera
- Evaluation: Observation protocol

Evaluation:

- Design: Observational
- Methods and Measures: Infant safety seat use was determined via unobtrusive observation by trained research personnel of mothers in the hospital parking lot when they returned with their infants for the four-month checkup. Observations were made according to a specially devised protocol detailing all car occupant restraint and details of proper and improper infant safety seat use and/or nonuse.

Outcomes:

- Short Term Impact: The intervention group had a significantly better rate of correctly restrained infants in infant safety seats compared to the community control group.
- Long Term Impact: Not measured

Maintenance: Not mentioned

Lessons Learned: Mothers are far more likely to restrain improperly than not to restrain at all. Emphasis on instruction to use the restraining device correctly is seen as extremely important and it may be more difficult than persuading parents to use the device at all. The study confirms the effectiveness of an interactive video program in creating correct infant safety seat use across a broad socioeconomic base. The interactive video program provides a physically portable and economically feasible method by which education can take place in a large number of hospitals and other appropriate settings.

Citation(s):

Hletko, P. J., S. S. Robin, et al. (1987). "Infant safety seat use. Reaching the hard to reach." *Am J Dis Child* 141(12): 1301-4.