

Title of Intervention: Pre-school Intervention to Increase the Use of Safety Restraints

Intervention Strategies: Individual Education, Group Education, Campaigns and Promotions

Purpose of the Intervention: To increase safety restraint use

Population: Pre-school children aged 3 to 5 years old and their parents

Setting: Pre-schools in Newcastle, Australia and surrounding areas; school-based

Partners: Pre-school director, police officers

Intervention Description:

- Individual Education: The intervention targeted parents and used threats of random police checks and fines as ways to encourage more child restraint use. Parents were given letters from the Chief Inspector of Police from the preschool director. The letter outlined legislation concerning children wearing safety restraints. The letter stated that police would be doing random checks in their area and vehicles with children not properly restrained would be fined. The letter also included information about different types of child safety restraints and their costs. General information on the use of child restraints was provided in an accompanying pamphlet.
- Group Education: The educational intervention targeted pre-school children with the hope that the children would educate their parents on child restraint use. This part of the study was conducted on the same day as the observations. One of the program's aims was to teach children appropriate verbal responses to situations when restraints are not used. They were taught to insist that a restraint be used, even in the face of initial parental inaction. The other aim was to teach children about the importance of always wearing a safety restraint and how to use them properly. Materials were supplied to each preschool and suggestions on how the materials were to be used were given.
- Campaigns and Promotions: Posters and reminder cards highlighting the warning of fines and police checks were used. Each pre-school was supplied with three posters to display. Reminder cards were pinned to children's clothing or placed in lunch boxes during the intervention weeks.

Theory: Not mentioned

Resources Required:

- Staff/Volunteers: Not mentioned
- Training: Not mentioned
- Technology: Not mentioned
- Space: Classroom space for group education
- Budget: Not mentioned
- Intervention: Educational kits (copies of six different drawings featuring cartoon characters, two brief songs, a rubber stamp which read "Seat Belt Safety" and two modified lap seat belts), posters, reminder cards, child restraint pamphlets, letter from Chief Inspector of Police
- Evaluation: Observers

Evaluation:

- Design: Randomized control (experimental)
- Methods and Measures: Observations of pre-schoolers' and other vehicle occupants' safety restraint use were recorded

Outcomes:

- Short Term Impact: Not measured
- Long Term Impact: Pre-schools in the educational intervention group had a significant increase in restraint use as compared to the control and coercive groups, which had small non significant increases.

Maintenance: Not mentioned

Lessons Learned: It was suggested that the coercive intervention was not successful because of a lack of police presence and enforcement. This intervention demonstrated the effectiveness of educating preschool children about safety restraints and not only modified the behavior of the children but also the parents. Future interventions should include an education component for parents to deal with misuse of and misconceptions about safety restraint use.

Citation(s):

Bowman, J. A., R. W. Sanson-Fisher, et al. (1987). "Interventions in preschools to increase the use of safety restraints by preschool children." *Pediatrics* 79(1): 103-9.