

Child Falls:

Locally Driven Collaborative Project Year Two - Evaluation of Key Messages

= Prevent =
Child Injury

► Background

The Locally Driven Collaborative Project entitled “Adapting Alberta’s A Million Messages for Implementation in Ontario’s Health and Social Services Systems” is a multi-phase study conducted over two years. This study component examined 39 key injury prevention messages for parents/caregivers of children between the ages of 0 - 36 months based on message readability and validity. The messages addressed general, falls, scalds/burns, or poisoning injuries.

► What we did

Utilizing message framing strategies, 39 injury prevention key messages were developed. Each message was evaluated by 10 Health Communication Experts (HCE) and 10 parents/caregivers of children ages 0 - 36 months. Messages were evaluated based on the following five components: readability; technical quality of the message; message representation; message relevance; and other characteristics such as message credibility.

► What we found

Messages on average were written between a 4th and 7th grade reading level. These findings are generally consistent with Doak et al. (1996) who recommend a 6th grade reading level for educational materials. The vast majority of participants rated the messages to be relevant and representative of the injury prevention category they were created to target. The messages were perceived to be of an appropriate length (>85%), clear (>91%), likeable (>79%), and credible (>83%). Participants also indicated that the messages were effective and actionable (> 86%). Most messages (>81%) were believed to prompt parents and caregivers to take action to prevent injuries in children aged 0-36 months. In addition, participants indicated that the messages were not difficult to read (>94%), did not present more than one concept per message (>89%), and were not offensive (>90%) to parents/caregivers.

Lessons Learned
Injury prevention messages are more impactful when positively framed, written in clear language, and actionable.

► What's next?

These key messages will be integrated into a newly designed and tailored injury prevention messaging strategy. Messages will be delivered through an email messaging system as well as during teachable moments and parenting workshops delivered by Early Childhood Educators throughout four catchment areas in Ontario.

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early years

Funding for this resource was provided by Public Health Ontario (PHO) and the Ontario Neurotrauma Foundation (ONF) through the Locally Driven Collaborative Projects Program. The views expressed in this resource are the views of the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of PHO and the ONF.