



# **Child Accident Prevention Trust**

**Annual report and accounts for  
the year ended 31 March 2008**

**Registered Charity: Charity registration number: 1053549  
Company limited by guarantee: Company registration number: 3147845**

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# About the Child Accident Prevention Trust (CAPT)

## Our mission, vision and philosophy

The Child Accident Prevention Trust's mission is to reduce the number of children who are killed, disabled or seriously injured in preventable accidents. Our vision is of a world where children lead active, healthy lives, safe from the disabling effects of serious accidental injury.

We understand that experimenting and risk-taking are part of growing up, and we do not advocate 'wrapping children up in cotton wool'. Instead we aim to help children and their parents understand the real risks to children's safety, and gain skills in managing those risks.

## The need for our work

### **'Rates of accidental injury and death are too high, particularly amongst disadvantaged groups'**

*Public Service Agreement, Delivery Agreement 13: Improve children and young people's safety, HM Government, October 2007*

We exist because accidents are a leading cause of death, serious injury and acquired disability for children in the UK – and because many of these accidents can be prevented.

Accidental injury is one of the biggest killers of children and young people in the UK, second only to cancer. Last year, 300 children and young people died in accidents – almost six deaths every week. While the death of any child is unacceptable, deaths from accidents are far higher than from other causes that often hit the headlines, for example, 15 times as many children are killed in accidents as are killed by strangers.

Accidents also put more children in hospital in the UK than any other cause. Last year, 120,000 children and young people were hospitalised – over 2,000 children every week. Some children – who suffered severe burns or scalds – will require years of painful skin grafts and will still be scarred for life. Others – who suffered severe head injuries, for example in road accidents – will be left with permanent brain damage.

Children from the poorest families are 13 times more likely to die from injury overall and 38 times more likely to die in house fires. They are also three times more likely to be admitted to hospital and to be admitted with more severe injuries.

On top of the human costs of disfigurement, disability and distress, there are the financial and social burdens of childhood accidental injury. Accidents can result in lost learning and life opportunities for children and young people. Caring for a child who has been seriously injured can stop a parent from returning to education or work, reducing the family's income. The NHS spends millions of pounds each year treating childhood accidents. The Audit Commission reports that the cost of childhood visits to A&E alone is £146 million a year.

The tragedy is that many of these deaths and injuries are preventable. Many childhood 'accidents' are predictable events that can be prevented if people change their behaviour, adopt new routines or make children's environments safer.

However, many parents – especially the poorest parents – lack accessible information on what they can do to make their children safer. In addition, many staff and policy makers are not fully aware of the extent or nature of childhood accidents or how they can be prevented, and need information and support to put effective safety measures in place.

# About the Child Accident Prevention Trust

## Our strategic objectives and priorities

The trustees and staff have developed a strategic plan to take the charity forward to 2010. Our over-arching strategic priority is:

**To undertake child accident prevention activities designed to reduce serious injury rates among all children and young people and, in particular, to reduce the marked inequalities between richer and poorer children.**

To support this strategic priority, we have five strategic objectives:

1. Engage with families and communities through innovative educational campaigns and resources, benefiting all children and young people but targeting those at greatest risk of death and serious injury from preventable accidents.
2. Provide an authoritative source of information, support and networking for practitioners and policy makers interested in child accident prevention, using our links with researchers to share learning about what works.
3. Build beneficial partnerships with charitable, statutory and commercial organisations to extend the reach of our work, with a focus on those supporting children and young people at greatest risk of death and serious injury from preventable accidents.
4. Raise the profile of child accident prevention with key stakeholders, highlighting the Child Accident Prevention Trust's role as the leading charity in this field.
5. Ensure that the necessary financial, staffing, governance and other resources are in place to support the objectives above.

## An overview of our work

We achieve our objectives through a range of activities:

We use our skills in community education to engage with families, spreading knowledge, changing attitudes and behaviour, and encouraging local communities to take action to make children safer. While our community education work benefits all children and their parents, we target disadvantaged communities, who have least access to opportunities for learning and whose children are at greatest risk of death and serious injury from accidents.

We take our knowledge and skills to the frontline of family support, by providing expert advice on accident prevention to staff who work with parents and children in their local communities. Our services include good practice guides, email bulletins, training workshops and a website ([www.capt.org.uk](http://www.capt.org.uk)) with downloadable fact sheets.

We also act as a centre of specialist knowledge on child accident prevention for other charities, companies, standards bodies, local, regional and central government, and the NHS. Through our involvement in research projects, our specialist support and consultancy services, and our representation and advocacy work, we encourage the development of safer products and environments, and the planning and delivery of more effective child accident prevention services.

## About the Child Accident Prevention Trust

### Who benefits from our work

Our work helps to stop children and young people dying from preventable accidents, or suffering needless disability, disfigurement or distress. We focus our work on children from the poorest families, who are far more likely to be admitted to hospital with serious injuries or to die in accidents. The main beneficiaries of our work are therefore children and young people, especially those from the most disadvantaged families.

**“It made me think about safety and how our actions can influence accidents”**

Simon, aged 14

To achieve this, we target some of our activities at their parents, equipping them with the knowledge they need to make their children safer. Many of the poorest parents have simply never had opportunities to learn about accident hazards and practical prevention measures. We use our skills in community education to engage with parents, motivating them to learn and take action to make their children safer. The feedback from these mothers is typical:

**“It was fun and it helped me build up my confidence when it comes to keeping my family safe”**

**“I learnt that the things I would have done could have put my baby in danger”**

Parents are therefore also beneficiaries of our work, as we help them to build skills – and to avoid the lifetime of guilt that often accompanies a serious accidental injury to a child.

During the year under review, through our community education campaigns, our specialist resources and our support to frontline staff, we achieved outreach to four million children, young people, parents and grandparents, many of them living in areas of deprivation.

Frontline staff who work with parents and children in their local communities also benefit from our specialist support. By August 2008 we had 16,500 active community contacts on our database, including health visitors, nursery nurses, teachers, childminders, midwives and family support workers, and this number had increased by 27% over the year.

Over 75,000 frontline staff benefited from free resources for Child Safety Week 2007 and we dispatched a further 600,000 copies of our publications to our community contacts. This was complemented by the distribution of 48,000 copies of a joint publication on child road safety by the Department for Transport.

**“Very user-friendly resources deliver messages in a way that parents and carers find interesting, enjoyable and non-threatening”**

Co-ordinator, Home-Start project

In addition, we welcomed 400 staff to our training workshops and seminars. This feedback from a family support worker at a children's centre is typical:

**“The course was very informative and well-presented. I'll be able to use the information in my day-to-day work with families”**

The Treasury and taxpayers also benefit from our work. For example, our work on bath water scald prevention led to the Scottish Executive reviewing Building Regulations. This has seen thermostatic controls fitted as standard to bath taps in all new or refurbished homes, eliminating the risk of severe bath water scalds for these families. It costs the NHS as much as £250,000 to treat just one severe bath water scald. Until now, 125 victims of bath water scalding were admitted to hospital every year in Scotland.