



Child Accident Prevention Trust

Annual report and accounts for
the year ended 31 March 2009

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, 400 children and young people under 18 died in accidents – almost eight 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 accidental 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 serious injuries are preventable. Many serious 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.

Our objectives fully reflect the purposes that the charity was set up to further – see page 25.

An overview of our work

We have referred to the guidance contained in the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit when reviewing our work and in planning our future activities. All our charitable activities focus on the prevention of death and serious injury to children from accidents, and are undertaken to further our charitable purposes for the public benefit.

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) 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 this mother is typical:

“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 2009 we had 20,700 active community contacts on our database, including health visitors, nursery nurses, teachers, childminders, midwives and family support workers, and this number had increased by 25% over the year.

Over 70,000 frontline staff benefited from free resources for Child Safety Week 2008 and we dispatched a further 870,000 copies of our publications to our community contacts. Since March 2009, this has been complemented by the distribution, by the Department for Children, Schools and Families, of 18,000 copies of our good practice guide on accidents and child development and 121,000 copies of our home safety leaflet.

“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 425 staff and managers to our training workshops and seminars. This feedback from a family support worker at a Sure Start 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 Government reviewing Building Regulations for England and Wales. This will see thermostatic controls fitted as standard to bath taps in all new homes from October 2009, eliminating the risk of severe bath water scalds for these families. It costs the NHS over £160,000 to treat just one toddler seriously scalded by bath water. Hundreds of young children are admitted to hospital every year with such injuries.

Trustees' report

The trustees of the charity submit their report and accounts for the year ended 31 March 2009. The trustees who served during the period up to the 2nd of September 2009 are disclosed on page 26 of this report.

REVIEW OF THE YEAR

The Trustees have taken due regard of the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit and are pleased to report on the main activities undertaken by the charity to further its charitable purposes for the public benefit. The review looks at the success of each key activity and the benefits they have brought to those people we were set up to help.

Highlights of our achievements include the following:

- Local Child Safety Week activities and events reached an estimated 4 million people UK-wide – 2.2 million parents and grandparents, and 1.8 million children and young people. To support local activity, we distributed over 70,000 copies of our free resource booklet to community-based organisations UK-wide. Four government departments lent their support to the initiative, encouraging local participation and partnership working.

The total media reach/circulation for Child Safety Week 2008 exceeded 60 million. Independent market research found the highest awareness levels of Child Safety Week and its safety messages among parents in social classes D and E, whose children are far more likely to be killed or seriously injured in accidents. Almost half of all the parents polled said they had acted to make their children safer as a direct result of the Week.

- We supported the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) with script development for four television and six radio filler advertisements on child home safety, which were launched during Child Safety Week 2008. Since then, the fillers have reached millions of families with practical safety advice.
- We also worked with DCSF to develop a jointly branded Christmas safety advice leaflet in the style of an advent calendar. 150,000 copies were distributed to families in the run-up to Christmas 2008 through a range of partners, including Sure Start children's centres, housing associations, shopping centres and fire and rescue services.
- We distributed over 115,000 copies of our three picture-based safety advice booklets. These resources are aimed at the one in three parents in social class E with serious literacy problems, reaching out to sections of the community at greatest risk, and using innovative formats to engage attention and encourage action. In addition, we distributed 455,000 copies of our other user-friendly safety advice leaflets, booklets and posters.
- We continued to reach out to staff who work with parents and children in their local communities, adding 4,200 active contacts to our database over the year and bringing the total to well over 20,000. 425 frontline staff and managers attended our training workshops, gaining practical knowledge and skills in child accident prevention to apply in their daily work with children and families.
- We continued to press for a change to Building Regulations to eliminate the risk of severe bath water scalds at source. In May 2009, the government announced that, from October this year, all new homes in England and Wales will have protective devices such as thermostatic mixing valves fitted to baths to limit the hot water temperature.
- We also moved offices in order to reduce our overheads and limit our liabilities. Despite one-off relocation costs of c £19,000, we ended the year with a total deficit of just £4,105 and an unrestricted surplus of £5,018.

Trustees' report (continued)

COMMUNITY EDUCATION AND ENGAGEMENT

Accident prevention is often dismissed as common sense, with parents whose children are badly hurt in accidents branded as thoughtless or negligent. But how many parents know that a baby's skin is 15 times thinner than that of an adult? Or that a hot drink can still scald a young child 15 minutes after it has been made? And how many drivers know that, if you hit a child at 40 mph, there is a four in five chance that child will die, whereas if you hit a child at 30 mph, there is a four in five chance they will survive?

We use our skills in community education to engage with families and the frontline staff who support them, spreading knowledge, changing attitudes and behaviour, and encouraging families to take action to make children safer, without 'wrapping them in cotton wool'. During the year under review, our community education work included:

- Child Safety Week 2008, our flagship community education campaign, where we spent 26% of our total charitable expenditure.
- The provision of a wide range of other user-friendly resources – including innovative picture-based safety education resources for parents with poor literacy – where we spent 23% of our total charitable expenditure.

Child Safety Week 2008

"The best thing about Child Safety Week is creating opportunities for families from diverse communities to become actively involved and to raise their awareness. Having the opportunity to work in partnership with other agencies, professionals, teams, community groups and families"

Lead Family Worker, Sure Start Rosehill, Derby

"I like the fact that child safety is focused on by so many agencies and other professionals at the same time. It sends a valuable message to families that child safety is a priority for all of us"

Family Support Worker, Mansfield

Child Safety Week is the Child Accident Prevention Trust's flagship community education campaign. Its aims are twofold: first, to raise awareness of serious childhood accidents and how to prevent them, in ways that engage children and families; second, to encourage effective local action on child safety, with a strong emphasis on partnership working.

Four government departments – the Department for Children, Schools and Families, the Department of Health, the Department for Transport and the Scottish Government's Community Safety Department – lent their financial support to the Week.

Macfarlan Smith, the manufacturers of Bitrex (a bittering agent that deters children from accidentally swallowing harmful household chemicals) and the Electrical Safety Council, a charity whose aim is to reduce electrical accidents and injuries to users of electricity, were again official sponsors of Child Safety Week.

They were joined by FireAngel, a leading manufacturer of domestic smoke alarms and carbon monoxide alarms, and the CORGI Trust, a charity whose mission is to promote gas safety and carbon monoxide awareness.

Child Safety Week generates media coverage for practical safety advice and – by providing free resources to community-based organisations – acts as a catalyst for thousands of local safety activities and events, which reach millions of children and families UK-wide.

