

A map of policy for child injury prevention in England

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This document outlines government policies that contain or may create opportunities for action with regard to preventing accidental injuries to children and young people. The breadth of departmental, agency and practitioner involvement emphasises the need for collaborative working.

POLICIES, TARGETS AND POTENTIAL FUNDING STREAMS

The report of the Accidental Injury Task Force identified a number of areas where accidental injury prevention was located in terms of government policy and departmental involvement. However, since the publication of the report, the breadth of policy areas has increased and the scene is a constantly changing.

The list below divides the policy areas into children's issues, health, fire prevention, road safety and education, and also notes the mechanisms to fund and more generally support collaborative working. Given the importance of collaborative working, the separation by policy area may be regarded as creating compartments rather than promoting inter-agency working and may therefore be unhelpful. Nevertheless, the implementation of these policies is normally led by a single agency.

Children's policy

Every Child Matters and Children Act 2004

These establish mechanisms (Children's Trusts) in local authorities to enable them to act as a local focus for children's issues (although initially they may concentrate on education and social services). The Act (<http://www.dfes.gov.uk/publications/childrenactreport/>) requires local authorities to appoint directors of children's services and designate an elected member with responsibility for the area. There is an emphasis on service coordination that will strengthen partnership working and joint commissioning between statutory and voluntary agencies. Regional offices of government have Directors of Children and Learning. This is a powerful initiative for children's services, for which local authorities will provide lead.

The implementation of the Act and wider children's reforms are presented in Every Child Matters (<http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/>). This provides for five outcomes:

- Be healthy
- Stay safe (including from accidental injury)
- Enjoy and achieve
- Make a positive contribution
- Achieve economic well-being

The ways that local authorities provide children's services will be inspected through joint area reviews led by OFSTED and comprehensive performance assessments based on these outcomes. There is an expectation that agencies will work together.

The inspection regime calls up the Children's National Service Framework standard that outlines a series of preventive measures of high effectiveness that seek to address significant injury issues (Standard 1).

Sure Start and Children's Centres (<http://www.surestart.gov.uk/>)

Many programmes are actively involved in accident prevention work and in play. The PSA 2003-2006 targets make no mention of accidental injury. One undated Service Delivery Agreement target under the objective of improving children's health includes accidental injury:

Reduce by 10 percent the number of children aged 0-4 living in Sure Start local programme and Children's Centre areas admitted to hospital as an emergency with gastro-enteritis, a lower respiratory infection or a severe injury.

The Children's Centre programme is based on the concept that providing integrated education, care, family support and health services are key factors in determining good outcomes for children and their parents. The move to Children's Centres may expand populations covered by these support programmes.

United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (<http://www.unicef.org/crc/crc.htm>)

This was ratified by the United Kingdom in January 1992. It sets out a number of basic rights that every child should enjoy. Article 12 requires signatories to consult children in matters affecting them and two Articles are particularly relevant to the prevention of unintentional injury:

- Article 19 requires signatories to ensure that they take all legislative, administrative, social and educational measures to protect the child from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse, while in the care of parent(s), legal guardian(s) or any other person who has the care of the child.
- Article 24 (e) requires signatories to ensure that all segments of society, in particular parents and children, are informed, have access to education and are supported in the use of basic knowledge of child health and nutrition, the advantages of breastfeeding, hygiene and environmental sanitation and the prevention of accidents.

Health

National Service Framework for Children, Young People and Maternity Services (often referred to as the Children's NSF) (<http://tinyurl.com/cg3e7>)

Under Standard 1: Promoting Health and Well-being, Identifying Needs and Intervening Early, section 4, health promotion, general guidance is provided for local authorities and primary care trusts on tackling accidental injuries in priority areas where there are marked inequalities. There is no designated funding associated with the NSF.

Choosing Health: making healthier choices easier (Public Health White Paper) (<http://tinyurl.com/4uovd>)

Accident prevention is mentioned in the White Paper and delivery plan. Although accidental injury is not one of the six public health priorities, it is recognised as an inequalities issue. The White Paper refers to action across government to help children and young people lead healthy lives. It also lists actions of government departments to tackle accidental injuries.

Health inequalities

Tackling health inequalities is a top priority for the government, and it is focused on narrowing the health gap between disadvantaged groups, communities and the rest of the country, and on improving health overall. The government's strategy, "Tackling Health Inequalities: A Programme for Action" (<http://tinyurl.com/d8kvc>), which is backed by 12 departments, was published in July 2003. It lays the foundations for meeting the government's target to reduce the health gap on infant mortality and life expectancy by 2010. "Every Child Matters" is a part of the government's programme to reduce inequalities.

Reducing health inequalities in "super output areas" (areas smaller than wards and defined using indices of multiple deprivation) is being driven by the ODPM. Child safety audits are part of the process in some areas, associated with local transport plans or local public service agreements.

Health Communities Collaborative

This is a methodology for collaborative working developed by National Primary Care Development Team (<http://tinyurl.com/bwpks>)

National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE)

NICE is the independent organisation responsible for providing national guidance on the promotion of good health and the prevention and treatment of ill health (<http://www.nice.org.uk/>).

Ambulance service

Ambulance services may work locally with other agencies, including schools, although there is no obligation to undertake safety promotion

PCT performance indicators

PCTs are rated using performance indicators (star rating) but accident prevention is not part of rating system. (The list of indicators used for rating can be found at <http://tinyurl.com/8znfk>.) Although accident prevention is not part of star rating, some aspects of the topic can be incorporated into other programmes (e.g. physical activity and smoking cessation)

Fire prevention

Fire and Rescue National Frameworks and Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004

The Act (<http://tinyurl.com/a96j8>) places obligations on fire and rescue services to carry out prevention activities.

The 2004/5 Fire and Rescue National Framework (<http://tinyurl.com/ctdzc>), sets the following target:

To reduce the number of accidental fire-related deaths in the home by 20%, averaged over the eleven-year period to 31 March 2010, equivalent to 280 fire-related deaths per annum, compared with the average recorded in the five-year period to 31 March 1999 of 350 fire-related deaths. Also, no local Fire and Rescue Authority having a fatality rate, from accidental fires in the home, more than 1.25 times the national average by 2010.

Under the 2005/06 Fire and Rescue National Framework (<http://tinyurl.com/acec4>), the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) is providing £25 million for capital grants to all English Fire and Rescue Authorities for the four years to March 2008 to install free smoke alarms with 10-year batteries and automated fire suppression systems, associated with Home Fire Risk Checks targeted on the most vulnerable households. The funding can be used for alarms, sprinklers and staff time.

Road safety

Tomorrow's Roads: Safer for Everyone

The Department for Transport road safety strategy sets targets for casualty reductions by 2010, including specific target for child casualties (<http://tinyurl.com/dr633>). Following government's spending review in 2000 (SR2000), the two following targets were adopted as Public Service Agreement (PSA) targets for which the Department for Transport is accountable to the Treasury:

By 2010 we want to achieve, compared to the average for 1994-98: a 40% reduction in the number of people killed or seriously injured in road accidents; a 50% reduction in the number of children killed or seriously injured

This PSA target was modified after the SR2002 because of the association between road casualties and disadvantage and is now:

To reduce the number of people killed or seriously injured in Great Britain in road accidents by 40% and the number of children killed or seriously injured by 50% by 2010 compared with the average for 1994-98, tackling the significantly higher incidence in disadvantaged communities

School Travel Plans (<http://tinyurl.com/d23ke>)

These plans are produced by schools, encompassing all issues relevant to journeys to and from school. They include concerns about safety and health, and proposals for ways to make improvements. They are a means to bring together the ideas and contributions of different groups of people to help to solve problems. DfES will give a grant to every English state school that implements a STP to help fund measures identified in the plan, such as cycle parking, lockers, or bus bays.

Local Transport Plans (<http://tinyurl.com/a83eh>)

Local road safety plans are part of Local Transport Plans. They reflect local aspects of national priorities, in particular the needs of disadvantaged populations and reductions in child casualties. There is an expectation that their delivery involves collaborative working.

Education

National Healthy Schools Standard (<http://tinyurl.com/6rxa4>)

The NHSS is the mainstay of the healthy schools programme and was introduced in 1999 as a vehicle to support delivery of Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE). The NHSS and PSHE framework support each other and engage staff, pupils, governors, parents and the wider community in a whole school approach. This aims to improve educational achievement, health and emotional well being, and make schools a safe, secure and healthy environment in which young people can learn and develop. The NHSS includes eight key areas of activity:

- Personal, social and health education
- Citizenship
- Drug education (including tobacco and alcohol)
- Emotional health and well being
- Healthy eating
- Physical activity
- Safety – broadly, this notes that pupils should be able to keep themselves safe in the home, at school, while travelling, at work, in play, in sport and in leisure. Safety

education helps them to recognise potential risks. (Visit <http://tinyurl.com/aarne> for further information.)

- Sex and relationship education

National Healthy School Programme (a joint DfES/DH programme)
(<http://www.wiredforhealth.gov.uk/>)

The National Healthy Schools Programme is working with over 10,000 schools to develop a whole school approach to health, for example one that focuses on both the organisation and taught curriculum. It brings together and promotes all aspects of health, while giving schools flexibility to focus on particular local issues. Every area has a local healthy schools programme, which is managed by local education and health partnerships, and is able to support schools in meeting the objectives of the Healthy Living Blueprint for Schools. The blueprint aims to help schools support children in leading a healthy lifestyle and to make the most of the resources which already exist. It includes advice on lifelong health and the role of school nurses in achieving the whole school approach, and encourages children to walk and cycle where it is safe, working with local authority school travel advisers to achieve this. Accident prevention is not a mandatory part of the healthy schools programme.

Collaboration and funding mechanisms

Local Strategic Partnerships (<http://tinyurl.com/c9x9m>)

A Local Strategic Partnership (LSPs) is a single non-statutory, multi-agency body, which matches local authority boundaries, and aims to bring together at a local level the different parts of the public, private, community and voluntary sectors. The government regards LSPs as key to tackling deep seated, multi-faceted problems, requiring a range of responses from different bodies. Local partners working through a LSP are expected to take many of the major decisions about priorities for their local area. They can link local authorities and PCTs to assist in achieving the health inequalities agenda and other initiatives.

Local Area Agreements (<http://tinyurl.com/akouw>)

Local Area Agreements (LAAs) are made between central and local government in a local area. Their aim is to achieve local solutions that meet local needs, while also contributing to national priorities and the achievement of standards set by central government. They are being piloted in 21 local authorities. They can give local authorities more freedom on service delivery and can provide an option for pooling money (e.g. from Primary Care Trusts and Sure Start). One "block" (theme) for operation of Local Area Agreements is children and young people, using the five outcomes defined in Every Child Matters. Local authorities can negotiate local public service agreements with other agencies. LAAs can be a mechanism to deliver safety.

Local Public Service Agreements (<http://tinyurl.com/7us5e>)

A Local PSA is a voluntary agreement negotiated between an individual local authority and the government. The overall aim of Local PSAs is to stretch performance in the delivery of local public services, by focusing on targeted outcomes with support from government. They can lead to performance reward funding for the local authorities when targets are met and can also allow authorities to access funds to assist in the development of programmes to achieve the Local PSAs.

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