The feasibility of using a parenting programme for the prevention of unintentional home injuries in the under-fives: a cluster randomised controlled trial

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Plain English summary

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Plain English summary

Most injuries in preschool children occur at home, and many are preventable. Parenting programmes, supporting parents to make changes to their behaviour, have been shown to improve outcomes in children. This study explored whether or not a parenting programme could prevent home injuries in preschool children.

We were asked to target parents whose child had recently been injured. We were concerned that parents asked to take part would fear that they were considered poor parents. We know that parents are interested in learning first aid, so we developed a programme to include first aid and safety advice to make it more appealing.

To find out if it would be feasible to run a trial of the parenting programme, we tried to recruit 96 parents from eight children’s centres to a small study with four randomly chosen centres providing the programme and four not doing so. After 10 months we had recruited only 40 parents, so we opened the study to all parents, whether or not their child had been injured. This helped us engage another 11 parents over 2 weeks. We ran the programme four times and 15 parents completed the course.

Based on our experience we have made improvements to the programme and made recommendations about how a future trial could be run, including making it available to all parents using children’s centres in disadvantaged areas. We have advised how to measure the number of injuries in children, and how to find out if the programme provides value for money.
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