

Keeping Children Safe: a multicentre programme of research to increase the evidence base for preventing unintentional injuries in the home in the under-fives

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Declared competing interests of authors: Elaine McColl is a subpanel member for the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) Programme Grants for Applied Research (PGfAR) journal, but in that capacity has already declared a conflict of interest in respect of this grant and has not been involved in any discussions or decisions thereon. Elaine McColl was a NIHR journal editor for the NIHR PGfAR journal at the time that this report was written and has a declared conflict of interest in respect of this report and will not participate in any discussions, work or decisions thereon. The Keeping Children Safe programme received Flexibility and Sustainability Funding from Nottinghamshire County Teaching Primary Care Trust, University Hospitals Bristol NHS Foundation Trust and Norfolk and Suffolk Comprehensive Local Research Network and Research Capability Funding from Nottinghamshire County Teaching Primary Care Trust and Nottinghamshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust to support NIHR Faculty members' salaries.

Published July 2017

DOI: 10.3310/pgfar05140

Plain English summary

Keeping Children Safe: a multicentre programme of research

Programme Grants for Applied Research 2017; Vol. 5: No. 14

DOI: 10.3310/pgfar05140

NIHR Journals Library www.journalslibrary.nihr.ac.uk

Plain English summary

Burns, scalds, falls and poisoning are major causes of death, disability and health service use in the under-fives. We undertook 13 studies to explore factors associated with injuries, what prevents injuries, the cost of the injuries to the NHS and parents, and what parents and children's centres (which provide families with information, support and co-ordinated services from a range of professionals) were doing to prevent injuries. We used evidence from these studies to design a resource [an injury prevention briefing (IPB)] for children's centres to use with parents for preventing house fire injuries. We gave 12 children's centres the IPB, with training and support to implement it, (IPB+ group) and 12 centres the IPB without training or support (IPB-only group). A further 12 centres were not given the IPB (usual-care group). Children's centres in both IPB groups used the IPB and increased injury prevention activity, more markedly in the IPB+ centres. The IPB did not increase how many families had a fire escape plan in either IPB group, but did increase some fire escape behaviours in both groups. Providing the IPB without training and support cost less and was slightly more effective than not providing the IPB. Providing the IPB with training and support cost more but was only slightly more effective than not providing the IPB. Children's centres can increase some fire safety behaviours in families with young children if they are provided with evidence-based resources such as the IPB. A further IPB has been produced for the prevention of fire-related injuries, falls, poisonings and scalds.

Programme Grants for Applied Research

ISSN 2050-4322 (Print)

ISSN 2050-4330 (Online)

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Editorial contact: journals.library@nihr.ac.uk

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This report

The research reported in this issue of the journal was funded by PGfAR as project number RP-PG-0407-10231. The contractual start date was in April 2009. The final report began editorial review in November 2014 and was accepted for publication in February 2016. As the funder, the PGfAR programme agreed the research questions and study designs in advance with the investigators. The authors have been wholly responsible for all data collection, analysis and interpretation, and for writing up their work. The PGfAR editors and production house have tried to ensure the accuracy of the authors' report and would like to thank the reviewers for their constructive comments on the final report document. However, they do not accept liability for damages or losses arising from material published in this report.

This report presents independent research funded by the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR). The views and opinions expressed by authors in this publication are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of the NHS, the NIHR, CCF, NETSCC, PGfAR or the Department of Health. If there are verbatim quotations included in this publication the views and opinions expressed by the interviewees are those of the interviewees and do not necessarily reflect those of the authors, those of the NHS, the NIHR, NETSCC, the PGfAR programme or the Department of Health.

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