

Unintentional Harm Hub - Practice Exemplar SHSES - FINAL

Name and Timescales

Scotland's Home Safety Equipment Scheme (SHSES)
April 2013-June 2014

Summary

SHSES was funded by the Scottish Government and enabled RoSPA in Scotland to co-ordinate the delivery of crucial home safety advice to over 900 families across 12 local authority areas.

SHSES was a fit with a number of Scotland's National Outcomes:

- We live longer and healthier lives
- Our children have the best start in life and are ready to succeed
- We have improved the life chances for children, young people and families at risk
- We live our lives free from crime, disorder and danger
- We live in well-designed sustainable places where we are able to access the amenities and services we need
- We have strong, resilient and supportive communities where people take responsibility for their own actions and how they affect others.

The project supported the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) which recognises the need for safety in the development and protection of the child, and in particular Article 24, which includes the prevention of accidents. The project was also relevant to the Christie Commission which highlighted the importance of early intervention and prevention.

Need for Initiative

RoSPA data shows that although the number of accidental injuries in the home is generally falling, they are still significantly higher than road traffic accidents. In addition, children and young people who survive a serious unintentional injury can experience severe pain and may need lengthy treatments. Such injuries can have long term consequences and have an impact on their social and psychological wellbeing.

Aims and Objectives

The scheme aimed to contribute towards the health and wellbeing of young children by providing families with the skills and knowledge needed to make informed choices on injury prevention. This would allow children to develop in a secure environment, ensuring a healthy and safe future.

There were four key intended outcomes:

1. Vulnerable children will be less likely to be admitted to hospital because of home accidents.
2. Parents and carers of vulnerable children will have improved levels of awareness and understanding of key child safety issues.
3. Practitioners working with vulnerable children will have increased awareness of home injuries involving young children and how these injuries can be prevented.
4. Individual risks in the home will be identified and addressed.

Delivery

SHSES was implemented through twelve local Schemes, supported by a national steering group comprising RoSPA, Care and Repair Scotland, the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service and the Scottish Government. It was managed from RoSPA Scotland's office in Edinburgh with delivery at local level through partnership organisations trained by the RoSPA home safety team to carry out home checks and provide education and home safety advice to parents.

A SHSES model/service process was developed for the project which included:

1. Referral/identification of eligible families.
2. A home safety visit, involving: a home safety risk assessment, including assessment of what equipment was needed and where it should be fitted – and equipment ‘prescription’; a home safety awareness discussion with the parents/carers, making use of a home safety pack provided by RoSPA; and the offer of a Home Fire Safety Visit to be undertaken by the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service.
3. A second home visit to deliver and professionally install the ‘prescribed’ home safety equipment, and provide guidance to the family in using it.
4. A Home Fire Safety Visit if the family wanted it.
5. A follow-up visit or phone call to further support the family in using the equipment (in some areas).

Home safety packs included checklists, a DVD, Height Chart and numerous leaflets on safety. Home safety equipment available included:

- Safety Gates
- Window Restrictors
- Non-slip bath or shower mat
- Fire Guard
- Catches for kitchen cupboards
- Corner cushions
- Blind cleats
- Sort door jammers.

Successes and Challenges

SHSES was a preventative scheme. It reached 900 vulnerable families and a total of 1,752 vulnerable children under the age of 5 over the course of thirteen months. Each family had an average of 9 items of safety equipment supplied and professionally fitted.

The cost of delivering the scheme was £276 for each family; or £142 for each child. In 2014 the available data on the cost of a non-fatal, hospital treated home accident for children aged up to 4 years was £10,600⁽¹⁾

Impact/Change

99% of all families engaged considered that their home was safer. The majority of professional stakeholders (including family support practitioners, health visitors and fire officers) considered that the Scheme helped to:

- Make children safer and healthier (85%).
- Prevent accidents and unintentional injuries in the home (76%).
- Prevent accidents and unintentional injuries to children under the age of five (75%).

165 staff were trained, with 28 achieving the RoSPA/City & Guilds Level 2 Child Safety in the Home qualification. This resulted in a 54% improvement in learners’ understanding that home injuries involving young children can be prevented and a 44% improvement in learners’ confidence in working with families on child safety issues.

Reflections

SHSES was seen as a very effective home accident prevention scheme. Its strength was in its holistic integration of all elements of the model: effective targeting of families most at risk; home

safety risk assessment; home safety equipment 'prescription'; home safety awareness raising; and professional fitting of 'prescribed' equipment.

The holistic nature of the SHSES model – in particular the 'walk through' built into the home safety visit – also provided opportunity to identify and address issues in addition to home safety, notably child protection and health improvement.

Additional Information

⁽¹⁾ Walter, LK. Re-valuation of home accidents: Published project report: PPR 483 Transport Research Laboratory 2010. Data used in the University of Nottingham Evaluation of the National Safe At Home Scheme Final Report, September 2011

<https://www.rospa.com/Home-Safety/UK/Scotland/Projects/past-projects/Home-Safety-Equipment-Scheme>

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