

REPORT BRIEF

Injury Surveillance & Prevention

CHILD INJURIES ARE A SERIOUS BUT PREVENTABLE PROBLEM

Injuries are the leading cause of death among children, accounting for more than one quarter of all child deaths in New York City. The 2010 report from the NYC Child Fatality Review Team shows that an average of 55 children between the ages of 1-12 years old die each year as a result of fatal injuries.

Fatal injuries are concentrated in low-income areas. Boys and younger children face the greatest risk.

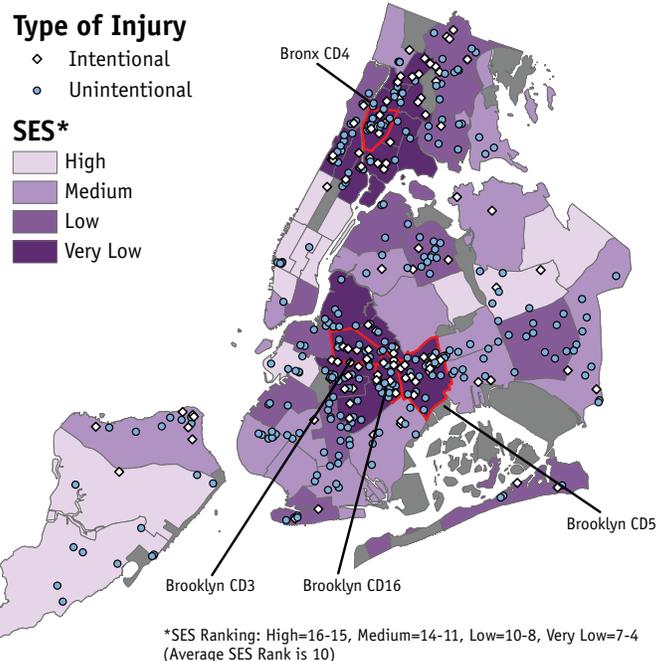
Between 2001 and 2008, more than two thirds of the injury-related child deaths were unintentional, such as deaths caused by motor vehicle crashes, and 25% involved intent to cause harm, such as injuries from child abuse. Among the unintentional injuries, 41% were transportation-related, 28% were caused by fires and burns, 10% involved suffocation, and 9% resulted from a fall. Nearly all intentional deaths (93%) were homicides involving blunt impact injuries, gunshot wounds, or fire.

Disparities in Child Injury Deaths

From 2001 to 2008, fatal injuries were more common in younger children (ages 1-3) than older children, more likely to affect boys than girls, and black, non-Hispanic children had a higher risk for injuries than children from other racial/ethnic groups.

Fatal injuries also varied by neighborhood, as shown in the map. The child fatality rate was more than twice as high in the city's poorest neighborhoods (5.2 deaths per 100,000 children) when compared with the richest (2.3 per 100,000). This disparity was largely due to homicides. Neighborhood-level disparities reveal that social and economic factors, the physical environment, and housing quality, may influence the well-being and safety of a child. Injury prevention programs, policies, and legislation should target geographic areas with highest risks.

Fatal Child Injuries and Socioeconomic Status Map
(Index of education, employment, income, and race)



Community Districts (CDs) with the highest number of fatal child injuries were found in NYC neighborhoods with the lowest socio-economic status (SES): Brooklyn CD 5 (East New York/New Lots/City Line/Starrett City), and CD 3 (Bedford Stuyvesant/Tompkins Park North/Stuyvesant Heights), Bronx CD 4 (Highbridge/Concourse), and Brooklyn CD 16 (Ocean Hill/Brownsville).

Source: Bureau of Vital Statistics, NYCDOHMH, NYC Dept. of City Planning

The full report is available at the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene's website: <http://www.nyc.gov/html/doh/downloads/pdf/episrv/episrv-childfatality-book10.pdf>

About the Child Fatality Review Team: The 2010 report was written by a multi-institutional committee created by New York City Local Law 115 (2005) to collect data and annually review external causes of death among children between 1 and 12 years old. The group's work is intended to inform policies, laws, regulations and prevention activities.



PREVENTING CHILD INJURIES

Key safety practices for parents, caretakers, and providers from the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene

Parents and Caretakers

Safety at Home

- Dial **911** in an emergency.
- Never leave a child alone in the house, in a bathtub, near water, or in a car.
- Never shake or handle your child roughly. Hitting doesn't teach children to behave; it teaches violence.
- Safeguard your home with window guards and smoke and carbon monoxide detectors. *(Building owners are required by law to install window guards in apartments with children under age 11 and install smoke and carbon monoxide detectors in all apartments).*
- Install safety gates at stairs, safety latches for drawers and cabinets, and electrical outlet covers.
- Keep medicines and potential poisons out of children's reach. Post the number for Poison Control near the phone (**800-222-1222**).
- Make sure TV sets and other large household objects are secure to avoid tip over.
- Avoid bringing toys into the home with parts small enough for a child to swallow or choke on.
- Do not keep firearms in the home. Guns should be stored unloaded, inside a lockbox, and with the trigger locked.

Street and Traffic Safety

- Supervise children while crossing the street. No child under age 10 should cross the street by him or herself.
- Place children in an age and weight appropriate car or booster seat when riding in any vehicle. *(NY State law requires children under age 4 to ride in a car seat and children under 7 or weighing more than 40 pounds to be secured in a car seat, booster seat, or harness/vest appropriate for their weight and height)*
- Teach children about safe play; be sure they wear helmets and other protective gear whenever they are on wheels, including bicycles, skates, skateboards, scooters. *(NYC law requires bicycle helmet use for children under age 14)*

Additional Tips

- Learn how to swim and provide your child with swimming lessons. Backyard pools in New York State must have barriers around them at least 4 feet high.
- Learn cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and early treatment for choking (www.nyredcross.org/takeaclass.php).
- Get help when the stresses of parenting are overwhelming. For support, call the 24-Hour Prevention and Parent Helpline (**800-342-7472**).
- Get help when stress in your relationship compromises your parenting. For support, call the 24-Hour Domestic Violence Hotline (**800-621-HOPE**).
- Call **311** for more resources!

Health Care Providers

- At each well-child visit, counsel parents about:
 - Keeping homes safe from hazards and using safety devices.
 - Using the appropriate child restraint system in all motor vehicles on every trip.
 - Providing appropriate supervision based on child's age, development, and exposure to possible hazards.
- Promote parental involvement and positive parent-child interactions to reduce child abuse and neglect.
- Look for early signs of abuse and report all suspected child abuse and neglect to the State Central Register (**800-342-3720**). It is your legal responsibility to report any reasonable suspicion of child abuse or neglect. **Never assume someone else is going to report it for you.**