

How big is the injury burden in New Zealand?



- Injuries kill three school children a week in this country, that's 60% of all childhood deaths.
- Injuries are the leading cause of death for ages 1-34 years and the second leading cause of hospitalisations.
- More than 1,600 of us die each year from injuries, our men are dying at twice the rate of women.
- Injuries claim more potential years of our lives than cancer and heart disease combined.
- Nearly a quarter of a million of us have long-term disability as a result of injury.
- Over a quarter of a million of us are treated in emergency rooms for injury, every year.
- Analysis of injury fatalities and hospitalisations by Territorial Local Authorities (TLAs) demonstrates a wide variance in injury rates (refer SCFNZ Factsheets **9 & 10**).
- The cost of lost productivity is untenable. Not only do we lose 5% of GDP as a result of injury, we suffer the ongoing cost of health care treating the huge numbers involved.
- The financial cost to this country each year is an astonishing \$7 billion, but the costs of a life taken, of lost potential and opportunities for gone are immeasurable.

Protecting & improving community safety requires a coordinated & intersectorial approach.



Why is local government leadership so important in building Safe Communities?

Consider these real life examples:

- A child drowns in an unfenced swimming pool.
 - A woman is raped in an unlit council car park.
 - A toddler is run over in a poorly designed road.
 - A senior citizen is found dead from smoke inhalation in his council flat.
 - A child breaks her leg at a council playground.
 - A teenager is hit by a car at a pedestrian crossing, and breaks his skull.
 - A woman trips on an uneven footpath and breaks her hip.
 - During scheduled maintenance on a sewer, a gas explosion occurs resulting in severe injuries to workers.
-  Local government has a leading role in ensuring that these kinds of situations are avoided and when they do occur, coordinating all steps to prevent them from happening again.
-  Councils can contribute to the reduction of injury and crime rates by:
- Systematically incorporating safety provisions and risk management considerations into their planning and approval processes for the built, natural and social environments; and
 - Leading and facilitating safe community partnerships with a broad range of community organisations, industry groups, employers and individuals, to co-ordinate preventative programmes and community actions that promote safety.



What is a Safe Community?

Safe Communities is a World Health Organisation (WHO) concept that recognises safety as a “universal concern” and a responsibility for all. The Safe Communities model creates an infrastructure in local communities to increase action on injury prevention and safety promotion through the building of local partnerships.

Over 100 communities throughout the world are designated as a Safe Community of the WHO Safe Community Network, five of these are in NZ (Waitakere, Waimakariri, New Plymouth, Whangarei and Wellington), and a number of other TLAs are supporting injury prevention coalitions to achieve accreditation.

The Safe Communities Foundation NZ (SCFNZ), an Affiliate Support and Certifying Centre for the WHO Collaborating Centre on Community Safety, accredits communities using the WHO criteria. (www.safecommunities.org.nz/becoming).

In NZ, the Foundation's work is based on three core values:

1. **Safety** is a fundamental human right;
2. **People** are at the heart of making communities safer places in which to **live, work, learn, travel** and **play**; and
3. **Everybody** has a responsibility to promote & maintain their safety and the safety of others.

Designation as a Safe Community of the WHO Safe Community Network programme is an option. Some communities may choose an alternative approach. However, most local councils would see value in receiving international recognition for their efforts in local community safety and the benefit from making this public commitment to an open, transparent and evidence-based approach.



Why would you want to set up a Safe Communities programme?

The Local Government Act 2002, states that the purpose of local government is to promote social, economic, environmental & cultural wellbeing of communities in the present & for the future. The Safe Communities Accreditation Programme is recognised as an effective, beneficial & sustainable way to promote safety & reduce injuries.

Advantages from a TLA perspective related to Safe Communities accreditation are:

1. It makes good business sense to be involved in safety promotion and injury prevention; &
2. It provides a vehicle for TLA engagement with local business, community organisations & groups, as well as individuals.

Even modest improvements in community safety will produce significant results. Consider these national estimates if applied to your TLA:

- A 5% reduction in injury fatalities would save around 75 lives & around \$212 million;
- A 5% reduction in the number of injury hospitalisations would save pain, suffering & disruption to quality of life for about 2,200 people & save around \$466 million;
- A 5% reduction in the number of ACC weekly compensation work-related injuries would save pain, suffering & disruption to quality of life for approximately 11,500 claimants & save around \$6.5 million; and
- LTNZ estimate the average social cost as being: \$2.84 million per fatal injury; \$505,000 per reported serious injury; & \$50,000 per reported minor injury.

Think Safe
Feel Safe
Act Safe
Be Safe

Advantages of working together to reduce community risks.

- ⇒ One message, many voices;
- ⇒ Build critical mass & credibility;
- ⇒ Create clearer & more comprehensive picture of local risks;
- ⇒ Coordinate efforts, reduce duplication, and integrate planning;
- ⇒ Provide access to other sectors, shared resources; develop collective expertise; and
- ⇒ The whole can be greater than the sum of its individual parts (synergy).

How to get started?

Introduce the concept to your local stakeholders and raise interest about forming a coalition by:

1. Arranging for SCFNZ to provide a **short and punchy presentation** to Council about the benefits of Safe Communities;
2. **Convening a community consultation and planning forum** to map current initiatives and identify gaps (Refer SCFNZ resource 'A Guide to Developing a Safe Community'). SCFNZ is also available to facilitate this process.
3. Establishing a Safe Communities coalition and provide **training for the members**.
4. Appointing a **designated coordinator** to develop partnerships and programmes and to help co-ordinate a Safe Communities business plan.

For further information and support contact:

Safe Communities Foundation NZ (SCFNZ)

Dr Carolyn Coggan, Director

Hurstmere House, 128 Hurstmere Road, Takapuna

PO Box 331399, Takapuna,

North Shore 0740, New Zealand.

Tel: +64 9 488 7601 Fax: +64 9 488 7602

Email: contact@scfnz.org

Web: www.safecommunities.org.nz

Resource Number Three: Updated October 2006



An introduction to...

Supporting a Safe Community Coalition in your TLA Region



SCFNZ is a:

Certifying Centre and

Affiliate Safe Community Support Centre of the WHO
Collaborating Centre on Community Safety Promotion.

Affiliate Centre with Certifying Authority of the
International Safe Schools Movement.