

Accidents and injuries

Growing Up in Scotland is a large-scale longitudinal research project which is tracking the lives of several groups of Scottish children from the early years, through childhood and beyond. GUS is concerned with all aspects children's lives including health, development, family circumstances, parenting, neighbourhood, education, friends and leisure activities.

GUS helps to find out how the circumstances and experiences of children growing up in Scotland are changing. It also shows how early experiences influence later outcomes as the children grow older.

The principal aim of the study is to provide information to support policy-making and service planning in Scotland, but it is also intended to be a broader resource that can be drawn on by academics, voluntary sector organisations and others. Findings from the study are being used as a resource for the training and development of practitioners working with young children and their families, including nurses, midwives, health visitors, early years professionals, teachers and social workers.

Information about accidents has been collected every year during interviews with parents. When babies were 10 months old, main carers were asked if their child had received NHS treatment for any accidents at any point since their birth, and if so, what kind of injury occurred and whether a hospital visit resulted. Where possible, trends in accident rates are reported.



Recent findings

- In 2010/11, 8% of babies (8% of boys and 9% of girls) had received treatment for an accident. This is a small (but statistically significant) reduction from 2005/06 when 10% of children had done so (11% of boys, 9% of girls)
- Of those children experiencing accidents requiring treatment, similar proportions in both years had visited casualty or were admitted to a hospital ward (75% in 2010/11, 73% in 2005/06)
- By far the most common injury was a knock or fall causing no serious injury (e.g. bang on the head), accounting for 60% of injuries
- The minority of children who, at 10 months had already started to walk were more likely to have had treatment for an accident than those not yet walking (11% compared with 7%)

Source: Bradshaw, P et al (2013) *Growing Up in Scotland: Birth Cohort 2 Results from the first year* Edinburgh: Scottish Government

Previous findings

- Over the first 4 years of children's lives, the 'peak' time for accidents is between the age of one year and 2 years, when 23% of children experienced one or more accident requiring treatment. This is probably due to increased (but faltering) mobility as the children begin to walk. 19% of children experienced at least one accident between the ages of 2 and 3 while 18% had an accident between the ages of 3 and 4.
- Between the ages of 1 and 4, one in five children aged experienced 2 or more accidents requiring medical attention.
- Children living in deprived areas were more likely than those living in more affluent areas to experience 2 or more accidents requiring treatment during their first 4 years. 26% of those living in the most deprived areas of Scotland experienced an accident, compared with 17% in the least deprived areas (based on Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation quintiles).

Source: Bromley, C & Cunningham-Burley, S (2010) *Growing Up in Scotland: Health inequalities in the early years* Edinburgh: Scottish Government



- 60% of children had at least one accident or injury during their first 5 years, for which their parent had consulted a medical specialist (doctor, dentist, health centre or hospital).
- 11% of children experienced 3 or more accidents requiring medical attention over their first 5 years.
- 'Family adversity' (an index combining 8 measures of disadvantage including poverty and maternal depression) is significantly associated with children experiencing 3 or more accidents requiring medical attention during their first 5 years.
- However, no significant relationship between parenting styles and parent-child relationships and accidents/ injuries was identified.

Source: Parkes, A & Wight, D (2011) *Growing Up in Scotland: Parenting and children's health* Edinburgh: Scottish Government

For more information and to download a copy of the full report please see
www.growingupinScotland.org.uk

See also:

Bradshaw, P (2012) Chapter 2 'Accidents' in Rutherford, L., Sharp, C and Bromley, C (eds) *The Scottish Health Survey 2011: Volume 2 – Children*, Edinburgh: National Statistics

Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health/ UCL/HQIP (2013) *Child Health Reviews UK Clinical Outcome Review Programme Overview of child deaths in the four UK countries*

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