



NO. 19

SUMMER 2002

Dedicated to reducing preventable injuries and deaths in Connecticut children.

## Use Your Head, Wear a Helmet



While Hartford Wolfpack mascot "Sonar" looks on, Connecticut SAFE KIDS Director Eileen Henzy (left) and Alice Halloway of the Connecticut Brain Injury Association adjust a safety helmet for proper fit. Nearly 200 children attended the SAFE KIDS Day sponsored by the Elks of Connecticut. See story on page 2.

MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

### Dangerous misconceptions



Eileen A. Henzy

The National SAFE KIDS Campaign recently released the "National Study of Traumatic Brain Injury and Wheel Related Sports," which explored the level of knowledge children 8 to 12 have regarding brain injury and how often they wear their helmets. The study also explored why children 8 to 12 years old do not wear helmets.

The results:

- 94% of children 8 to 12 years have biked in the last year,
- 65% of those surveyed knew that the effects of a brain injury could last a lifetime, yet less than half said they wear a helmet on every bike ride,
- Nearly half cited "I only ride near home" as the reason they do not wear a helmet,
- More than half said that if their parents had a rule that the child always wear a helmet, they would comply,
- Children do not perceive themselves as being susceptible to a brain injury.

The implications of these findings will help to shape our efforts to educate children about helmet use and safety. Most importantly, more education needs to be done so that parents realize whether their children perceive the true risk of injury on a bike.

More needs to be done also on educating parents to encourage their children to wear helmets. A presentation by a child affected by a TBI from a bike crash may help children feel more susceptible to injury.

Finally, children need to realize that bike crashes can happen close to home, and peers need to encourage use of helmets at all times.

For a full copy of the report visit [www.safekids.org](http://www.safekids.org).

## CHAPTER UPDATE

# Connecticut SAFE KIDS

New London County Chapter is applying to become a local coalition of the National SAFE KIDS Campaign. The chapter has been affiliated with Connecticut SAFE KIDS since 1999 and recently gained support from Community Partnerships, a program of Lawrence & Memorial Hospital, to form its own coalition. In addition to activities in several risk areas, the chapter has announced the first hospital-based fitting station to check car seats in Connecticut. The service is provided free-of-charge every Tuesday from 4 to 7 pm by appointment. For more information or to schedule an appointment, call (860) 442-0733.

Greater Waterbury Chapter is a coalition of area hospitals and public health and safety professionals interested in injury prevention. This spring the chapter has been busy providing safety programs to elementary schools in Terryville, Watertown, Waterbury, Middlebury and Cheshire. In addition, the chapter has assisted with safety fairs and has organized several car seat safety check events. The chapter sponsors several ongoing projects, including a bicycle helmet replacement program for pediatric patients at St. Mary's and Waterbury hospitals and car seat checks by appointment at Waterbury Police Department and AMR Ambulance.

Windham County Chapter, the latest chapter to come on board with Connecticut SAFE KIDS, is led by the Windham Regional Community Council. The chapter has representatives from throughout the county, including hospitals, police, fire, EMS, Healthy Start and local retail stores. The chapter recently planned and organized a car seat clinic, and is working with area daycare facilities on bicycle helmet programs. Plans are underway for a July kick-off that will feature safety information at a regional event. ■

## SAFE KIDS Week 2002

# Use Your Head, Wear a Helmet

*(continued from page 1)*

On May 9, 2002, nearly 200 children attended the 5th Annual Connecticut SAFE KIDS Day at Connecticut Children's Medical Center. For the third year, the Elks of Connecticut provided generous support for the event, including "coaches" who assisted the children with their transition to a variety of safety stations. Many thanks to the following organizations for their assistance in helping to teach these children valuable safety lessons:

- American Medical Response
- Connecticut Brain Injury Association
- Connecticut Children's Medical Center Auxiliary
- Connecticut Children's Medical Center Staff
- Connecticut Poison Control Center
- Connecticut State Police Troop H
- The Elks of Connecticut
- Hartford Fire Department Special Services
- Hartford Police
- West Hartford Police



U.S. CONSUMER PRODUCT SAFETY COMMISSION (CPSC)

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*Honorary Chairman*  
Senator Christopher J. Dodd



# Reporting on childhood injury: Connecticut Drownings

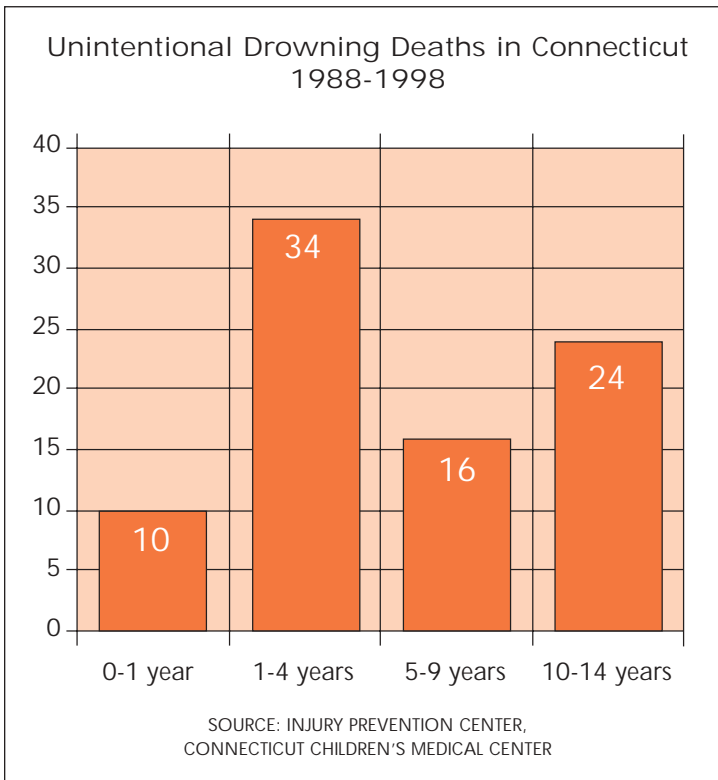


Garry Lapidus, PA-C, MPH  
Director, Injury Prevention Center, Connecticut Children's Medical Center; Assistant Professor of Pediatrics and Public Health, University of Connecticut School of Medicine

Nearly nine children die each year in Connecticut from preventable drownings. From 1988 to 1998, 84 children ages 14 and under died from drowning. Unlike other unintentional injuries, the number of drownings related hospitalizations and emergency department visits are nearly equal to the number of deaths. This is a result of the deadly nature of this type of injury.

It takes only a few seconds and an inch of water for a child to drown. Children under four years old are most at risk, and most drown in a pool.

Prevention techniques include constant supervision of all children around water, installation of four-sided isolation fencing around pools, and use of a personal flotation device when boating. ■



## Congratulations!

In March, 10 programs received funding for spring safety projects. The following projects were chosen from many applications.



BLACKHAM ELEMENTARY SCHOOL BASED HEALTH CLINIC, BRIDGEPORT

Scooter Safety Rodeo

CONNECTICUT STATE POLICE TROOP L, LITCHFIELD  
Bicycle Safety Program

NEW BRITAIN EMS, NEW BRITAIN  
Seat Belt Simulator for Car Seat Education

NEW LONDON COUNTY SAFE KIDS CHAPTER  
CONNECTICUT SAFE KIDS  
Bicycle Safety Program

READ SCHOOL-BASED HEALTH CENTER, BRIDGEPORT  
Scooter and Bicycle Safety Program

CONNECTICUT STATE POLICE, TROOP F, WESTBROOK  
Unattended Kids in Cars Awareness Project

FAMILY STRIDES, TORRINGTON  
Home Safety Project

WATERBURY POLICE DEPARTMENT, WATERBURY  
Bicycle Safety Program

WATERBURY HOSPITAL, WATERBURY  
Bicycle Safety Rodeo

MERIDEN POLICE DEPARTMENT, MERIDEN  
Seat Belt Simulator for Car Seat Education

Keep Kids Safe

## License Plate Grants

Applications for next round will be available late summer at

[www.ctsafekids.org](http://www.ctsafekids.org)

## Why become a SAFE KIDS member?

- You will receive the latest research and program information.
  - You will have the opportunity to purchase low-cost safety supplies and materials for your program.
  - You will be participating in an active, growing movement to reduce childhood injury.
- Please send me a SAFE KIDS brochure and membership application.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Daytime Telephone: ( \_\_\_\_\_ ) \_\_\_\_\_

or call (860) 545-9988

## Mark your calendar!

The Connecticut SAFE KIDS Coalition breaks for the summer and will resume meetings in September. Dates and times are scheduled, but may change. Please look for mailings to announce meetings, and be sure to RSVP your attendance by calling (860) 545-9988.

September 5, 2002      Coalition Meeting  
Noon – 2 p.m.              Location: TBA

November 7, 2002      Coalition Meeting  
Noon – 2 p.m.              Location: TBA

February 6, 2003      Coalition Meeting  
Noon – 2 p.m.              Location: TBA

April 3, 2003              Connecticut SAFE KIDS Annual  
Workshop

For more information  
[www.ctsafekids.org](http://www.ctsafekids.org)

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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

[www.ctsafekids.org](http://www.ctsafekids.org)

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