



## Background

- Injuries to infants and young children in the child care environment are not uncommon.
- Important to the design of an effective intervention is an assessment of the current safety practices and environmental conditions.

## Aims

- Survey the safety practices of urban child care centers.
- Identify setting characteristics associated with unsafe practices and hazardous conditions.

# Methods

- Design: Descriptive survey.
- Setting: Urban child care centers.
- Subjects: 97 child care centers within the Philadelphia Early Childhood Collaborative.
- Data Collection: On site safety evaluations performed by trained inspectors using a standardized questionnaire.

#### Outcome Measures

- Points were accumulated on the safety questionnaire for observed practices and conditions and normalized to a 100 point scale.
- Each center received an Overall Safety Scores (OSS) and 9 Category Safety Scores (CSS).

# **ON SITE SAFETY EVALUATION OF URBAN CHILD CARE SETTINGS**

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#### **Program Characteristics**

	<b>n (%)</b>	
Setting	60 (62)	Home-based
	37 (38)	<b>Center-based</b>
Census	66 (77)	<30 children
	23 (20)	<u>&gt;</u> 30 children
Site Longevity	25 (30)	< 3 years
	58 (70)	<u>&gt; 3 years</u>

Safety Scores		
	Average (%)	( <u>+</u> s.d.)
Overall	82.0	( <u>+</u> 13.0)
Category		
Burn	80.5	( <u>+</u> 18.0)
Fire	80.8	( <u>+</u> 14.0)
Infection Control	81.3	( <u>+</u> 17.3)
Poisoning	83.2	( <u>+</u> 14.5)
Aspiration	83.2	( <u>+</u> 23.7)
Playground	84.3	( <u>+</u> 14.9)
Lacerations	85.2	( <u>+</u> 14.9)
Falls	85.8	( <u>+</u> 14.9)
Security	87.9	( <u>+</u> 28.2)



### Results

#### **Deficiencies in Safety Device Use**

	n (%)
Stair gates	33 (49)
Stove knob covers	32 (47)
Drawer latches (sharps)	29 (35)
Cabinet locks (poisons)	27 (30)
Outlet covers	32 (32)
Window guards	17 (22)
Drapery cords	21 (30)

### **Deficiencies in Infection Control**

	Infant Room	Classroom	
	<u>n (%)</u>	n (%)	
<b>Gloved with diapering</b>	21 (31)	29 (37)	
Hygienic diaper disposal	11 (17)	10 (14)	
Washed after diapering	6 (9)	4 (6)	
Changing table cleaned	12 (19)	18 (26)	
Toys washed daily	NA	12 (14)	





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### **Proficiencies in Safety Practices**

	<u>n (%)</u>
Infants back to sleep	61 (95)
Cribs meet safetystds	50 (98)
<b>Poison Control # posted</b>	76 (90)
Furniture in good condition	89 (95)
No peeling paint	78 (93)

# Conclusions

- Many children in urban child care centers are exposed to health and safety hazards.
- Individual centers varied greatly in their safety practices and maintenance of a hazard free environment.
- Hazard reduction could be achieved through prevention education and the use of inexpensive safety devices.
- Interventions targeted to more established, center based, larger sized sites may have greater impact on overall hazard reduction.

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