



Led by the American Trauma Society, PA Division  
2 Flowers Drive  
Mechanicsburg, PA 17050  
717-766-1616

## Summary Report: 2021-2022 Fiscal Year Data

Safe Kids Pennsylvania (SKPA) is part of Safe Kids Worldwide's global network dedicated to keeping kids safe from preventable childhood injury, which is the number one cause of death among children ages 1 to 19. These injuries range from accidental falls, to poisonings, car crashes, drownings, and many more. SKPA promotes and supports childhood injury prevention activities through education, collaboration, and advocacy throughout Pennsylvania. Safe Kids Pennsylvania is one of many statewide coalitions under Safe Kids Worldwide, and is led by the American Trauma Society, PA Division.

In the 2021-2022 fiscal year, SKPA started with 9 Coalitions and 7 Partners of the State. We were fortunate enough to end the fiscal year with 8 Coalitions and 10 Partners of the State and added one more Partner just after the fiscal year ended.<sup>1</sup> Coalitions and Partners of the State are both headed by a lead agency who is responsible for employing a coordinator doing Safe Kids-related work. Coalition coordinators must dedicate at least 20 hours a week on Safe Kids work, while Partner coordinators must dedicate at least 8 hours.

During the 21-22 fiscal year, Safe Kids PA Coalitions and Partners engaged in approximately 430 community events, 71 professional trainings, 154 media contacts, and many more, all totaling over 4,300 hours of event time. These groups and their partner agencies checked over 1,900 car seats and distributed almost 900 more. Across the state, these groups reached just over 125,000 people and distributed approximately 3,818 helmets, 316 cribs, 67 smoke alarms, 67 CO monitors, 32,410 educational materials and/or brochures, and over 8,500 other items<sup>2</sup> to qualifying clients and families. Additionally, there are over 200 partner agencies or groups throughout PA that work with our Coalitions and Partners to prevent unintentional childhood injury and death.

Compared to the data from the 2020-2021 fiscal year,<sup>3</sup> the numbers across the board have increased significantly -in some cases, doubling. In the 21-22 FY, many organizations and agencies relaxed their COVID restrictions, allowing for optional masking and in-person events. While this is not true for every

---

<sup>1</sup> SKPA currently has 19 groups throughout the state, but this document will report on 18 of those groups since the last was added after the fiscal year transition.

<sup>2</sup> Other items include sleep sacks, medicine safety materials, childproofing kits, baby gates, multi-purpose locks, window blind cord wind-ups, furniture wall straps, Mr. Yuck stickers, stove knob covers, universal cable gun locks, hydration safety water bottles, bike bells and reflectors, and more.

<sup>3</sup> In the 2020-2021 fiscal year, Safe Kids PA Coalitions and Partners engaged in over 218 community events and 60 professional trainings, all totaling over 2,200 hours of event time. These groups and their partner agencies checked over 1,300 car seats at 358 child passenger safety related events. Across the state, SKPA groups reached 36,188 people and distributed helmets, car seats, booster seats, cribs, smoke alarms, CO monitors, educational materials and/or brochures, and other items to qualifying clients and families.

agency under SKPA or their partners, it most likely has made a significant difference for our outreach during this time period. Additionally, it is likely that the adaptations and strategies for engagements the Coalitions and Partners developed during the height of the pandemic are still beneficial to their outreach and community programs.

Information in this document was collected from Community Impact Reports (CIR) from Coalitions and Partners for the 21-22 fiscal year, and from a series of virtual meetings between the PA State Coordinator with Coalition Coordinators and/or Partner Coordinators. This year, we had a 100% response rate for both virtual meetings and for submission of CIR spreadsheets.

### **PRIMARY INITIATIVES AND PROGRAMS<sup>4</sup>**

The initiative with the highest level of events and involvement from Coalitions and Partners is child passenger safety (CPS). In the virtual meetings, it was the most mentioned program focus of the past fiscal year. Twelve groups (out of 18) mentioned CPS being a primary focus for their efforts, and the hard data reflects that clearly. There were 459 CPS related events, including Inspection Station(s), CPS week, Check up events, and more. Additionally, there were 1,943 car seats checked by certified technicians at these events, and another 898 car seats distributed to families in need. These numbers are a huge increase from the 20-21 FY, with almost 100 more CPS related events, over 600 more car seats checked, and double the number of car seats given out to those who needed one. This is an excellent insight into how the social norms around the pandemic are shifting as more in-person events are being allowed and even encouraged, while many policies within agencies have been upgraded to be more accessible to the public.

After CPS, the next most mentioned safety topic (by 7 groups) was bicycle safety. In the CIR, this is categorized as “Wheeled Sports Safety” and had 414 events reported, with 3,818 helmets distributed to the public in the past fiscal year. This is a huge increase in events for bike safety when compared to last fiscal year, and an additional 600 helmets distributed. During the pandemic, many people and families were using bicycling more as a way to get outside and exercise, and our agencies found that “bike rodeos,” a favored bicycle safety event (where helmets are fitted and distributed, and children can ride around a safety course) can be hosted safely outside while masked and maintaining appropriate distancing for most of the time. Even now that many agencies are not requiring masking, the strategies employed during the past two years of the pandemic seem to be continuing to help with our events.

Medication safety initiatives were mentioned next, as well as safe driving programs -either focusing on teen drivers or distracted driving in general. Each of these topics were mentioned by four groups in the virtual meetings. The CIR data shows that medication safety, categorized under “Poisonings,” was the focus of 105 events, while teen driving was a part of 72 events. Unfortunately, due to the nature of the current CIR, distracted driving is not its own category and so it is likely that events with that focus were not explicitly counted.

Additional safety topics mentioned in the virtual meetings include home safety, fire safety, safe sleep initiatives, pedestrian safety, falls prevention, farm safety, and sports safety. Again, due to the current CIR, we have numbers for some of these initiatives but not all. Meanwhile, the numbers we have are

---

<sup>4</sup> Final counts for initiatives, programs, and materials distributed can be found at the end of this document, in Table A.

excellent -95 events focused on fire safety, with 67 smoke alarms and 67 CO monitors distributed to the public; safe sleep was the focus of 314 events, with 316 cribs (or other safe sleep device) distributed; pedestrian safety was focused on 109 events; and 74 events focused on falls prevention.

Another primary focus that was mentioned during the virtual meetings was around coalition/committee engagement and partnerships. A few groups (3) specifically mentioned that their coalition/committee engagement was going 'really well,' saying that their groups were very engaged and willing to volunteer and participate in events. One group discussed a coalition member stepping up to organize a big event and following through on it. Additionally, and more significantly, 8 different groups discussed strong partnerships with current or new agencies as being particularly successful and helpful this past fiscal year. These will be discussed more in the "Programming Highlights and Successes" section of this document.

### **CHALLENGES<sup>5</sup>**

In the virtual meetings with Coordinators, the most mentioned challenge for Coalitions and Partners was around volunteer engagement and attendance at events. Seven groups discussed this, with two specifically talking about the difficulty around scheduling technicians for CPS events, and lacking CPS technicians in general. This was also a challenge in the previous fiscal year, and will most likely continue to be a difficulty for many SKPA groups even while others are seeing success in this area.

Five groups discussed difficulty with volunteer engagement and attendance at meetings (versus community events). While some groups have found that moving to virtual meetings has had a positive impact on volunteer attendance, many are still struggling with partner agencies not attending the coalition/committee meetings. This could be due to the large number of agencies with staff turnover, stemming from the pandemic and huge levels of burnout in numerous industries. When partner agencies experience staff turnover, it impacts who the SKPA group can collaborate with and requires the SKPA groups to basically 'start over' in terms of relationship building.

Similarly, five groups discussed the difficulty and challenge of capacity building at this time. Capacity building can take on many different forms -from increasing membership in the coalition/committee, gaining additional CPS technicians, learning necessary skills and information for success (like grant writing), and more. Many of the groups who discussed this are new Partners as of this past fiscal year, and so it is entirely expected that they will be focusing on capacity building in general, which is challenging for any agency.

While last fiscal year, one of the biggest and most obvious challenges for the SKPA groups was the coronavirus pandemic and social restrictions and responses to that, this fiscal year has seen something of a relief around restrictions and less hesitancy with in-person events. Even so, some groups are struggling with community programming, and some specifically mentioned difficulty around 're-entry' after COVID. Some groups have found that the request for programming and/or materials from the community is still lower than pre-COVID levels, while others are finding that volunteers are less likely to commit to events happening in the evenings or on weekends. Additionally, while some agencies may be comfortable with in-person events not requiring masking, other partner agencies might not be 'at the

---

<sup>5</sup> As this is not tracked within the CIR, the information within this section is based off the virtual meetings between the PA State Coordinator with the Coalition and Partner Coordinators.

same level' around COVID protections or restrictions, which makes it more difficult to coordinate events with them.

As seen in previous summary reports, unrestricted funding is often a challenge for SKPA groups. Unrestricted funding is always important to any agency -particularly nonprofits -and allows SKPA groups to buy materials that they see a need for that may not be "popular" with funders. Additionally, many materials that SKPA groups use (like car seats and helmets) have increased in price, which requires the groups to have more money in order to meet community needs. SKPA groups need funding both for materials and non-material items (like "overhead" or marketing needs, etc.) to do their best work.

Finally, another challenge briefly mentioned was the struggle of the time of the coordinators. Many coordinators are stretched thin by all the work that they do, especially in hospital agencies although it is not unique to them. The SKPA coordinators are all busy dealing with scheduling and facilitating meetings, coordinating and participating in events, reporting their activities to multiple agencies, ordering and distributing materials to the public, and so much more. On top of that, all of them have other requirements for their jobs at whatever kind of agency they work at -hospitals to nonprofits to local government offices. Finding the time to focus on just Safe Kids work alone can be challenging when other emergencies or priorities arise, and so some coordinators are feeling like they are always 'dreaming of doing more' without having the capacity to do so.

#### **PROGRAMMING HIGHLIGHTS AND SUCCESSES<sup>6</sup>**

Even with the challenges mentioned previously, many groups have been able to achieve some amazing programming results. For example, Chester County was able to partner with a local hospital to begin a Lunch and Learn program for expectant parents. They bring visual props (car seat, baby doll, etc.) and a bucket of non-recommended items focusing on CPS and explain why these items may reduce safety if a crash occurs. They now have two hospitals on board with it, and other partner agencies interested as well. From those classes, they can get people to attend car seat check events and make sure that the seats are installed correctly.

Berks County was able to solidify a partnership with Reading Hospital-Tower Health through their mini grant initiatives. They have been able to use some funding to do outreach to Spanish-speaking communities via bus ads (either on bus stops or inside of busses) and Reading Hospital has been a huge support in this initiative. They even added double-sided bilingual flyers and easily distributed 500 flyers to community members and have ordered another 500 to be printed. Another group doing translation work is York County, where they have a high number of people speaking Haitian Creole. They were able to utilize mini grant funds for translation of safety materials into Haitian Creole. Additionally, they were able to get matching grant funding for this initiative, which expanded their ability to provide translation and outreach.

Our Central Partner of the State was able to organize a distracted driving campaign in collaboration with PennDOT, state and local police, and local schools. They got supplies from Impact Teen Drivers, received funding from Children's Miracle Network, and provided a fun and educational event that included drunk goggles, competitions, and driving simulations. They even heard about how good the event was from an

---

<sup>6</sup> As this is not tracked within the CIR, the information within this section is based off the virtual meetings between the PA State Coordinator with the Coalition and Partner Coordinators.

administrative staff member at a local hospital who reached out because their child participated in the event and had awesome things to say about it.

Susquehanna Valley was able to work with the PA Traffic Injury Prevention Project (TIPP) to schedule and host two car seat technician training classes in the spring. They received overwhelming support for these classes, with lots of people attending. And now, because of the training, they are able to set up car seat clinics and relaunch car seat safety checks with the new technicians in their service area.

Finally, one of our Partners of the State was able to hold their first Safe Kids specific meeting in over two years! This is an excellent success, and indicative of their hard work during the most intense period of the pandemic. They were able to brainstorm more people to invite, imagine future plans and goals, and gather a team of people to meet community needs. Successes, even when they are not trackable programmatic successes, should be celebrated and recognized.

### **STATE OFFICE HIGHLIGHTS**

This is a new section in the Summary Report, allowing for more accountability and reporting from the State Office from the past fiscal year. The State Office does not focus on public outreach currently, but focuses on addressing overarching needs of SKPA groups, researching and implementing best practices for injury and violence prevention work, and generally providing support and technical assistance to SKPA groups, among other things.

In the 21-22 FY, the State Office was able to accomplish many of the recommendations mentioned in the previous Summary Report. The Coordinator created two official and adaptable invitation letter templates for SKPA groups to utilize to invite either organizations or individuals to collaborate with them; hosted quarterly networking meetings to provide opportunities for communication within the SKPA network; and continued to inform SKPA groups of relevant resources and best practices within the field of injury and violence prevention.

In addition to the recommendations in previous Summary Reports, the State Office Coordinator participated in the “Injury and Violence Prevention Policy Fellowship Program” through the Safe States Alliance during the federal fiscal year of October 2021 to September 2022. This unique opportunity provided a stronger foundation of policy and advocacy work that can be brought back to the Commonwealth and used to advocate for policies and legislation that supports the Safe Kids mission.

The Coordinator also created a page dedicated to health equity on the Safe Kids PA website and has prioritized health equity work across the state. The State Office sends health equity specific resources to local Coordinators in monthly newsletters, participated in a pilot program on “*Health Equity: Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Assessment Guide for Multidisciplinary Teams*” in the winter of 2021,<sup>7</sup> and also worked to overhaul the mini grant process from start to finish to focus more on utilization of evidence-based programs and prioritization of health equity work throughout the state.

Every year, the State Office offers mini grants for the Coalitions and Partners of the State where they can receive up to \$3,000 of funding for a specific project or initiative. In the 21-22 FY, the State Office provided \$17,536.36 of funding to six SKPA groups through the mini grant program. Additionally, after

---

<sup>7</sup>This health equity assessment tool is being developed in a partnership between Safe Kids Worldwide, Children’s Safety Network, and the National Center for Fatality Review and Prevention

an application process, the State Office was awarded extra money from the Pennsylvania Department of Health for an additional round of mini grants for Coalitions and Partners. This 'special round' of mini grants began with the change of the fiscal year, in July of 2022, and will be reported on further in the 22-23 Summary Report.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

While the work "on the ground" that the Coalitions and Partners are accomplishing cannot be understated, this section focuses on work for the State Office to complete in order to provide better and more comprehensive support to these groups.

Recommendations are as follows:

- Update and adapt the Community Impact Report to prioritize clear and accurate data, while also not adding additional burdens to the local Coordinators;
- Assess the counties in PA without coverage or with limited coverage and prioritize strategies to engage relevant organizations or groups (including establishing new Partners of the State);
- Continue to provide Coalitions and Partners with opportunities for collaborations and communication with each other, in order to support their programming efforts, discuss best practices, establish collaborative bonds, and create more cohesive prevention efforts in PA;
- Pass along information to Coalitions and Partners focusing on volunteer engagement; increasing participation and collaboration within groups and programming; health equity; and other relevant materials.

Jessica Ritter  
Safe Kids PA State Office Coordinator

