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Summary Report: 2023-2024 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 (SKW), and is led by the American Trauma Society, PA Division.

During the 23-24 fiscal year (FY), SKPA had 8 Coalitions and 11 Partners of the State working on preventing unintentional childhood injuries across PA. Coalitions are groups that have contracts with SKW, with expectations including reaching a certain percentage of the population within their service area, building a dynamic group of community partners to help do the work, engaging in outreach, raising funds as necessary and possible, submitting the annual coalition assessment to SKW, and complying with SKW brand guidelines. Pennsylvania also has partners of the state, which are groups that have a contract with the Safe Kids Pennsylvania State Office to do work around the commonwealth. Similar to coalitions, partner coordinators are expected to dedicate at least eight hours a month to Safe Kids work and other standards, including creating a working committee of community partners to do the work of Safe Kids, generally being an active partner within the SKPA network, participating in or implementing at least three injury prevention activities each year, submitting an annual assessment to the state office, adhering to branding guidelines set by SKW, and fundraising as possible.

These SKPA groups were a part of at least 14,034 total events reaching over 201,000 people. Specifically, they engaged in at least 363 community events, 13,608 educational sessions, and 63 trainings across all safety topics.¹ Further breakdowns on programmatic efforts will be provided in the section below. In addition to data from reports, the subsequent sections will also outline challenges and successes of the local groups and the State Office of Safe Kids PA.

The information in this document was collected from the Community Impact Report (CIR) data provided from coalitions and partners for the 23-24 FY, and from a series of virtual meetings between the PA State Coordinator with coalition and partner coordinators. This year, there was a 95% response rate for virtual meetings, and an 89% response rate for the CIR submission.

¹ For the CIR, "community events" are defined as a 'less active' form of education (like a table event at a health fair), an "educational session" is a 'more active' form of education that aim to provide a depth of knowledge or encourage behavior change either in a group setting or individual/one-on-one education (like a class presentation, or car seat fitting), and a "training" is a type of education delivered to a professional with the intent to build their skill set for use in their work.

PRIMARY INITIATIVES AND PROGRAMS

Over the 2023-2024 fiscal year, SKPA groups reached over 201,000 people throughout the state at over 14,000 events,² totaling just over 16,500 hours of time. The majority of those events were educational sessions, which can include individualized or one-on-one education. Specifically, there were 13,608 educational sessions across all focus areas, 363 community events, and 63 trainings. Final counts can be found on pages 6 and 7 of this document.

Within Home Safety, which includes topics like fire prevention, poisoning prevention, safe infant sleep, and more, there were over 7,500 events to more than 130,000 people. The data show that poisoning prevention (including medication safety), safe sleep, and fire prevention were within the top 5 focus areas of local SKPA groups. In the one-on-one meetings, SKPA groups identified general home safety (like childproofing), poisoning prevention, and safe sleep as primary focus areas for their work. They provided at least 2,540 home childproofing items, 140 baby gates, 350 cribs, and over 12,000 medication safety items to people who needed them.

For Car and Road Safety, including child passenger safety, teen driving, pedestrian safety, and more, SKPA groups provided services to just over 37,700 people at 6,033 events. Events focusing specifically on Child Passenger Safety (CPS) were the most frequent - an aspect that was also mentioned within the one-on-one meetings. CPS is consistently the primary focus area of a majority of the SKPA groups, with a total of 13 groups mentioning it as a priority during the one-on-one meetings. During the 23-24 FY, there were at least 2,436 car seats checked at events (to ensure correct installation and use), and 561 child safety seats provided to those who needed them.

Finally, Sports and Play Safety, which includes bicycle safety, concussion prevention, sports hydration, and more, accounted for 455 events to just over 29,000 people. Specifically, bike safety accounted for 112 of these events, and 4,364 helmets were provided to community members who needed them. Bike safety was the second-most mentioned priority focus area of SKPA groups (second to CPS).

Other safety topics mentioned in the one-on-one meetings included water safety (both at home and elsewhere), farm safety, and firearm safety. Firearm safety is a topic that is becoming a vital topic of discussion within public health work, and this is true for SKPA groups as well. It is important to note that any firearm safety program or education happening within the SKPA groups only focuses on safe practices when owning a gun, not on preventing gun ownership or taking guns away. In total, SKPA groups provided their communities with over 400 gun locks alongside education on safe storage.

One final focus area for at least five of the SKPA groups was building up their group identity and membership. This is not a safety topic but became an apparent theme within the one-on-one conversations between the coordinators. Much of this work will be discussed in the section below, focusing on challenges, but between restructuring/turnover within their own as well as partner agencies, feelings of low levels of group participation in meetings and at events, and other barriers, about 20% of the SKPA local groups spent time actively strategizing around ways to build up their group's identity and building their membership during the 23-24 FY.

² When the word "events" is used, it includes all types of events listed above (community events, educational sessions, and professional trainings). Otherwise, the text will distinguish which type of event.

CHALLENGES

Every year, the State Office Coordinator meets virtually with each coordinator with SKPA. This provides time and space to discuss the previous fiscal year and the upcoming fiscal year. Part of these meetings focuses on challenges and barriers that were experienced either by the coordinator or by their group as a whole. For the 23-24 FY, the most-mentioned challenge was that coordinators felt that they didn't have enough time to do all the things they wanted or needed to do -they felt that they were wearing too many hats and/or they were spread too thin. The second-mentioned challenge was around participation within their specific groups, mostly in terms of attendance at meetings as well as events.

The coordinator time is a challenge that has come up repeatedly over the past few years. It was mentioned by eight of the eighteen groups that attended a one-on-one meeting with the State Office Coordinator. Particularly within the 23-24 FY, many coordinators mentioned difficulties with being spread too thin across their work or wearing too many hats. Some coordinators had experienced restructuring within their lead agency that led to other positions being eliminated and increased the workload of the coordinator. Others have experienced staff turnover -either in their own agency or within partner agencies -that put more work on their shoulders. Additionally, all of them have other requirements for their jobs at whatever kind of agency they work at -hospitals to nonprofits to local government offices.

Seven groups mentioned challenges around group participation. The difficulty of volunteer engagement has been a top challenge among groups for many years. This has likely gotten worse by the level of turnover happening at partner agencies, as those employees often sit on the working groups of SKPA coalitions and partners. When individuals who had partnered with SKPA groups as a part of their employment leave their roles, there is often a gap in recruiting the person who replaces them, if they are replaced at all.

Another group mentioned that while their working group was strong, only a handful of people volunteer to attend events. Other groups are actively working on building up their Safe Kids group. One coordinator said that if she could not attend an event, then they would not have any Safe Kids representation there. Coordinators recognize that attending and volunteering at events is difficult if it's not something you're paid for, as most events occur during evenings and weekends.

Other challenges that were mentioned were low community involvement or attendance at events, needs around funding, issues around getting needed safety materials for their communities (sometimes due to funding and sometimes due to logistical issues), and needing more educational materials to be translated into various languages. Many of the challenges mentioned are interrelated -there are clear connections and influences between them -which makes it more complex to resolve.

PROGRAMMING HIGHLIGHTS AND SUCCESSES

Alongside the discussion of challenges, the State Office Coordinator and local coordinators also discussed some of the successes and favorite programs from the previous fiscal year during the virtual meetings. Generally, the SKPA coordinators said it had been a good year for their work -they were able to make strong partnerships with other organizations, get out into the community, and provide quality education and materials to people to increase safety.

One of the local SKPA groups covering Lycoming County finalized and began use of a new trailer that they can bring to events. The trailer has been a huge success, and they are able to use it to store various bicycle safety equipment, like helmets, bike stands, air compressors, repair kits, and more. Their community partners are excited when they bring the trailer to community events, and it has made their work more streamlined and effective.

A few groups discussed their successes in outreach to community groups that need more social support. Lycoming County discussed how they have done outreach to a local after school program focused on low-income children. In our South-Central PA Coalition, they have been able to get a safe sleep video translated into Haitian-Creole to better serve their community. Additionally, because of a grant they were a part of during the year, they were able to prioritize their rural communities and do more impactful work with low-income groups. While they noted that they weren't going to get "big numbers" compared to other cities in the state, they were prioritizing the impact of their work to create a shift towards safer behaviors.

Other groups celebrated their successes around group dynamics. The Allentown-Bethlehem coalition has been able to foster more collaboration within their group and also delve into safety topics outside of car seat safety and safe sleep. In Berks County, the coordinator discussed other outside agencies expressing interest in joining the work to keep kids safe. Within the Capital Region, they are continuing to offer coveted Child Passenger Safety Technician training classes to their community and partner agencies and have been able to open multiple car seat check sites throughout their service area because of the people they've trained.

In addition to group dynamics, some groups discussed specific events that they enjoyed throughout the year. Chester County started a CPS-focused lunch and learn program two years ago and has now expanded it in three hospitals to talk with expectant parents about how to keep children safe in cars. They bring visual props (car seat, baby doll, etc.) and a bucket of non-recommended car seat items and explain why these items may reduce safety if a crash occurs. In the Capital Region, the coalition coordinators have spent years building up a working relationship with local law enforcement and now work alongside them in "Car Seat Ninja" events, where they will go to a local school at pick-up or drop-off time and inspect car seats, check that children are in a correctly fitted seat, and provide new seats if necessary. These Car Seat Ninja events take about an hour, and within that time their team may inspect 50 seats or more! "[Our] strength is our side-by-side, getting-your-hands-dirty, relationship," one of the coordinators said.

Another group is celebrating a more personal milestone. In McKean County, the lead agency for the SKPA partner of the state, CARE for Kids, is celebrating 100 years of service! To celebrate, they have billboards within the communities they work with, stating that they are "leading child safety efforts in McKean County." One of the ways that they are doing this is through their Kindergarten Bicycle Safety Program, which is conducted at all five school districts in McKean County and another school district in Potter County. Through this effort, they reached over 400 students and provided helmets to 99% of kindergarten students within their area.

Although not every SKPA group is or can be highlighted within this section, the State Office is extremely proud of the work and dedication shown by each of the groups. They are doing incredible work within their communities and should be proud of their efforts to keep children and families safe.

STATE OFFICE HIGHLIGHTS

The State Office primarily centers on addressing the overarching needs of SKPA groups, researching and encouraging the implementation of best practices for injury and violence prevention work, and generally providing support and technical assistance to SKPA groups, among other things.³ The State Office operates as an information and resource hub for both coalition and partners of the state by gathering data and disseminating relevant information. Additionally, every year the State Office offers a competitive funding opportunity for coalitions and partners, where SKPA groups can receive financial backing for a specific project or initiative that utilizes evidence-based/informed practices, reaches marginalized or underserved populations, and has clear objectives and metrics to measure success.

In the 23-24 FY, the State Office was able to provide four local groups with funding for their projects, totaling \$16,000.00 distributed for child safety efforts. Through these programs, SKPA groups were able to provide their communities with helmets, child safety seats (including booster seats), and written and verbal education. Some groups were able to start new partnerships, while others were able to strengthen partnerships that had already been formed.

In addition, the State Office was able to provide local SKPA groups with specific materials that they requested closer to the end of the fiscal year. The State Office provided medication lock bags to the groups who requested them as well as funding for childproofing items. Additionally, other items requested included traffic cones, pop up signs, and a car-sized tent for child safety seat inspections; bilingual pedestrian safety tabletop displays; iPads with hotspots; folding tables and chairs for events; bike helmets; smoke detectors; and Sleep Baby Safe and Snug board books. In total, the State Office provided over \$15,800.00 in additional funding for supplies for ten local SKPA groups.

Another new initiative from the State Office of SKPA was the Safe Sleep Summit (“the Summit”) in partnership with local Child Death Review (CDR) teams. The Summit was hosted in Chester County and focused on the southeastern region of the state. This initiative intentionally brought together the CDR teams and the SKPA groups to begin bridging the gaps between local data and injury prevention work. At this first Summit in Chester County, almost 60 people attended, representing 26 counties in PA. Moving forward, the Summit will continue to be regional and will occur twice a year in different parts of the state to reach different groups.

Under the Pennsylvania Department of Health’s Bureau of Family Health, [Safe Kids PA has a three-year strategy plan that plots out our goals until June 2026](#). All goals and action steps for the 23-24 FY were accomplished and now the State Office is moving forward with next year’s objectives.

Jessica Ritter
Safe Kids PA State Office Coordinator

³ “Other things” includes social media and website moderation, legislative policy advocacy, press releases, and similar awareness-raising work.

Total Numbers

Total Numbers																			
Community Event	Number of		Educational Session	Number of		Training	Number of Adults	# of Event Hours	Number of Volunteer Hours	SKW Specific Topic Focuses								Partner Organizations	Group Meetings
	Adults	Children		Adults	Children					Fire Prevention	Poison Prevention (medication safety, cleaning supplies)	Safe Sleep	At-Home Water Safety	Passenger Safety	Pedestrian Safety	Bike Safety	Water Safety		
363	26644	27225	13608	46664	99661	63	1144	16509	2533	127	149	134	111	410	65	112	20	151	51

Home Safety (wrapped due to size)

HOME SAFETY																
Community Event	Number of		Educational Session	Number of		Training	Number of Adults	# of Event Hours	Number of Volunteer Hours							
	Adults	Children		Adults	Children					Safe Kids tip sheets/materials	Small Home Childproofing items	Cabinet Latches Specifically	Cabinet Latches to Underserved	Baby Gates	Safe Sleep Devices	
204	14105	12257	7333	32468	75280	9	325	13124.5	130	4335	2540	803	801	140	42	

Item Distribution												Event Topic (for SKW)			
Cribs to Underserved	Sleep Sacks to Underserved	Fire Safety books or pages	Smoke Alarms	Smoke Alarms to Underserved	CO Monitors	CO Monitors to underserved	Medication safety items	Gun locks	Water Safety items	Other	Fire Prevention	Poison Prevention (medication safety, cleaning supplies)	Safe Sleep	At-Home Water Safety	
350	288	3570	98	128	71	47	12439	449	472	3438	127	149	134	111	

Car and Road Safety

CAR AND ROAD SAFETY																			
Community Event	Number of		Educational Session	Number of			Training	Number of Adults	# of Event Hours	Number of Volunteer Hours	Items Distributed						Event Focus (for SKW)		
	Adults	Children		Adults	Children	Car Seats Checked					Safe Kids tip sheets/materials	Child Safety Seats	Child Safety Seats to Underserved	Reflective Safety Items	Pedestrian Safety Book	Other	Passenger Safety	Pedestrian Safety	
89	3950	5651	5897	11576	15765	2436	47	767	2974.75	2308	24185	561	1025	2853	1223	8661	410	65	

Sports and Play Safety

SPORTS AND PLAY SAFETY																			
Community Event	Number of		Educational Session	Number of			Training	Number of Adults	# of Event Hours	Number of Volunteer Hours	Items Distributed						Event Focus (for SKW)		
	Adults	Children		Adults	Children	Car Seats Checked					Safe Kids tip sheets/materials	Helmets	Helmets to Underserved	Bicycles	Bike Safety Items (no helmets)	Sports Safety Items	Life Jackets/personal flotation devices	Life jackets or PFDs to Underserved	Bike Safety
70	8589	9317	378	2620	8616	7	52	409.75	95	6221	4671	4364	412	3175	1043	139	47	112	20