

Injury Prevention Program

The Injury Prevention Program at the Union County Health Department is dedicated to making Union County a safe, injury-free community. The work of the program is driven by the Safe and Sound Coalition, a collaborative of Union County partners working to reduce injuries. During 2013, the Injury Prevention Program and Safe and Sound Coalition focused its efforts on motor vehicle safety, infant safe sleep, and sports safety.

Ensuring Infants Sleep Safely

In 2013, the Ohio Department of Health announced that reducing Ohio's high infant mortality would be a statewide priority. The announcement came shortly after the Injury Prevention Program had identified infant safe sleep as a new focus area for Union County.

Sudden Unexpected Infant Deaths (SUID) including suffocation, strangulation and Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) are often related to unsafe sleep environments for infants. These tragic deaths are preventable by learning about safe sleep.

The Safe Sleep Crib, which is displayed in the health department's lobby, shows the ABC's of safe sleep for infants. Infants should sleep **A**lone, on their **B**ack, and in a bare **C**rib. The crib will travel to community locations in 2014.



Other recommendations include breastfeeding, living smoke-free, and getting immunizations.

Supervised, awake "tummy time" promotes child development. More information about these recommendations along with resources including a safe sleep checklist and interactive learning tools can be found on the health department's website, www.uchd.net.



In addition to providing community education, a partnership has been established with the national organization, Cribs for Kids. Through this partnership and funding from Union Rural

Electric, a crib distribution program has been created and will pilot in 2014.



Funds Brought to Union County

| Project | Source | Amount |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------|
| Sports Safety | Ohio Dept of Health | \$45,000 |
| Statewide Child Injury Coalition | Ohio Dept of Health | \$23,000 |
| Safe Communities | Ohio Dept of Public Safety | \$23,575 |
| Infant Safe Sleep | Union Rural Electric | \$1,250 |
| Total Funds | | \$92,825 |

A New Face in Injury Prevention

During the summer of 2013, the Injury Prevention Program welcomed Emma Brofsky to the health department staff. Ms. Brofsky is an associate through the CDC's Public Health Associate Program and was selected to work in Union County for two years. During year one of her assignment, Ms. Brofsky has been tasked with creating an infant safe sleep program for the health department. She has been a wonderful addition to the injury prevention staff.



During the fall, Ms. Brofsky helped fit bicycle helmets at a community event with the Marysville Division of Police.

Buckling Up Goes Down

Seatbelt usage has been a priority for the Safe and Sound Coalition for many years. To help encourage drivers to buckle up, the Coalition works participates in annual mobilizations including "Click It or Ticket." Despite these efforts, usage rates in Union County have been declining. According to results from surveys conducted in 2010, 80% of Union County drivers were wearing their seatbelts. However, in 2013, this number had dropped to 76%. Because of this decline and similar drops across Ohio, the Coalition will be looking for innovate ways to increase seatbelt rates in 2014.



Safe and Sound Seniors

Seniors enjoyed a sunny afternoon at the American Legion Park learning about the safety services available to them. Co-sponsored by Union County Senior Services, a free lunch was served and live music entertained the attendees. Information booths filled the park hall, and seniors participated in fire extinguisher and electrical safety demos. With over 150 attendees, the event was a success and will be repeated in 2014.



Sports Injury Prevention

In 2009, youth sports-related injuries were identified as an issue in Union County. Through a grant from the Ohio Department of Health, the program began working to address these issues in 2010. This component of the program partners with recreational organizations, youth leagues, and school districts to improve the safety of young athletes.

Ohio's Return to Play Law Takes the Field

In April of 2013, Ohio's Return to Play Law went into effect. The purpose of the law is to promote the recognition and proper response to concussions when they first occur in order to prevent further injury or even death. In addition to new training requirements for coaches and referees, the law requires any young athlete participating in school or organized recreational sports to be removed from practice or play if they are suspected of sustaining a concussion. The athlete is then prohibited from returning to practice or play until they have written clearance from an authorized health care provider.

During 2013, the Injury Prevention Program worked to educate coaches on the new law. Packets with a clipboard card and factsheets for parents and athletes were distributed to coaches and athletic organizations. Copies of these materials and more information can be found on the Ohio Department of Health website. <http://www.healthy.ohio.gov/vipp/concussion.aspx>

Athletic Facility Facelifts

The Injury Prevention Program sponsors an annual mini-grant opportunity for organizations to make physical improvements to their athletic facilities. By doing so, they reduce the risk of injury for their young athletes. In 2013, three projects were funded through the Central Ohio Youth Center, Fairbanks Summer Ball Association, and Marysville High School.

Educating Coaches on Sports Safety

3
Policies adopted

5
Trainings held

50
Packets distributed

Helping Hands to Keep Athletes Safe

The student athletic training club program expanded to North Union High School in 2013. The club, which began in 2011 at Fairbanks High School, allows high school students to gain education and skills in athletic training and sports injury prevention. Working with the certified athletic trainers provided to the high schools by Memorial Hospital of Union County, the student trainers help provide care and treatment to their peers. They participate in weekly educational sessions led by the athletic trainers who also serve as club advisors. Grant funds are provided to the clubs from the Injury Prevention Program to purchase training supplies and educational materials. The clubs not only provide expanded services to the athletic teams, they also provide an opportunity for student trainers to explore potential careers in athletic training and sports medicine.



BEFORE



AFTER

The Central Ohio Youth Center installed mats along portions of their gymnasium walls.

Creating a B.A.S.E. for Sports Injury Prevention

The concepts of sports injury prevention were introduced to a new, younger audience in 2013. Through the B.A.S.E. program at Bunsold Middle School, middle school youth participated in the Introductory to Sports Injury Prevention Program. The four week program taught students about the field of athletic training and basics of sports injury prevention. Guest speakers presented on topics including CPR, first aid, sports nutrition, concussions, and the prevention and treatment of sports injuries.