

## **STUDY OF TRAFFIC ACCIDENT RELATED INJURIES OF CHILDREN IN THE KYRGYZ REPUBLIC**

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The development of automobile industry in the Kyrgyz Republic goes together with the problem of providing road safety whose successful solution is vitally important not only for the economic development of the republic but also the most valuable thing – preserving the life and health of people and, first and foremost, of children. Thus, from 1996 to 2003 years 6172 children and adolescents were injured on the streets and roads of this country.

Our studies were carried out with the support of the World Health Organization and WHO Liaison Office in Kyrgyzstan within the project “Traffic Safety in the City of Bishkek”.

The aim of the study was to assess the traffic accidents situation and traffic related injuries in children of Kyrgyzstan.

The study reviews data on all modes of transport, accident rates and the number of registered traffic accidents (TA). The sources of information were reporting forms on TA from the Centre of Analysis, Forecasting and Prevention of the Department of Motor Inspection of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Kyrgyz Republic. Data of a 3-year period were analyzed (2001-2003). Along with it, the state of population health was analyzed including children’s and adults’ morbidity due to traffic related injuries. Injury and morbidity data were taken from the Republican Medical Information Centre of the Ministry of Health of the Kyrgyz Republic, health care facilities in the Bishkek city (reporting forms 12-1) and from the National Statistical Committee (reporting forms C51) for 2000-2002. Health data were expressed per 100 000 population.

Among all type injuries the traffic related injury came third after domestic and street injuries in children. In the republic as a whole Batken Region was found to be a “leader” in injury rate in children – 35.6% followed by the Osh and Naryn Regions – 26.9% each, Jalalabad Region – 26.2%, the Bishkek capital – 22.8% of the total number of registered traffic accidents (nationwide – 22.2%).

In 2001-2003 years 562 injury cases occurred in children in the Bishkek city making up 24.9% of all traffic related injuries in the whole republic with death of 23 children (5 – 2001, 9 in 2002, 9 in 2003) and 567 being wounded. According to the Motor Inspection Department data among children sustaining traffic related injuries 69.4% are child pedestrians and 24% are child passengers. A frequent cause of injuries is children playing in forbidden places on roads and streets indicating lack of knowledge or awareness of the danger of not observing rules of the road.

Seasonal changes in occurrence of traffic accidents was found, with peaks in May and September, which is related to the start of vacations. The most accident-dangerous days of the

week are Friday, followed by Monday and Tuesday. Thus, in 2001, 17% of all traffic accidents fell to Friday, 16% and 15% to Monday and Tuesday respectively. Within a day's interval, accidents are most frequent in the period from 17.00 to 23.00 hours. Traffic accidents occur 1.5 times more frequently during dark time than daylight hours.

Child injury morbidity was studied by localization sites. The severity of injuries was found to be increased, i.e. the number of craniocerebral injuries and fatalities increased against the decreased total number of traffic accidents involving children.

The main cause of traffic accident is non-observance or lack of knowledge of rules of the road by children, irresponsibility or disrespect of traffic participants to rules. One of important measures to prevent traffic related injuries in children is the education of children from early age on road safety rules and their strict observance by adult traffic participants and continual prevention activities for large groups of the population.