Winter Injuries in Arizona

Arizona Injury Prevention Advisory Council
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Winter in Arizona?
Winter Injuries in Arizona

- Started with a call from Flagstaff
- 3 branches
  - Education through Safe Kids
  - Analysis of hospital data at ADHS
    - Initial data from FMC’s ED helped guide efforts
  - Observational helmet survey
    - Coordinated with local Safe Kids Coalitions
Hospital Data Analysis

- Limited due to available data & E-codes
  - Only one season of data for now
  - December 1, 2008 – April 30, 2009
  - Falls from skis and snowboards
    - Collisions excluded—major source of injury!
Hospital Data Analysis: Findings

• 715 non-fatal inpatient hospitalizations and emergency department visits
• More snowboarders (n=517)
• Differences by age
  – Snowboarders 15-19yrs (n=160)
  – Skiers 45-54yrs (n=45)
• All ‘trauma’ cases were seen at Trauma Centers (n=27)
• Longest hospitalization = 14 days
• $2.8 million total in hospital charges
Hospital Data Analysis: Findings

• Injuries distributed by type of sport:
  – Skiers: lower extremity injuries
  – Snowboarders: upper extremity injuries
  – Overall: 16% had head injuries
    • Half of those involved an intracranial injury without fracture
• 62% of patient seen at two facilities
• MLK weekend = most injuries
Observational Helmet Survey

• What do you know about snow play in AZ?
  – 4 alpine ski facilities
  – Includes southern-most ski facility in U.S.
  – 2 facilities rent helmets; 1 more sells them

• We took observations of children wearing helmets at all four locations
  – Feb 3 – 7, 2010
Observational Helmet Survey

• 122 forms collected, with 3,582 observations
  – 2 forms = sledding area outside a facility
• 3,040 observations for analysis
• Overall helmet use: 38%
  – 44% Snowbowl
  – 36% Sunrise
  – 17% Ski Valley
  – 53% Elk Ridge
Observational Helmet Survey

• More skiers were helmeted than snowboarders (45% vs. 32%)
• No significant difference between males & females (39%, 37%)
• Differences by age group
  – 53% among children younger than 5 years
  – 48% among children 5 through 12 years
  – 28% among children 13 through 17 years
Contact Information

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