Available online at www.sciencedirect.com
ScienceDirect
Journal of Applied Developmental Psychology 27 (2006) 560 – 570
Journal of Applied Developmental Psychology

# Factors influencing young children's risk of unintentional injury: Parenting style and strategies for teaching about home safety☆

Barbara A. Morrongiello *, Michael Corbett, Jennifer Lasenby, Natalie Johnston, Meghan McCourt

*Psychology Department, University of Guelph, Canada*

Available online 11 September 2006

**Abstract**

This study examined mothers' teaching about home-safety issues to 24–30 month and 36–42 month old children, explored the relationship of teaching strategies to parenting styles, and assessed how these factors are related to children's risk of unintentional injury. A structured interview assessed home-safety issues relevant to falls, burns, cuts, poisoning, and suffocation/strangulation/choking. Mothers identified safety issues relevant to *her* child, and indicated the type and extent to which she utilized teaching as a strategy to address each safety issue. Standardized questionnaires provided information about parenting style and children's history of injuries. Results revealed that mothers' endorsements of home-safety issues did not vary with child age, mothers used teaching to manage safety issues for all types of injuries, and type of teaching strategy (explanations, rules, behavior modification) varied with parenting style. Greater use of explaining and less rule usage was linked to permissive parenting; these teaching strategies predicted children's medically-attended injury among highly-permissive mothers. Thus, teaching about safety is a common risk-management strategy mothers use to address hazards in the home. However, the specific type of teaching strategy used varies with parenting style, which has implications for children's risk of injury.
© 2006 Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

*Keywords:* Young children; Injury risk; Parent teaching strategies; Parenting style

## 1. Introduction

Unintentional injury poses a significant health threat to children. In many industrialized nations, including the United States and Canada, it is the leading cause of death in childhood (Baker, O'Neil, Ginsburg, & Li, 1992; Canadian Institute of Child Health, 2000). In fact, the number of childhood deaths due to unintentional injury in the United States is greater than the next nine causes of death combined (Centers for Disease Control-National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, 2002). Because of the scope of this problem there have been many calls for research to advance our understanding of factors that contribute to risk for injury during childhood (e.g., Miller, Romano, & Spicer, 2000).

☆ This research was supported by a grant from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council. The authors extend their thanks to the parents for their enthusiastic participation.
* Corresponding author. Psychology Department, University of Guelph, Guelph, Ontario, Canada N1G 2W1.
*E-mail address:* bmorrong@uoguelph.ca (B.A. Morrongiello).

0193-3973/$ - see front matter © 2006 Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.
doi:10.1016/j.appdev.2006.08.004

Many injuries to young children occur in and around their homes (National Safety Council, 1991; Rivara, 1995; Rivara, Calonge, & Thompson, 1989; Shannon, Brashaw, Lewis, & Feldman, 1992). Consequently, there has been increasing interest in examining how parents manage risk of injury at home for young children. Studies of parent socialization practices indicate that parents devote considerable time to the issue of safety, especially during the preschool years (e.g., Garling & Garling, 1995; Gralinski & Kopp, 1993). Recent research reveals three risk-management strategies that parents routinely use when at home with their young children: Implementation of environmental changes to prevent access to hazards, supervision, and teaching about safety (Morrongiello, Ondejko, & Littlejohn, 2004a).

Historically, the major focus of research on parents' management of home-injury risk has been to study the nature and extent of use of environmental changes and ways to increase usage of safety devices (Gielen, Wilson, Faden, Wissow, & Harvilchuck, 1995; Greaves, Glik, Kronenfeld, & Jackson, 1994; Kelly, Sein, & McCarthy, 1987; Paul, Sanson-Fisher, Redman, & Carter, 1994; Wortel, de Geus, & Kok, 1995). More recently, increasing interest has been directed towards studying parent supervision and how this impacts young children's risk of home injury (Morrongiello, 2005; Morrongiello & Dawber, 1998; Morrongiello, Ondejko, & Littlejohn, 2004b). Few studies, however, have considered parents' teaching young children about home safety and the types of teaching strategies used for this purpose. Although there is considerable evidence on the teaching strategies parents use when the aim is to promote children's knowledge for activities relevant to school performance, such as math or reading (Mattanah, Pratt, Cowan, & Cowan, 2005; Neitzel & Stright, 2004; Worden, Kee, & Ingle, 1987), virtually nothing is known about the strategies parents use to teach about home safety. One aim of the present research was to examine the nature and scope of parents' efforts to teach young children about home safety issues and to determine if the various teaching strategies used differentially influence children's risk of injury.

Research has shown that parents are aware of the need to teach young children to avoid risky situations in the home (Gralinski & Kopp, 1993) and that most parents acknowledge that this is primarily their responsibility (Peterson, Farmer, & Kashani, 1990). By the time children reach 3 years of age parents routinely attempt to manage injury risk by teaching children about safety and how they are expected to behave (Garling & Garling, 1995; Gralinski & Kopp, 1993). Drawing on these findings, in the present study we included an age group below and above 3 years, with the aim to determine if teaching strategy usage varies as a function of children's developmental level.

A second aim of the present study was to examine parenting style and how this relates to teaching strategy usage and affects child-injury risk. There is surprisingly little research on how parenting influences children's risk of injury. A recent study indicates that infrequent demonstration of positive parenting behaviors (e.g., spontaneously vocalizing to the child) predicts injury in young children (Schwebel, Brezausek, Ramey, & Ramey, 2004). The aim of the present study, however, was to focus on more general parenting *styles* rather than a subset of specific parent behaviors. Drawing on Baumrind's (1971) classic research, three styles of parenting were measured herein. These styles focused on the dimensions of parental control and warmth. Based on Baumrind's research, authoritative parents are high in control and maturity demands but also very responsive and communicative with their children. Authoritarian parents are high in control and maturity demands but low in responsiveness and communication. Permissive parents are low in control and maturity demands but high in responsiveness and communication.

The concept of 'parenting style' has been shown to be very robust in explaining how parenting practices relate to child outcomes (e.g., see Darling & Steinberg, 1993; Maccoby & Martin, 1983 for reviews) and research on parenting style reveals a consistent picture of the types of parenting that maximally enhance socialization of children (see Baumrind, 1989, 1991 for reviews). Generally, an authoritative parenting style has been found to be superior in promoting the development of instrumental competence, whereas children of permissive parents show poorer self-regulation and instrumental competence. Drawing on this literature, we reasoned that parenting style would influence the types of strategies used to teach children about safety, which may have implications for children's risk of injury. Permissive parents, being low in control and high in responsiveness, might be more likely to respond with explanations as a primary teaching method and less likely to develop and enforce rules in teaching children about safety. Parents high in authoritarianism may show the opposite pattern, being more inclined toward instituting and enforcing rule usage and doing less explaining in teaching about safety (i.e., high in control and low in responsiveness). Authoritative parents, being high in control and responsiveness, may show comparably high levels of both rule usage and explaining. Thus, in the present study we examined whether teaching strategy use varied with parenting style, and the implications of this relationship for children's risk of medically-attended injury.

دریافت فوری ← متن کامل مقاله

ISIArticles
مرجع مقالات تخصصی ایران

- ✓ امکان دانلود نسخه تمام متن مقالات انگلیسی
- ✓ امکان دانلود نسخه ترجمه شده مقالات
- ✓ پذیرش سفارش ترجمه تخصصی
- ✓ امکان جستجو در آرشیو جامعی از صدها موضوع و هزاران مقاله
- ✓ امکان دانلود رایگان ۲ صفحه اول هر مقاله
- ✓ امکان پرداخت اینترنتی با کلیه کارت های عضو شتاب
- ✓ دانلود فوری مقاله پس از پرداخت آنلاین
- ✓ پشتیبانی کامل خرید با بهره مندی از سیستم هوشمند رهگیری سفارشات