

ABSTRACT

Despite attempts to stem childhood injury through education programmes, trauma from various types of accidents continue to be a major problem with a high incidence of accidents among those children in the lower socio-economic groups. The study which was carried out in the Kingston metropolis, examined the nature and impact of trauma on children who presented for treatment at the Bustamante Hospital for children (BHC). The study consisted of 60 children who received medical care at the Casualty department of BHC over 47 randomly selected days in March and April 1995. The children ranged from 3 months old to 9 years old. They were mostly residents of the corporate area Kingston, with a few referrals from other parishes.

The results of the study revealed that male children were more frequently injured than female children. The most frequent age group presenting with trauma was that group between 5 - 9 years, this accounted for 61.7% of the sample.

Injuries to the extremities and head were very frequent. Fifty percent (50%) of the children studied suffered from trauma due to falls, followed by burns 17%, and motor vehicle accidents 13%. The results indicate that children between the ages 5 - 9 years old, need a lot more supervision for most of the time especially during the hours from 12 noon to 5 p.m. This supervision is needed in the homes, on the streets and in the schools. The results also showed that there is still much work to be done to develop an effective programme for educating the community as to what should be done in the prevention of childhood injuries, caused from accidents other than child abuse.