

ABSTRACT

The Ingestion of Harmful Substances
among children presenting at the
Bustamante Hospital for Children in 1988.
An Epidemiologic Survey.

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The need for consistent adherence to proper storage practices for harmful substances in the home is critical to the preservation of the health and well-being of young children under 10 years old throughout the world.

Despite the vast number of studies carried out on ingestion of harmful substances among children and the many recommendations made to reduce the incidence, it continues to be a major issue with a high incidence among those in the lower socio-economic groups.

This study which was carried out in the Kingston Metropolis, examines the nature of the substances ingested by children along with the socio-economic and environmental factors associated with the incidence of ingestion of harmful substances among them.

The study was restricted to those children who ingested harmful substances and were presented for treatment at the Bustamante Hospital for Children in 1988.

It reveals that vast majority of children in the lower income groups aged 0-4 years are the most susceptible to accidental ingestion of harmful substances arising from poor storage practices in the home.