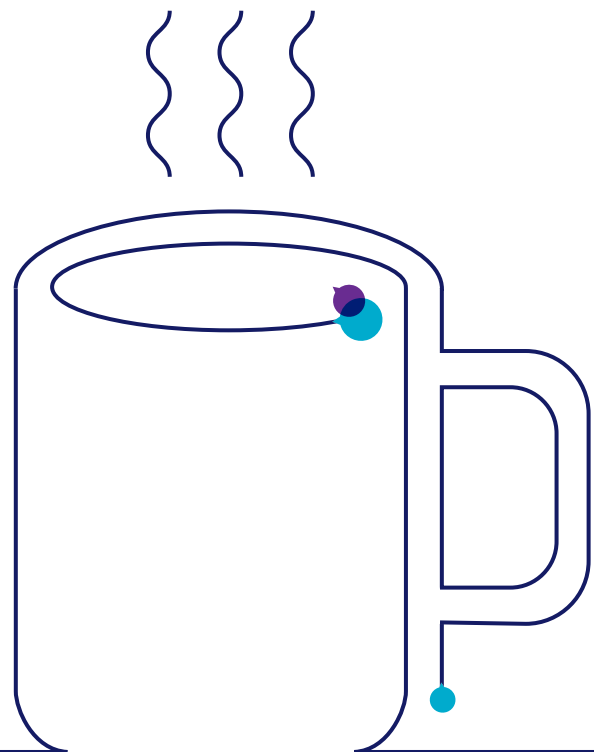


Knowledge of scald prevention and first aid in East Renfrewshire



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Introduction

Last year, burns and scalds made up six per cent of hospital admissions to children under the age of five in Scotland¹. Such injuries often lead to the need for long-term medical care and can result in psychological harm, scarring and disability.

There is an overall lack of published literature and research in the UK regarding the incidence and prevalence of burns and scalds² as well as first aid knowledge to help minimise the effects of burns and scalds.

This study, in association with East Renfrewshire Council and Care of Burns in Scotland (COBIS), aimed to explore further the prevalence of scald injuries, and the current understanding of knowledge of scald prevention and first aid among parents in East Renfrewshire, Scotland.

Methods

Survey

A cross-sectional study was undertaken in order to explore the topic from June 2019 to February 2020. Families with children under the age of five were targeted throughout East Renfrewshire by the council's Trading Standards department. The staff ran sessions for parents and carers within the local authority on Child Safety in the Home and undertook individual home inspections.

Survey responses were collected at the end of sessions. Convenience sampling was therefore used in order to gather the data and information. To thank them for participating, each parent was given a Child Safety at Home pack containing a wealth of information including a coaster with the preventative message "Keep your tea away from me" as well as a fridge magnet from COBIS with first aid advice.

Question development

We studied existing surveys and identified questions used in previous research to collect information on the knowledge of first aid and prevalence of scald injuries³. We added specific questions around first aid, similar to previous studies² as well as new questions on preventative advice, based on RoSPA and COBIS policy and information. The final survey featured five questions.

Results

The survey received 75 responses.

Prevalence of scalds

Just over a quarter – 26 per cent (n=20) – of respondents reported that their child had been scalded at some point in the child's life, and 12 per cent (n=9) reported that their child had been scalded in the last 12 months (see table 1).

Response	Percentage (n=75)
Scalded in child's lifetime	26%
Scalded in the past 12 months	12%

Table 1: Respondents that reported their child had been scalded

Knowledge of prevention

Prevention knowledge was high, with 89 per cent of parents being aware that cold water should be run before hot when preparing a bath for their child, and 92 per cent being aware that hot drinks can injure a child 20 minutes after being made.

Response	Percentage aware of this (n=75)
Run cold water first	89%
Hot drinks can injure 20 minutes after making	92%

Table 2: Respondents reporting on prevention knowledge

Knowledge of first aid

NHS Scotland advises that a burn or scald should be held under cold running water for 20 minutes⁴.

The survey asked respondents how long they thought a scald should be held under water, with 15 per cent of respondents correctly identifying the time advised by the NHS. The majority (73 per cent) of respondents believed it was 15 minutes, whilst 12 per cent thought it was 10 minutes (see chart 1).

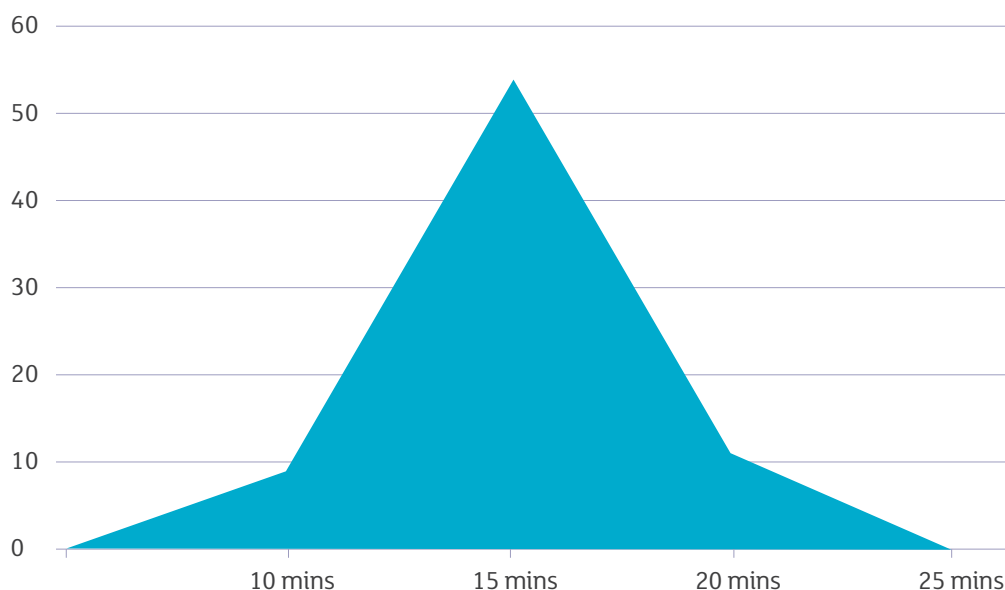


Chart 1: Respondents first aid knowledge on length of time to hold a scald under cold running water

Resources

The survey asked how helpful the coaster was in reminding parents of the issue of scald injuries. Three quarters – 75 per cent of parents – felt the resource was very helpful. Only 8 per cent felt it was either unhelpful or had no positive thoughts towards it.

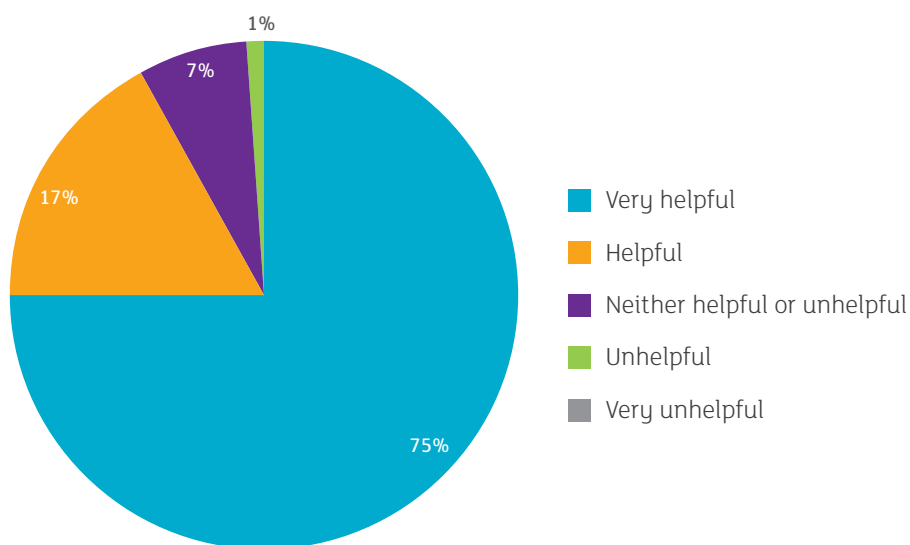


Chart 2: Respondents' thoughts on the helpfulness of the coaster resource

Discussion and conclusions

Prevention knowledge of scalds was high within the study population. However, an important finding in this study is that roughly one in eight respondents reported that their child had been scalded in the past 12 months (12 per cent). In addition, 26 per cent of respondents noted that their child had been scalded in their lifetime. This reinforces the high risk of scalding to children within the home, and suggests the important need for ongoing preventative messaging and projects in this area.

First aid knowledge of scalds was mixed. Only 15 per cent identified the correct time length to hold a scald under cold running water. This suggests that first aid knowledge of scalds could be improved.

Respondents were very positive towards the resource coaster to remind them of the prevention of hot drink scalds, which provides weight for the continued provision of such a resource.

However, there were several limitations to this study, which mean the results must be interpreted with caution. Firstly, the study used convenience sampling which gives the potential for selection bias. The results of this study cannot therefore be generalised beyond the study population, but at least provide preliminary insight into scald prevalence and first aid knowledge. Secondly, the study used self-reporting which gives the potential for measurement bias.



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- 1 ISD, 2020 Emergency hospital admissions as a result of unintentional injury by age group and cause of injury. Available online: https://beta.isdscotland.org/media/3785/ui_table1_mar20.xlsx
 - 2 Davies, K., Johnson, E., Hollen L., Jones, H., Lyttle, M., Maguire, S. & Kemp, A., 2020. Incidence of medically attended paediatric burns across the UK. *Injury Prevention*, 26, pp. 24-30.
 - 3 Harvey, L., Barr, M., Poulos, R., Flinch, C., Sherker, & Harvey, J., 2011. A population-based survey of knowledge of first aid for burns in New South Wales. *Medical Journal of Australia*, 195, pp. 465-468.
 - 4 NHS Inform, 2020. Burns and Scalds. Available online: www.nhsinform.scot/illnesses-and-conditions/injuries/skin-injuries/burns-and-scalds



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