



## Can the Supervising for Home Safety program help change supervision of children by parents?

### What is this research about?

Accidental injury is a leading cause of death for Canadians between the ages of 1 and 19. About 350 children die each year in Canada as a result of an accidental injury. Thus, finding ways to decrease accidental injury to young people is important for their wellbeing. The Supervising for Home Safety program (SHS) is a program developed to help reduce the risk of children being injured in the home.

The SHS program focuses on increasing active supervision skills in caregivers. Active supervision refers to:

- Proximity of the adult to the child
- Attention given to the child
- How consistent attention and proximity is over time

The SHS program uses a video to educate caregivers about injury risks. The video also stresses the need for active supervision. The next part of the SHS program helps caregivers practice active supervision. Caregivers are then asked to track these efforts over a one-month period. This research evaluated how well the SHS program worked to improve parents' active supervision.

### What did the researcher do?

### What you need to know:

Finding tools that reduce accidental injury to children will improve the wellbeing of children. Limiting access to environmental hazards is one way to reduce accidental injury to a child. But, not all hazards can be removed from the home. Thus, tools that increase active supervision of children are essential for injury prevention, and the SHS does this.

The sample was made up of caregivers with a child between the ages of 2 and 5 years. To be included in the study, a caregiver had to meet 10 inclusion and exclusion criteria. Caregivers were randomly placed into the control group or the intervention group. Both groups completed a pre-intervention diary that noted the usual level and type of supervision shown by parents in the home. Within two weeks of this, the groups participated in a program about child health. The control group completed a program on child nutrition. The intervention group completed the SHS program. After the programs were done, parents were asked to fill out a post-intervention diary about supervision.

In addition to diary recordings of supervision, all parents were unobtrusively video recorded with their child while in a waiting room. There were three different waiting rooms and each had

different “contrived” hazards; hazards looked real but none posed an actual danger to the child. Each parent-child pair was video recorded once in each waiting room. Observations occurred before the intervention, directly after the intervention, and 6 months later. The video recordings were not watched or used until parents were informed they had been recorded and granted consent.

Statistics were used to compare the results of the control and intervention groups.

### What did the researcher find?

Parents who attended the SHS program began to show more active supervision than control group parents. SHS parents spent more time watching their child and reported a higher level of supervision when the child was out of direct view. Increased attention was noticed after the SHS program when the parent was observed with the child in a room with contrived hazards. This increased attention continued up to six months after the intervention. These results affirmed the effectiveness of the SHS program.

### How can you use this research?

The SHS program has been shown to be effective in improving adults’ supervision of children; this is the only program that has been proven to do so. This is helpful because more active supervision can prevent injury to a child. Support for this program will help ensure that cost-effective tools are created so this program can reach more parents.

Parents will learn that there are tools to help them improve their supervision skills, which will improve the health and wellbeing of their children.

### About the Researcher

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Visit [ALTERforChildSafety.ca](http://ALTERforChildSafety.ca) for SHS program information.

### Citation

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### Keywords

*Children, Injury, Prevention, Supervision, Intervention, RCT*

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