

HELPING CHILDREN STAY SAFE AT HOME

FUNDED BY: This project is sponsored by Wednesbury & West Bromwich Primary Care Trust, funded by Greets Green Partnership and supported by OSCAR, the Organisation for Sickle Cell Anaemia Research, based in Lodge Road, West Bromwich.

PROJECT BACKGROUND: Regional statistics showed a higher than average number of Greets Green children aged under five were attending accident and emergency departments following accidents in the home. As a result, Greets Green Partnership, OSCAR and Wednesbury & West Bromwich PCT decided to join forces in 2003 to launch a one year pilot Child Home Safety Project. Its aim was to reduce the number of preventable accidents which involve children aged under five and provide support and advice for the families.

It proved so successful that Greets Green Partnership invested a further £138,000 in the project in 2004 to fund it for three more years.



PROJECT IN ACTION: The Child Home Safety Project offers free home safety equipment on long-term loan to all residents with children aged under five who have a B70 or B71 postcode in Greets Green.

Equipment includes baby changing mats, safety gates, fireguards and radiator guards, carbon monoxide testers, bath and room thermometers, safety harnesses and a safety pack with table corner cushions, door jammers, a choke tester, cupboard and window catches. Residents simply ask for and fill in an application form or are referred by their GP or Health Visitor. They then make arrangements to collect their equipment.

A part-time Development Worker, Flo Reynolds and an Administration Assistant were recruited in December 2004 and since then, 220 local families have received free safety equipment.

“We’re delighted with the success of the project so far,” explains Flo, “and we’re expanding our work still further by working with local residents and organisations to offer a programme of home safety advice and information as well as equipment.”

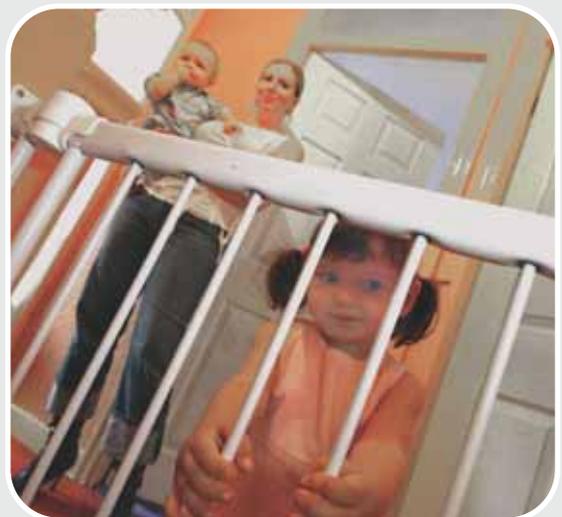
The Project is already working with West Midlands Fire Service to promote and offer free Home Fire Risk Assessments. The assessments involve fire fighters visiting residents’ homes to look for hazards which could cause a fire or prevent escape. At one of the homes visited previously, there were baby clothes drying too close to a fire, highlighting the need to make people more aware of the dangers this could lead to.

The Project also teamed up with Sandwell Traffic & Road Safety Services and a high street car accessories retailer to provide a number of child car seats on free long-term loan.

In June 2005, the Project staged a successful Child Safety Week to tie in with



Lisa Locke is one of the many Greets Green parents to have benefited from the Child Home Safety Project. She said: “I have two children under five and so child safety is very important to me. I now want to help other families to stop their children having accidents in the home.”



the national campaign. During the week, several local parents stepped forward to volunteer for the new Child Home Safety User Group which will discuss how the Project develops in the future.

There is also a project Steering Group which has representatives from the Greets Green Health Visiting Team, Greets Green Partnership, the Children and Families Programme, OSCAR, the Primary Care Trust (PCT) and West Midlands Fire Service, in addition to local parents.

Local mother, Geneva Myrie says

“I learnt a lot things about child safety and about play groups for my baby. I’ll definitely be joining the User Group.”



Looking ahead

A programme of information and advice sessions for local parents is now taking shape. A different topic will be covered each month, at different venues and times throughout the month. Over a year, the information and advice sessions will cover:

- Fire Safety, Burns and Scalds
- Toy Safety, Choking, Suffocation & Foreign Bodies
- Home Security
- Tumbles & Falls
- Poisons & Inhalation
- Moving & Handling
- Garden Safety
- Road Safety
- Water Safety & Sun Safety
- Safe Play

Look out for the local publicity for details of the venues and times.

With nine children, Mrs Begum of Cambridge Street makes safety in the home a priority.

“My youngest child, Tanzia, is only 15 months old, so I’ve got a safety gate and fire guard from the Child Home Safety Project. The project is very good for the children because they could easily burn themselves on the fire or set fire to something else in the house.

“The safety gate stops them falling and breaking their arm or leg. I’ve been given safety advice too which is helpful. Sometimes people don’t bother to buy safety equipment, but when they see that it’s free, they’re more likely to ask for it and they cut down the dangers to their child. The Project is helping a lot of people.”



Community Champions

The Child Home Safety Project has recently appointed a number of Community Champions, (who are local enthusiastic people with knowledge of the local area and local networks) to engage with children and families across the Greets Green Partnership area.

They are paid on a sessional basis (approximately 6 hours per week) to work with the Project's Development Worker to loan out equipment, help to plan and attend promotional activities and events and participate in Child Safety information and advice sessions. However, we are always looking for more people to join the team – just give us a call.

How to get involved

There are lots of ways local people can get involved with the Child Home Safety Project.

- Fill in an application form for equipment
- Come along to the information and advice sessions
- Become a volunteer
- Join the Project's User Group
- Become a Community Champion
- Attend the Project's Steering Group
- Sign up for free training in paediatric first aid and basic food hygiene

To find out more, call the Child Home Safety Project Development Worker, Flo Reynolds, on 0121 525 0556.



Greets Green Partnership was awarded £56 million in 2000 to deliver a 10 year regeneration programme under the Government's New Deal for Communities (NDC) initiative. It is currently funding more than 100 projects throughout the area, covering community empowerment, crime and community safety, education and lifelong learning, health, housing and urban form, and jobs and enterprise. The Partnership area, which is adjacent to West Bromwich Town Centre, is home to just over 12,400 residents living in 4,900 households.

To find out more, call Greets Green Partnership on freephone 0800 953 0215.



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