

Profile of hospital-treated child injury in primary schools, Victoria, 2009/10 to 2018/19

FACT SHEET

The following has been extracted from the Victorian Injury Surveillance Unit's (VISU) latest issue of *Hazard* (Edition 88). VISU is a unit within the Monash University Accident Research Centre (MUARC).

Hazard 88 analysed injuries sustained by primary school-aged children during regular school days in the state of Victoria, Australia. Injury patterns (2016/17-2018/19) and trends (2010-2018) were analysed using emergency department (ED) presentations and hospital admissions data.

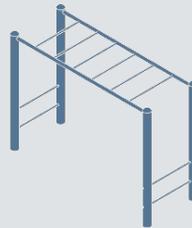
Primary School Injury Patterns: 2016/17 – 2018/19 (3 years)

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- 26,970 ED presentations
 - Annual average: 8,990 ED presentations
 - School injuries accounted for 22% of all child injuries seen in ED
 - Child median age: 8 years old
 - 41% were aged 7-9 years
 - 57% of ED presentations were male



- 63% (2,837) of ED presentations were caused by falls, followed by being unintentionally struck/colliding with an object (15%)
- 76% of hospital admissions were caused by falls, followed by unintentional hit/struck/crush (18%)

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- 3,736 hospital admissions
 - Annual average: 1,245 hospital admissions
 - School injuries accounted for 21% of all child injury admissions
 - Child median age: 8 years old
 - 43% were 7-9 years of age
 - 60% of hospital admissions were male



- 45% (1,286) of fall admissions involved playground equipment (34% of all school injury admissions)
- 48% of playground equipment fall admissions were children aged 7 to 9 years
- 70% (894) of playground fall admissions involved climbing apparatus such as monkey bars

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- 38% (10,335) of ED presentations were for fractures
 - Most common ED fractures: wrist/hand (44%, 4,515), elbow/forearm (38%, 3,937)
 - 60% (2,222) of admissions were for fractures, open wounds (13%), intracranial (head) injuries (10%)



- 528 (14%) of hospital admissions were related to school sport activities
- 47% of admissions related to school sport activities were children aged 10-12 years; 70% were male
- 19% of school sport injury admissions involved Australian Football, 17% were soccer-related

Average yearly rate of hospital admissions between 2010-2018 was 224.2 per 100,000 full-time enrolled primary school students. Rates did not increase or decrease significantly over the 9-year period.



KEY MESSAGES

- Primary school child injury is unacceptably high and mostly preventable, and more needs to be done to ensure a safe environment for students. This requires a coordinated strategy at the state-wide, regional and local school levels.
- Particular attention needs to be given to reducing falls involving playground equipment, injuries occurring during sports, physical education (PE) and free-play outdoor activities.



Hospital treatment costs for primary school child injury admissions for 2016/17 to 2017/18 totalled **\$7.3 million**

VISU would like to acknowledge the support of the Victorian Government