Portugal:

How did we achieve the best reduction in child road mortality over the past decade?

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Associação para a Promoção da Segurança Infantil
Portuguese Association for Child Safety Promotion

is a private non-profit organisation, launched in 1992, with the objective of promoting joint efforts for the reduction of the number and severity of injuries to children and adolescents.

INTERVENTION AREAS

- Road Safety
- Home Safety
- Drowning Prevention
- School, Sports, Playground Safety

Tools:

- Information & Communication
- Training & Education
- Research
- Standardisation
- Legislation

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Child Road Mortality

Sharp decrease between 1998/2006 (children up to 17 years old)

- Decrease of mortality in all road users
- Half of dead children are car passengers

In 8 years, mortality decreased for almost 1/3
Measures with direct impact:
1/ Child restraint systems (CRS)

- In 11 years the situation reversed: from less than 20% of CRS use in 1996 to more than 80% in 2007
- but still in 2007: only a little more than half of the children are well carried

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Measures with direct impact

1/ Child restraint systems (CRS)

Importance of law changes:
- mandatory use of CRS until 3 years (1995)
- and until 12 years (2005)

Informative campaigns

Enforcement

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Measures with direct impact

Reduction of VAT for CRS
New law adopted in Jan 2009

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Measures with direct impact
2/ Promoting rearward facing seat

CRS ORIENTATION ACCORDING TO CHILD AGE

Rwf increased in age group 9-12 M and even in group 12-18 M (most difficult age groups)

9-12 M RwF - less than 30% to more than 50%
12-18 M RwF - less than 10% to more than 20%

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Measures with direct impact

2/ Promoting rearward facing seat

APSI Information Campaigns

APSI CRS Checkpoints

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• Training courses for drivers (since 2000) and accompanying adult (since 2005) - APSI

• Law for transport of children in organised/institutional groups in minivans, coaches and buses (2006) - due to APSI influence

• Law requires:
  vehicles with seatbelts and CRS
  professional training for drivers
  criteria for the choice of safe vehicle stops
  presence of an accompanying adult (with reflective vest)
  responsible to check/fixing CRS/seatbelt and help children cross streets

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4/ Best Practices – Health Professionals

• **Training courses** for paediatricians, family doctors and nurses to promote adequate counselling to families

• **Safe First Trip** - initiative from some hospitals that obliges that all newborn leave the Hospital in a CRS

• **Distribution of information** on safe transport, in Maternities, to all parents of newborns

• **Adoption of harmonised messages** on child safety in cars – APSI recommendations were integrated in National Child Health Program and by Portuguese Society of Paediatrician

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5/ Successful Approaches – Community Intervention

• **CRS Checkpoints** (since 2001)
  trained inspectors check CRS in cars of families

• **Safe Road to School - Faro** (2003 to 2005)
  police training, educational/informative sessions for children and parents, enforcement, road safety week

• **Safety of Children in Cars - Around country** (2008)
  evaluation studies, schools sessions, local seminar for professionals and families, CRS checkpoints
  policie authorities, firemen, health professionals, health students, municipalities, schools, media, families

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Child Road Mortality
Positive Evolution – But not enough!

(annual average) 2001/2003

Deaths - 94
Serious injuries - 560
Slight injuries - 6390
Permanent disabilities - ?
Temporary disabilities - ?

2004/2006 (annual average)

Deaths - 54
Serious injuries - 402
Slight injuries - 5373
Permanent disabilities - ?
Temporary disabilities - ?

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Child Road Mortality
Positive Evolution – But not enough!

In the last 3 years, every day, 16 children are victims of a road accident.

9 cars passengers, 4 pedestrians, 3 drivers

Road accidents the major cause of death in children

Portugal is among the group of European countries with higher road mortality

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Child Road Mortality
Positive Evolution – But not enough!

(annual average) 2001/2003

Dh 94

2004/2006 (annual average)

Dh 4

In the last 3 years, every day, 16 children are victims of a road accident

Road accidents the major cause of death in children

Portugal are the group of European countries with higher road mortality
Priorities for the future

• Increase CRS use

• Promote the use of rearward facing CRS until 3 or 4 years old

• Reduce CRS misuse

• Extend Safe First Trip Programme to all hospitals and increase the number of health professionals with specific training

• Training police officers and CRS sellers (for better enforcement and counselling)
Priorities for the Future (continued)

• **Reduce urban speeds** (down to 30 km/h) in specific locations (ex: near schools, playgrounds and residential areas)
• Create better road infrastructures for pedestrian
• Enforce the use of bicycle helmets and strategies to increase their visibility in traffic (ex: lights, reflective materials)
• Development of informative campaigns with harmonised messages

Direct contact with families
Involvement of local authorities/institutions and local professionals
Information + education/training + enforcement + evaluation

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