



SPECIAL BULLETIN

“No Accident National Days”

SPECIAL - JUNE 2005

HEALTHY CITIES OF THE CZECH REPUBLIC

BRAND NEW ACCIDENT PREVENTION!

No Accident Days Linked Healthy Cities by Three Subjects of Child Accident Prevention

The June campaign No Accident Days (1 – 8 June 2005) are organized on an annual basis by municipal councils associated in Healthy Cities of the Czech Republic (HCCZ) together with their partners (e.g. schools, health authorities, medical facilities, state police and municipal police, NGOs, etc.). The numbers of cities that join the campaign keep growing from year to year.

The first year of the campaign had been organized by Council of Kroměříž in 2000, and two other Healthy Cities – Brno and Karviná joined it a year later. No Accident Days had taken place last year in fourteen Czech and Moravian Healthy Cities and the number of municipalities was still higher by twelve this year – amounting to twenty-six.

This year, the subject of No Accident Days covered three daily routine situations during which children are at risk – driving, biking and walking to school. These were the situations on which three national campaigns focused – **Armadillo**, **No Biking Without Helmet**, and **Safe Way to School**. The campaigns were actively supported during No Accident Days by Healthy Cities. Similarly to the past years, No Accident Days 2005 were organized under the auspices of the Czech Ministry of Health.

This year, the campaign was joined by the following cities: Boskovice, Brno, České Budějovice, Hodonín, Chrudim, Karviná, Kopřivnice, Kroměříž, Kuřim, Letovice, Litoměřice, Litomyšl, Mladá Boleslav, Orlová, Prostějov, Rožnov pod Radhoštěm, Slaný, Světlá nad Sázavou, Třeboň, Telč, Třebíč, Vsetín and Zlín. Involved were also some towns and villages in the **Healthy Region of Vysočina** and **Healthy Region of Zlín**.

ENTRIES FROM “NO ACCIDENT” JOURNAL...

Meeting at the Czech Ministry of Health: Prevention of Child Accidents in Traffic

On the eve of No Accident Days 2005, the Ministry of Health organized a workshop entitled Prevention of Child Accidents in Traffic. The event was not only a demonstration of high interest in this serious issue, but it also demonstrated well-functioning cooperation between departments. In addition to the Ministry of Health, involved in the organization and implementation of the workshop were the Czech Ministry of Transport (BESIP), World Health Organisation (WHO) Office in the Czech Republic and the National Network of Czech Healthy Cities. The event, which was an unofficial opening of No Accident Days, was attended by representatives of local administration, ministries, medical facilities and – also - journalists.

The workshop was opened by the representative of the Ministry of Health Dr. J. Rážová who explained the growing importance of strengthening prevention of child accidents. Accidents in traffic are currently the cause of up to 40 per cent of fatal traffic casualties of children below 14 years of age! Twenty-four children died last year on the Czech roads and fifteen of them died in cars. Foreign sources, however, report that the number of fatal casualties can decrease by up to 71 per cent if children are secured in a correct way in car seats. The campaign **Armadillo** promoting the use of car seats was discussed at the workshop by Mgr. J. Ivičičová from the Centre of Traffic Research (CDV). Then, two other national campaigns of prevention of child accidents in traffic were introduced. The first one entitled **Safe Way to School** comes from the United Kingdom and it was presented at the workshop by CDV representative J. Heinrichová. The other campaign **No Biking Without Helmet** originated in the town of Kroměříž and it was presented at the Ministry of Health by its author Dr. M. Sedlák who is a pediatrician in Kroměříž Hospital. The **Community projects Healthy City** and **Safe Community** were introduced as a “springboard” for starting up and developing the campaigns by Petr Švec, director of HCCZ, and Dr. J. Číhalová from Kroměříž branch-office of Zlín Medical Institute. The workshop was closed by a short briefing at which the questions of journalists were answered by: Deputy Minister

of Health and National Health Officer Dr. M. Vít, PhD., Director of Health Care at the Ministry of Health Dr. P. Březovský, Head of BESIP Mgr. R. Šťastný, and Doc.Dr. V. Benešová, CSc. from the Centre of Epidemiology and Prevention of Child Accident at the Second Medical Faculty, Charles University in Prague.

Healthy Cities of the Czech Republic/ Kroměříž: Safe Playgrounds

The programme Safe Community initiated by WHO focuses on reduction of accidents in towns. The city of Kroměříž is a holder of the pilot project Safe Community in the Czech Republic and as such it frequently answers the questions related to the building and operation of playgrounds. It is no chance that this Moravian city organized on the last but one day of No Accident Days a specialised workshop entitled **Safe Playgrounds**.



Typical playground at a Kroměříž housing estate – in the past.



The same playground at the same housing estate today.

The representatives of Healthy Cities of Litoměřice, Hodonín, Vsetín, Frenštát pod Radhoštěm and Šternberk met in Kroměříž early in June. Their meeting was attended by Regional Health Officers of Zlín, representatives of Medical Institute of Zlín, Czech Commercial Inspection, contractors and playground designers, representatives of the consulting company INORZ and representatives of non-profit organizations. A total of 24 persons. At the beginning of the event, the coordinator of

Healthy City of Kroměříž Ing. Marie Pokorná briefly informed about HCCZ and about the history of the city of Kroměříž's involvement in the projects Healthy City and Healthy Community. Do you know where children get injured most frequently? As indicated by the unique Kroměříž research, the home environment is clearly at the first place (27.51%), being followed by street and road (22.63%) and playgrounds (19.9%). Schools are at the last place (18.83%). These findings were communicated to the workshop attendants by Dr. J. Číhalová from Kroměříž branch-office of the Medical Institute of Zlín. Mr. Schmidtmayer (ZULPCB) then informed about the standards, obligations, checks and revisions. He paid special attention to the crucial regulation for towns ČSN EN 1176, section 7 "Playground Equipment – Guidelines for Checks, Maintenance and Operation". Although the standard is (only) a recommendation, which means it is not mandatory, the workshop attendants agreed in their final discussion that it would be helpful to observe it. Playground will be checked and issued passports and the financial and personnel capacities and qualities of playground operators will improve. Some attendants proposed that citizens should be involved, too. Parents should teach their children how to play safely in playgrounds. The next part of the workshop dealt with the experience from the city of Kroměříž. Attendants were informed, amongst other, about the software for documentation of the municipal green areas and movable chattels. Useful pieces of experience, advice and tips were offered to the workshop attendants in the form of a brochure, which was distributed in the end.

The Contribution of Armadillo for Healthy Cities, Villages and Regions

The campaign **Armadillo**, which focused on the use of car seats, was a novelty in this year's No Accident Days. The campaign mascot Armadillo was distributed to children below 12 years of age in schools and kindergartens by teachers and municipal



Armadillo

policemen. At the occasion, parents were given leaflets with tips how to select a good car seat, how to install it in the car

correctly or how to secure safely the child in the car seat. The national campaign comes from the Netherlands and, in addition to the Czech Republic, it will take place under the auspices of the European Commission also in some other European countries (Slovenia, Poland, Portugal, Spain, Germany, Sweden and Finland). The national campaign for the Czech Republic was prepared by the Ministry of Transport (BESIP) in cooperation with the Centre of Traffic Research (CDV), HCCZ and Czech Police.

The campaign was joined in Brno, the capital of South Moravia, by 32 kindergartens and the same number of primary schools. The campaign was organized jointly by Brno Office – Healthy City and CDV. *“Armadillos were given to over 6500 children. Armadillos will follow them on the road, but only if they are safely secured in car seats.”* described the event Mgr. Ivana Draholová, Head of Brno Office – Healthy City.

And why armadillo? According to the national campaign coordinator Mgr. J. Ivičková from CDV, armadillo was a symbol of security as far back as in the ancient civilizations. *“When in danger, the animal can protect its body very efficiently by a suit of belt armour,”* explained the coordinator.

Municipal employees in the Healthy City of Zlín brought 3500 rubber armadillos to kindergartens and schools. *“Toys were distributed by teachers who informed children how important it is to use safety belts. Children were also given leaflets for their parents with a survey of various types of car seats and guidelines how to select the best car seat.”* informed the politician of the project Healthy City of Zlín, Deputy Mayor Dr. V. Řihák.

In addition to the cities of Brno and Zlín, the campaign Armadillo took place in eighteen more Healthy Cities and in two Healthy Regions: Boskovice, Hodonín, Chrudim, Karviná, Kroměříž, Kuřim, Letovice, Litoměřice, Litomyšl, Mladá Boleslav, Prostějov, Rožnov pod Radhoštěm, Slaný, Světlá nad Sázavou, Třeboň, Telč, Třebíč and Vsetín. The campaign was joined also by other towns and villages in the **Healthy Region of Vysočina** and **Healthy Region of Zlín**.

Safe to School!

To facilitate daily school attendance and make it safer for pupils and students is the purpose of the project **Safe Way to School**. In its initial stage, children usually plot in a map their ways to school, highlight the risks they meet and, subsequently, they themselves propose how to eliminate the risky places. Children who had already plotted their ways to school last year, carefully checked this year risky places on their ways to hobby centres, etc. They also conducted some researches, e.g. how many pedestrians cross against the red lights or how many drivers or passengers do not use their safety belts. Results of mapping and researches were analysed and they will be further used by municipal authorities in Healthy Cities.

The project Safe Way to School comes from the United Kingdom and it gradually extends to the continent (e.g. Denmark and Austria). It was “brought” to the Czech Republic by CDV Brno and the centre of Accident Prevention at the Second Medical Faculty, Charles University in Prague. The project had been tested in the Czech Republic last year already by schools and hobby clubs in the Healthy Cities of Třebíč, Orlová and Kroměříž.

The questionnaire-based research within the project Safe Way to School in the North Moravian Healthy City of **Orlová** was organized by the Centre of Leisure Time Kotva, which is a partner organization of the Healthy City. Nine schools offered their cooperation in the questionnaire-based research and Kotva workers finally analysed 488 questionnaires. According to Healthy City of Orlová coordinator Halina Zadubánová, the research indicated numerous interesting issues. *“Most pupils have to cross roads or at least parking places on their ways to school. The feeling of danger is mostly invoked in children by cars, then by twilight, darkness and deserted places. Children mostly fear strangers. They feel safe on crosswalks, which are attended by a policeman,”* said the coordinator and she added that most children still responded they felt safe almost always when going to school. The campaign No Accident Days in the town of Orlová included also, for example, the children graphic competition Safe Way to School. The Centre of Leisure Time Kotva prepared a traffic security material in the form of folders and published in cooperation with the Healthy City Commission a methodical aid in the form of a table game training the safe way to school. According to the project coordinator Halina Zadubánová, the findings of the questionnaire-based research and the graphic competition are the main contribution of the project Safe Way to School and municipal authorities will use them in their work.

This year, the campaign Safe Way to School was organized by the following members of HCCZ: Chrudim, Letovice, Orlová, Karviná, Boskovice and Třebíč.

No Biking Without Helmet

Similarly to Safe Way to School, the campaign **No Biking Without Helmet** returned to the Healthy Cities during the No Accident Days in June. The purpose of the campaign is to promote the use of helmets by bikers below 15 years of age. The campaign had been run for the first time two years ago in the city of Kroměříž, the city of Litoměřice joined a year later and this year it was organized not only by other members of HCCZ (**České Budějovice, Chrudim, Litoměřice, Prostějov, Vsetín**), but also by many towns and villages outside the network of Healthy Cities. And what is more! The original project No Biking Without Helmet prepared by the Safe Community of Kroměříž was awarded this year the **second place in the competition Safe Road for Children**. The event is organized on an annual basis by Volvo in cooperation with “Our Child”



foundation. Twenty-seven projects were enlisted this year in the competition. The projects were assessed by eighteen independent experts, journalists and actors. The project initiator Dr. M. Sedlák was awarded early in June at Brno Car Show. Children below fifteen years of age must wear cycle helmets



when biking. Whether they do wear helmets was checked by municipal and state policemen from April to June in the cities, which joined the campaign. Municipal Police of **Kroměříž** awarded this year bikers with prizes amounting to CZK 23 000. The local branch-office of VZP (health insurance company) contributed for headlamps and blinkers, biking gloves, rings and other biking gifts. Policemen in the city of **Chrudim** stopped 190 bikers and 110 children of them who wore helmets were awarded nice gifts. Similarly to Kroměříž, VZP granted a contribution for the purchase of gifts. The campaign in the city of Chrudim culminated on the first of June by an event in the Town Park where children competed for interesting prizes, danced at a disco and those children who came on bike and wore helmets were given prize-draw tickets. The tombola included many attractive biking gifts, such as blinkers, locks, pumps and – the main prize – bicycle. Prizes were awarded by the politician of the project Healthy City of Chrudim Vice Deputy Mgr. P. Řezníček. The main prize was won by Tomáš Vožar, aged nine, from the city of Chrudim.

In the city of **Prostějov**, policemen - when checking young bikers - found out that helmets were worn mainly by young children, whereas children aged 12 to 14 almost never wore helmets. Instead of gifts, those offenders were given promotion leaflets with tips for bikers. **The campaign No Biking Without Helmet was joined this year during No Accident Days by the following Healthy Cities: České Budějovice, Chrudim, Litoměřice, Prostějov, Vsetín.**

BY WAY OF CONCLUSION...

In addition to the aforementioned three major campaigns – Armadillo, No Biking Without Helmet and Safe Way to School – the partners of Healthy Cities supported by municipal authorities organized in June events of smaller extent, which focused on reduction of accidents.

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(The photographs were provided by the archives of HCCZ member cities, municipalities and regions.)