



KAROLINSKA INSTITUTET  
Department of Public Health Sciences  
Division of Social Medicine



WHO COLLABORATING CENTRE  
ON  
COMMUNITY SAFETY PROMOTION

## SAFE COMMUNITY WEEKLY NEWS

No. 8  
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\*\*\*\*\* LETTER FROM THE EDITOR\*\*\*\*\*

Welcome to the eighth issue of Safe Community Weekly News in 2006, the electronic Safe Community Weekly News is edited by the European Safe Community Network, International Safe Community Support Team and the WHO CC on Community Safety Promotion on behalf of Safe Communities Network.

### WHAT IS NEW AT SAFE COMMUNITIES?

In this issue:

**DESIGNATION: Youth Park Community designated as Safe Community No. 97**

**PROGRAM: Northcott Community, working towards Safe Community Accreditation.**

**PROGRAM: the prevention of accidental falls among senior citizens in Vorarlberg**

**ASSOCIATION: Paraffin Safety Association of Southern Africa**

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### Youth Park Community designated as Safe Community No. 97

On March 1, 2006, Youth Park Community in Jinan City, China was designated as the first Safe Community in Mainland China and the 97<sup>th</sup> in the world. The designation ceremony was attended by nearly 200 participants, including government officials at different levels.



L to R: Ms. Qi Min, Mr. Dong Chuanshi, Prof. Joon Pil Cho.

Handing over the Safe Community plaque

The Safe Community Agreement was pre-signed by Prof. Leif Svanström, Chairman of WHO CC on Community Safety Promotion, and signed at the ceremony by Prof. Joon Pil Cho on behalf of the WHO CC, Mr. Dong Chuanshi, Political leader of Youth Park Sub-district Office and Ms. Qi Min, Director of Youth Park Sub-district Office.

The Safe Community program was formally initiated in Youth Park Community in June 2002. The Safe Community Promotion Committee was founded as the steering group to be responsible for the community safety promotion. After continuous efforts for nearly four years, Youth Park Community became a member of the International Safe Community Network.



Presentation by Mr. Dong Chuanshi Prof. Lars-Gunnar Hörte and Prof. Joon Pil Cho at the ceremony



The ceremony attracted great media attention



Prof. Joon Pil Cho announcing Youth Park designated as Safe Community



Congratulations by Prof. Lars-Gunnar Hörte



Government leaders attending the ceremony



### Presentation at the National Seminar on Safe Community

In the afternoon, at the National Seminar on Safe Community, various activities on injury prevention and ongoing safety promotion programs was presented by about 15 speakers. Great attention was paid to injury surveillance on local level, community safe training system, injury prevention for school children, community healthcare, domestic violence and other issues. Besides Prof. Lars-Gunnar Hörte and Prof. Joon Pil Cho, the speakers came from different government sectors, universities and communities around China.



Prof. Lars-Gunnar Hörte and Prof. Joon Pil Cho visiting primary school with government officials



Drunk driving talk with local traffic police

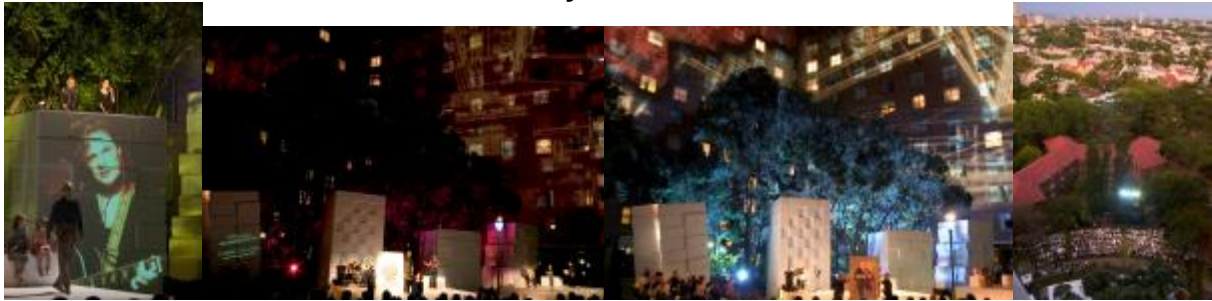
For more information on Youth Park Safe Community program: [www.phs.ki.se/csp/safecom/youth\\_park\\_china.htm](http://www.phs.ki.se/csp/safecom/youth_park_china.htm)

For further information contact:



Jake Lee  
Youth Park Sub-district Office  
No.90, Weiqi Road  
250021 Jinan, China  
Phone: +86-531-87936764  
Fax: +86-531-87931192  
E-mail: [ypcchina@yahoo.com.cn](mailto:ypcchina@yahoo.com.cn)

## Northcott Community, Sydney, Australia- working towards WHO Safe Community Accreditation.



Photographer: Keith Saunders

In 2002 residents of the Northcott Public Housing Estate in Central Sydney, Australia and Big *hART*, a not-for-profit social change arts company, began working together using cultural tools to bring about community change.

The Northcott Public Housing Estate comprises five hundred & ninety one apartments. The Estate, home to about 1,000 people, is made up of predominantly one and two bedroom units and many people live alone. A series of murders, suicides and ongoing crime and safety issues leading up to 2002 saw the Estate labeled a New South Wales Police 'Crime Hotspot'. At that time people lived in fear and stayed behind closed doors.

Big *hART* facilitates culturally driven projects that create sustained, evaluated behavioural change amongst some of our most marginalised. Behavioural change comes from a change in attitude and attitudinal change comes from a cultural shift. Over the past two years Northcott has seen a decrease in violent crime and vandalism and associated costs; a reduction in unit vacancies; an increase in tenant participation and access to support services and a reduction in the stigma associated with Public Housing and the Northcott Estate. The work at Northcott was recently awarded Coalition of Australian Heads of Government (COAG) Crime and Violence Prevention Award.

The activities of the Northcott community continue. During January the Northcott community, Big *hART* and a team of professional artists, staged **StickybrickS** as part of the Festival of Sydney. **StickybrickS** was a dinner party held in the grounds of Northcott, accompanied by a multi-media performance including theatre, dance, projected images and music. Playing to sold-out audiences **StickybrickS** celebrated and recorded different aspects of living at Northcott- diaspora, love, loss, children and dance.

In 2006 the Northcott community will be bringing together all its partners including local Police, Health and Department of Housing, to further address community safety issues. By working across sectors and through a range of programs and approaches, the community aims to experience and demonstrate the benefits of creating and sustaining a safe community. The community is being assisted by the Safe Communities Foundation of New Zealand in its steps towards becoming a WHO SAFE COMMUNITY.

For further information go to [www.bighart.org](http://www.bighart.org) or contact Michelle Kotevski [michellekotevski@hotmail.com](mailto:michellekotevski@hotmail.com)



Institut für Sozialdienste  
Vorarlberg



## Keeping the proper balance – the prevention of accidental falls among senior citizens

### A PROJECT FOR A BETTER QUALITY OF LIFE

We are living longer and longer. That's the good news. And yet, as we get older the dangers of suffering accidental falls increases. Lacking mobility and dexterity are especially serious problems. Falls among the elderly have become the number one cause of incapacitating accidents. And every eleventh fall results in a need for nursing care. Decisive efforts to combat this trend are now being emphasized in the project "Keeping the Proper Balance", which was launched by the "Safe Communities Initiative" in cooperation with the Province of Vorarlberg and the Institute for Social Services Advisory Section "Building with People in Mind".



Statistics paint a clear picture. Every year in Austria more than 105,000 persons over the age of 60 are injured in serious leisure time falls. Aside from prolonged medical treatment these falls can also have grave social and psychological consequences. For fear of injuries elderly persons often retreat from their formerly active way of life, which may result in loneliness and isolation.

Concerted, properly regulated and consistent exercise measurably lowers the risk of falls by improving mobility, reaction rates, balance, strength and stamina. International experience, for example in Germany, shows that mobility training is also worthwhile even if certain physical faculties are limited.

In the context of the preventative project "Keeping the Proper Balance" groups are being formed and sponsored within Vorarlberg which offer exercise programmes especially tailored to senior citizens' needs. "These courses are not meant to promote high-performance sports but rather help elderly citizens preserve their physical stability as long as possible," Franz Rein from the "Safe Communities Initiative" explains.

Physicians and physiotherapists play important roles in this approach, functioning as important partners in the project and providing a networking capacity for the groups. In specially organised training units they are familiarised with the specific preventative measures and risk-prevention courses being offered. In this way the hospital physician can, when risk patients are released from the hospital, direct them to the proper physiotherapy programmes. The physiotherapist, on his or her part, should be acquainted with the courses for mobility training groups in the patient's vicinity, in order to provide well-directed contacts.

Working with our project partner, the Institute for Social Services Advisory Section “Building with People in Mind”, on the one hand, we have intensified our personalized on-site consultation procedures for the elderly and, on the other hand, begun to mentally train and prepare interior designers, workers and architects in the subject matter of “housing adaptations for the elderly”. Improper or missing hand-rails, raised door thresholds, carpets, inadequately furnished living quarters are among some of the major causes for accidental falls at home. Plans are being made to arrange information events for relatives, employees at mobile assistance services, senior citizens’ gatherings, but also for all those generally who are interested in these topics.



Within the year’s training programme the heads of the mobility training groups who have achieved supplementary qualifications within the scope of the project also learn to integrate specific elements related to their own modes of behaviour. There are, for example, free sight and hearing examinations, information about the purpose and importance of having physicians regularly check over medications, demonstrations of auxiliary appliances such as tin

openers, extendible grippers, sock helpers, etc., but also consultation on how to avoid and do away with stumbling traps. In addition to regular exercise, all of these procedures are extremely important to enable elderly citizens to preserve their independent way of life and, above all, to reduce the dangers of serious falls. Thanks to this broad-access course approach directed at mobility groups, a maximum of participants will be familiarised with a broad range of accident-prevention topics.

An accompanying scientific evaluation extending over a period of two years will provide clear evidence of how important these activities can be for improving the quality of life for senior citizens and avoiding the risks of accidental falls.

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## **1st European Conference on Injury Prevention and Safety Promotion**

**Challenges and Solutions for a Safer Europe**

**June 25-27, 2006**

**Marriott Hotel, Vienna, Austria**

**Conference secretariat**

**EuroSafe**

**Mrs. Joke Broekhuizen**

**PO Box 75169, 1070 AD Amsterdam, The Netherlands**

**Phone: + 31 20 511 4513, Fax: + 31 20 511 4510**

**Email: [secretariat@eurosafe.eu.com/](mailto:secretariat@eurosafe.eu.com)**

**Website: [www.eurosafe.eu.com/events](http://www.eurosafe.eu.com/events)**



## Paraffin Safety Association of Southern Africa

[www.pasasa.org](http://www.pasasa.org)

### Campaigning to improve the quality of life for impoverished communities

The scenic and popular tourist destination Cape Town in South Africa, is no exception to the “new urban revolution” highlighted in an UN Habitat report predicting the explosive growth of world cities in the past few decades leaving more than 900 million people living in slums worldwide. Even Cape Town has experienced a staggering 100% increase in the densification of some informal settlements between 1998 and 2000, bringing many challenges to the young democracy.

An important factor associated with the poverty and unemployment of a vast majority of these informal communities is the use of paraffin (kerosene). Households with unpredictable incomes tend to purchase energy for cooking, heating and lighting when cash resources are available, and thus the purchase of an accessible fuel like paraffin is convenient. Poor households of necessity therefore have to rely on a potentially unhealthy and harmful fuel like paraffin for their daily survival.

The Paraffin Safety Association of Southern Africa operates from the premise that access to safe energy is a basic need and aims to substantially reduce the negative consequences associated with the domestic use of paraffin by adopting an integrated approach. Whilst there is a paucity of information on the extent of the tribulations related to paraffin usage, our own, on-going research has revealed that unintentional injuries is a serious public health problem in South Africa and in other low-income countries.

Whilst the South African constitution is probably the most progressive in the world in terms of human rights, at the same time, the majority of the poor are struggling to find concrete manifestation to chapter 24 of our constitution, that is a right to an environment that is not harmful to their health and well-being.

It seems likely that the use of low cost fuels like paraffin will prevail in many impoverished communities, certainly for the foreseeable future. The Paraffin Safety Association’s vision therefore is to support decisive policy leadership in the area of paraffin safety in South Africa, and to realise this vision, will continue to build strategic partnerships and share our knowledge to ensure that the users of paraffin will in large measure have access to a safer source of energy.

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15<sup>th</sup> International Safe Communities Conference – CAPE TOWN – South Africa  
09-11 April 2006,  
Cape Town, South Africa



<http://www.uct-cmc.co.za/conferences/2006/safecom/info.php>

**Please send your activities, programs and reports via post/ e-mail to the editor:**

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Yousif Rahim  
European Safe Community Network  
E-mail: [yousif.rahim@ki.se](mailto:yousif.rahim@ki.se)  
<http://www.phs.kise/csp>  
<http://www.safecommunity.net/>  
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