

Tips for Collecting Injury Data in your Community

1. **Staffing Recommendations When Starting Collecting Data** The importance of involving many key staff members as part of your injury prevention program can be crucial for success. At least one staff member should be trained, injury prevention specialist or coordinator. In locations with lighter workloads, workers may be able to successfully direct a local program on a collateral basis, provided they have a strong commitment from and the support of the administration. It is extremely important that the tribal Injury Prevention Coordinator be fully trained in injury prevention principles and have working knowledge of epidemiology, data/statistics and injury surveillance.
2. **Epidemiology.** The use of epidemiology is very important in incorporating a public health approach to injury prevention. The information gathered through these applied methods can help provide a strong base as well as ongoing data for an injury prevention program. This approach to injury prevention can determine the *What, Where, Who* and *Why* which are important data sources to determine your tribal communities needs'. By monitoring the ongoing patterns of injuries through public health surveillance, a tribal injury prevention program can effectively and efficiently investigate, prevent and control injuries in the community.
3. **Keep a consistent log method** Using the same methods to record injuries as they occur provides in the end an easier assessment of your community's source of injuries. Being organized and consistent makes the process of collecting data easier. This in end helps you to build a more efficient and better directed injury prevention program. Keeping a consistent log will inform you of the source of your problem is, how it occurs, when it occurs and why it occurs, rates of occurrence and populations that are subjected risk. In end, if you know all of these details about the source then you have more details to create a better more efficient, preventative program. If you have record of details then you know how to prevent.
4. **Increase community awareness, education and involvement on injury prevention.** Teach community members on the importance of keep records. Demonstrate the need for records and why they will benefit your community. If your community understands the need for reporting injuries then they will be more likely to be involved in the process. In end, you will have more thorough data and a more effective injury prevention program. In addition, create an easy process for your community to file injury records. The easier and faster the process is for community members to file injury reports the more likely they are to file one.