PROJECT NUMBER: 99250

PROJECT TITLE: Predictors of Car Crashes in Minorities and High Risk Groups

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR:
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PROJECT OBJECTIVES:
a) Evaluate and assess health-related behaviors that are associated with car crashes.
b) Identify high-risk groups in which these health-related behaviors are most prevalent.

PROJECT ABSTRACT:
The objective of this case-control study is to identify select demographic, driving habits and risk factors associated with involvement in car crashes among young drivers. The study will involve drivers aged 15-25 years who reside in Jefferson County, Alabama. Subjects will be identified and recruited from four high schools and one university. Those who agreed to participate will complete a questionnaire based in part on the 1999 Youth Risk Behavior Survey. The case group will be drivers who report ever being involved in a car crash during their lifetime. The control group will be students who have not been involved in a car crash.

It is probable that youthful risk driving behaviors will be found to be associated with other unhealthy practices, suggesting that these driving behaviors should not be viewed as exclusive, but part of a larger syndrome which takes into account adolescent lifestyle factors. In relation to seatbelt usage among this population, this research might begin to help researchers better understand the factors that predispose young drivers to wear seat belts.

PROJECT TASK DESCRIPTIONS:
1) Conduct literature search
2) Develop surveys
3) Recruit and survey 1200 study participants
4) Enter and analyze survey data
5) Interpret findings
6) Produce final report
7) Conduct technology transfer activities

MILESTONES AND DATES:
Phase I – begin project and begin literature review (2 months, Oct – Nov, 1999)
Phase II – continue tasks 1 & 2 (2 months, Dec – Jan, 2000), literature will be reviewed and stratified by age, gender, race, and health related behaviors.
Phase IV – task 5 (3 months, Jul – Sep, 2000)
Phase V – tasks 6 & 7 (4 months, Jan, 2001)

TOTAL BUDGET:
One-year project: UTCA $43,931; total budget $83,861.

STUDENT INVOLVEMENT:
Three undergraduate students in Public Health will assist investigators in recruiting and surveying participants and in performing data entry.

RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER RESEARCH PROJECTS:
None known.

TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER ACTIVITIES:
It is anticipated that the PI and Co-PIs will make presentations at the meeting of the Birmingham Regional Planning Commission on Seat Belt Initiative in Jefferson and Blount Counties in Birmingham, at the American Public Health Association Meeting in Boston, and at the National Highway Transportation Safety Administration conference: Youth Death on the Highway Conference in Atlanta. Other technology transfer activities will include distribution of the final report and potential publications in peer-reviewed journals.

POTENTIAL BENEFITS OF THE PROJECT:
The information gathered from this project will enable researchers to develop culturally sensitive, age appropriate, tailored interventions that will lower car injury rates among minorities and other high-risk groups.

TRB KEYWORDS:
Vehicle crashes, minorities, high-risk driver, driving.