

Welcome

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It is a pleasure to be here on behalf of the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, and join in welcoming you to this landmark event, and to state how pleased we are to be a part of this effort.

We have been a part, from the start, of the international cooperative effort on infant mortality, and have seen the successes of that program, how it has contributed to our knowledge through the development of standard definitions, of standard data collection efforts, and understanding in infant mortality rates across countries by our joint activities in this area.

We hope that this international cooperative effort on injury statistics will be similarly fruitful and productive.

I want to start by talking a little bit behind Dr. Satcher's back, and point out to you the special role he has played, not only in getting this started, but in assuring that we have inclusion of violence and intentional injury statistics in this whole effort.

This has been something that has required his leadership, and not only in this particular effort, but in bringing activities of research and prevention activities within states and state health departments, to bear on the whole problem of violence and intentional injury in our society.

You heard him speak a little bit about this in his opening remarks here, but I think that you should be aware of the fact that this is a very sensitive topic and it took a person not only with the broad public health perspective of the importance of this as an issue, but with the personal courage and commitment to make it a priority item for the CDC and the Public Health Service.

I want to salute Dr. Satcher particularly for that activity and that effort.

The NICHD, over the past eight to ten years, has developed a major research program in injury research and injury prevention in children, with the encouragement of the American Academy of Pediatrics, and the Congress. During this time, that program has grown from one lonely research grant to a multi-million dollar program in grants and contracts in epidemiology and statistics activities, as well as in the epidemiology and prevention research program.

This has been done under the guidance and direction initially of Dr. Pete Scheidt, later joined by Mary Overpeck, by Bruce Simons Morton, by Yossi Harel, and by Jordan Finkelstein. And you will be hearing from some of them later in this program, about some of those activities and efforts.

The interests of the Institute, however, extends beyond just that part of the program in injury prevention. It also has a component of intervention studies in violence reduction among adolescents, that is part of this activity. And also, we extend our interests to the role of injury in causing disability, and approaches to rehabilitation of persons injured by either violence, or unintentional injuries.

So, we have a program that really spans the scope of injury related activity. Thus, we are pleased to be part of this new international cooperative effort. We think that we have something to contribute. We certainly have much to learn from this effort, on a broad scale. We look forward not only to this symposium, but to the continuing interaction with our colleagues at the Centers for Disease Control, specifically in the National Center for Health Statistics, and colleagues throughout the world, as represented here.

So, enjoy your conference, and we look forward to continuing to work with you. Thank you.