



# Newsletter

JULY 2009

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## Effective Communication: Talking about Injuries

**We face different battles...  
but similar challenges.**

As members of the Partnership for a Safer Maryland, we represent a diverse community working in various injury issues. A unifying theme is our challenge to effectively communicate our various missions to our colleagues, community leaders, the media, etc.

The National Center for Injury Prevention and Control (NCIPC) recently produced a tool that provides guidance in how to place the right "frame" on your issue, which will help in achieving the results you seek through your work.

### What is a "frame"?

We can think of a frame as a very broad message that grabs the listener and helps him or her understand the core value our work is addressing.

The tool, titled *Adding Power to Our Voices: A Framing Guide for Communicating About Injury*, proposes that one common theme within all of our missions is to see individuals:

*"live to their full potential."*

**How can this core value be turned into a message frame?**

*Example: "We want a society where people can live to their full potential."*

By setting the stage with a message everyone can agree on, we can gain a more captive audience by helping them understand the relevance of our ultimate goal.

The guide suggests that even though injury prevention is a diverse field, we can support each other's efforts by using this common terminology throughout our communication strategies.

## Partnership Updates and Upcoming Events

### **MARYLAND'S 21ST ANNUAL SUICIDE PREVENTION CONFERENCE**

Wednesday, October 7th, 2009

Sponsored by the Governor's Interagency Workshop  
on Suicide Prevention

Visit the following website for more information:  
[www.regonline.com/2009mdsuicide](http://www.regonline.com/2009mdsuicide)

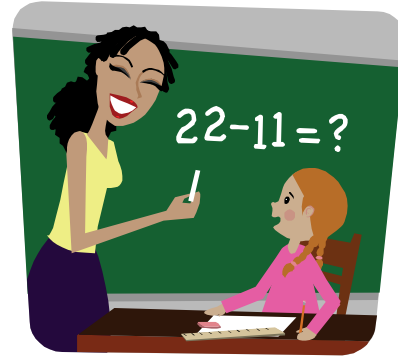
*Plans are currently being developed for a full training event sponsored by the Partnership for a Safer Maryland. Stay tuned for a "Save the Date"!*



# SOCIAL MATH:

## One Pathway to Effective Communication

One of our most powerful tools in communicating about the various injury issues we represent is the clever use of data. Having a powerful statistic is a good thing, but how you communicate that statistic can be even more important. When we take a number like the rate of falls among older adults, for example, and put it in a context that paints a descriptive picture for the listener, that's called "social math." Check out these examples:



"Every day 5,000 adults age 65 and above are hospitalized due to fall-related injuries."

"As many as 3.8 million sports- and recreation-related concussions occur each year in the United States. That's enough people to fill the 2008 super bowl stadium more than 50 times."

"Every 15 minutes, a 16- to 19-year-old teen is admitted to an emergency department because of motor vehicle crash-related injuries."

"People who don't have working smoke alarms in their homes are twice as likely to die in a fire than those with working alarms."

"Over 5 percent of high school students report missing school at least once in the past 30 days because of safety concerns. This is the equivalent of approximately 25,000 classrooms of high school students missing school because of fear."

"Each year over 91,000 infants less than 1 year old are victims of substantiated child maltreatment. If we were to place these infants' cribs end-to-end, the line of cribs would stretch for 78 miles."

**How can you use social math in your current position to help further your organization's mission?**

**Important:** All direct quotes in this edition of the Partnership for a Safer Maryland Newsletter are taken from *Adding Power to Our Voices: A Framing Guide for Communicating About Injury*, a NCIPC document available by visiting: [www.cdc.gov/injury/CDCFramingGuide-a.pdf](http://www.cdc.gov/injury/CDCFramingGuide-a.pdf).