

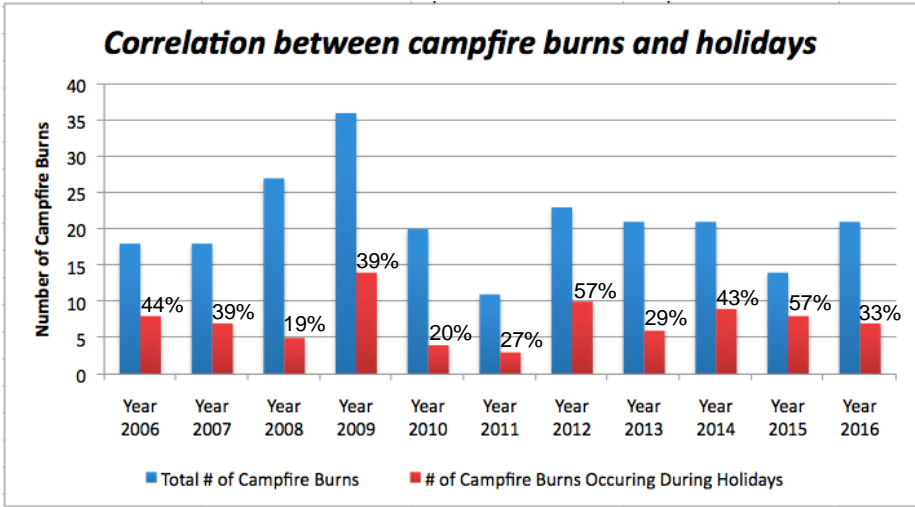


Paediatric Campfire Burns – Scourge of the holiday season

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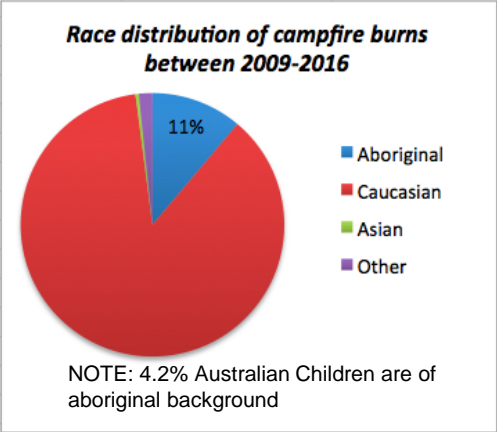
Background

Australian family camping holidays often involve a campfire, to facilitate cooking or provide warmth during the cooler winter months. This activity unsurprisingly carries a significant risk of burn injury for children and observance of fire safety is essential. Anecdotally, the unit has noted an increase in campfire related burns around public and school holidays. This study examines the nature and number of campfire burns and the correlation to the holiday season.



Methodology

Campfire related burn injuries managed by the unit during the period of August 2005 to April 2017 were examined. The unit’s database was utilised for the data and case note review was also undertaken.



Results

240 patients were found to have sustained an injury related to a campfire with an average of 21 cases per year. 36% of these cases required initial inpatient treatment with other patients requiring delayed grafting. Indigenous patients accounted for 11% of patients treated. The hands and feet were the most common areas affected. Whilst year-to-year trends varied, on average 37% of cases occurred during holiday periods.

Conclusion

Paediatric campfire burns remain a common and significant source of morbidity. Feet and hands are commonly injured and burn wounds are often deep requiring surgical intervention. As school/public holidays only account for 23% of the year, there are a disproportionate number of cases occurring within this small window of time. Indigenous are over represented in those affected. This study may help to better target awareness campaigns in the future.

Sources

- Giovine, P. D., Sparnon, A., Quinn, L.: A Decade Of Campfire Burns At The Women’s And Children’s Hospital Burns Unit Adelaide. ANZ J of Surgery 2012; 82 pp. 3
- Choo, K. & Fraser, J.: Campfire burns in children: an Australian experience. Burns 2002; 28: pp. 374-378