



Children's Issues Technical Group

The Children's Issues Technical Group (CITG) consists of individuals interested in research, design, and application concerning human factors and ergonomics (HFE) issues related to children's emerging development from birth to 18. The topic of children inevitably includes caregivers (parents and day care providers) and educators (teachers and those who maintain environments for children), which too is a main focus, particularly with respect to their perceptions and physical and cognitive tasks. Example application areas include injury prevention, product usability, physical and cognitive maturation, workload and decision-making. Visit <https://www.citghfes.org/> for additional information.

TECHNICAL FOCUS

Child-related issues in HFE focuses on the emerging development of a child in the context of product use in varied settings and environments such as home, school, vehicle, recreation, and digital spaces. The scope not only includes products intended for children, such as toys, playground equipment, and nursery products, but also other products in the environment that present hazards to children, such as window covering cord strangulations and glass-front gas fireplace burns.

Young children are particularly vulnerable to injury compared to adults. Very young children, particularly infants are incapable of telling what exactly is causing them discomfort. The youngest lack both physical and cognitive characteristics to make safety decisions. That responsibility for safety of young children is assigned to their caregivers particularly when the child is less than pubescent age. Indeed most warnings regarding child safety are directed to caregivers, not to the child itself. One of the difficulties in preventing injury in children is that a child's development is a continuously changing and dynamic process. A child may be incapable of doing something one day and the next day have that capability.

Some main topics of interest and research of the Children's Issues Technical Group include injury prevention, communication methods, and satisfaction and comfort of children and their caregivers.

MEMBERSHIP

The Children's Issues Technical Group consists of individuals who work in various areas pertaining to children's issues, such as researchers, practitioners, manufacturers, policy makers, caregivers, and students. Although most CITG members are also members of the Human Factors and Ergonomics Society, CITG membership may be obtained separately as well.

BENEFITS OF MEMBERSHIP

The Children's Issues Technical Group, like other technical groups within HFES, performs a variety of functions and services for its members. Goals of the CITG are to foster research and the sharing of interests and stories by a core group to keep members informed of current issues and developments. In addition to sponsoring technical sessions at the annual meeting of HFES, the CITG conducts special symposia on topics of interest to members. A newsletter is sent to all members two times a year. Additional information on the CITG can be obtained by contacting HFES.

SUCCESS STORIES

Human factors experts working in the area of children's issues have been involved in a number of successful programs and products including providing input to US Consumer Product Safety Commission mandatory product safety standards, ASTM International voluntary standards, and to companies developing and manufacturing either products for children or products that potentially present hazards to children. Some members participate in expert witness testimony in product and premises liability that have led to improved systems.