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Journal of Pediatric Psychology Advance Access originally published online on April 18, 2007

Journal of Pediatric Psychology 2007 32(5):517-526; doi:10.1093/jpepsy/jsm014

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The Roles of Age, Gender, Inhibitory Control, and Parental Supervision in Children's Pedestrian Safety

Benjamin K. Barton, PhD and David C. Schwebel, PhD

Department of Psychology, University of Alabama at Birmingham

All correspondence concerning this article should be addressed to Benjamin K. Barton, PhD, Department of Psychology, University of Guelph, Guelph, Ontario, N1G2W1, Canada, E-mail: bbarton@uoguelph.ca

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Abstract

Objective Thousands of American children are injured or killed each year as pedestrians, but behavioral factors in pedestrian injury etiology remain poorly understood. We examined the roles of children's individual differences (age, gender, and inhibitory control) and parental supervision in children's pedestrian behaviors. **Methods** Using the pretend road method, a sample of 85 children and 26 adults crossed a pretend crosswalk set adjacent to a real road. Safety of crossing the pretend road was determined based on actual traffic on the real road. Adults also crossed the real road. **Results** Adults' behavior on the real road paralleled that on the pretend road, supporting validity of the method. On


the pretend road, younger children, boys, and children with less behavioral control engaged in riskier pedestrian behaviors. Children with less behavioral control responded more noticeably to increases in parental supervision. **Conclusion** Results are discussed in relation to children's development and injury prevention.

Key words: inhibitory control; injury etiology; parental supervision; pedestrian injuries; unintentional injuries.

Received June 16, 2006; revision received September 18, 2006; revision received December 21, 2006; accepted December 26, 2006

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Online ISSN 1465-735X - Print ISSN 0146-8693

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