

****News release from The Scar Free Foundation****

Research drives campaign to reduce hot drink injuries to babies and toddlers

‘SafeTea’ campaign launches on National Burns Awareness Day

16 October 2019

The Scar Free Foundation is supporting a national campaign aimed at reducing the number and severity of injuries caused to babies and young children by hot drinks. The Scar Free Foundation Centre for Children’s Burns Research at the Universities of Bristol and Cardiff undertook research into the causes of burns and scalds to children. The findings form the basis of the campaign which was made possible by a generous grant from the Worshipful Company of Tin Plate Workers alias Wire Workers of the City of London and co-funding from Health and Care Research Wales.

Over 30 babies and young children per day attend hospital with scalds caused by hot drinks – more than 70% of all burns involving children. Many of these scalds cause painful injuries, sometimes resulting in life-changing scars. These findings prompted Professor Alison Kemp of Cardiff University and Professor Alan Emond of the University of Bristol to develop the Safe Tea Campaign, a multimedia intervention aimed at parents and carers of children aged 1-5.

The campaign, launched today, uses research findings to help parents reduce the risks of such injuries and gives the first aid in the event of a scald.

Researchers ran successful trials of the campaign in Hackney, east London, and Cardiff. Face-to-face interactive sessions, for parents and carers of young children, were backed up with take-away materials such as fridge magnets and reach charts (which show how high a toddler might reach).

SafeTea awareness packs are being distributed to schools, nurseries and parent groups, while powerful videos featuring victims of scald injuries and simple first aid advice have been posted on social media.

SafeTea campaign key messages:

PREVENTING & TREATING BURNS

- Keep hot drinks out of reach of young children
- Do not pass hot drinks over children
- Never hold a baby and a hot drink at the same time
- Create a SafeTea area at home where hot drinks are made and drunk away from children
- Follow the COOL, CALL, COVER principle if a burn occurs
- COOL the area under running water for 20 minutes; CALL NHS Direct or 999; COVER the area with clingfilm

Professor Alan Emond who leads the research team said:

“When parents or grandparents are shown how long a cup of tea can stay dangerously hot, how fragile a baby’s skin can be or how high a toddler can reach, they become far more vigilant. Separating hot drinks from where babies and young children are is crucial in reducing these horrible injuries.”

Brendan Eley, Chief Executive of The Scar Free Foundation said:

“The research which the Foundation has co-funded is informing the SafeTea campaign. We now know that of children seen in hospital with burn injuries, the great majority are between 8 and 18 months old and have been scalded by hot drinks. The horror is that the vast majority of these scald injuries

are completely avoidable. The SafeTea campaign will make a difference in reducing these injuries, while further research supported by The Scar Free Foundation will inform the work of clinicians in alleviating scarring.”

Laurence Mutkin, Master of the Worshipful Company of Tin Plate Workers alias Wire Workers, a City of London Livery Company, said:

“We are very pleased to support the work of The Scar Free Foundation – founded by one of our members - and the SafeTea campaign in particular. By engaging parents and carers with straightforward information and advice, fewer children should suffer from accidents involving hot drinks and those that do should receive more appropriate immediate first aid.”

ENDS

Notes to Editors

The SafeTea campaign - www.SafeTea.org.uk - is based on evidence collected by researchers from Cardiff University, the University of Bristol and the University of the West of England, and is using materials tested in collaboration with early years staff and parents of young children. Launching today, the campaign runs on social media for three months, backed up by health promotion in the NHS, in nurseries and by charities.

SafeTea is informed by research Network funded by The Scar Free Foundation and Health and Care Research Wales with financial support from the British Burns Association, Worshipful Company of Tin Plate Workers of the City of London, the VTCT Foundation, Cardiff City Region Exchange and Cardiff University.

The Worshipful Company of Tin Plate Workers alias Wire Workers is marking its 350th anniversary in 2020 by making a significant donation to the SafeTea Campaign, among its other charitable work (<https://tinplateworkers.co.uk/education-and-charities/>). The Foundation was founded by a member of the Company, and is a recipient of regular funding from the Company’s charity fund, for which the Foundation is very grateful.