

# Does Community Education Make a Difference?

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Bushfire CRC Project C7:

Developing an evaluation framework for community safety programs.

## Identifying factors influencing decision making in relation to householder preparedness and response to bushfires

Household and neighbourhood preparation and effective response to the bushfire risk are essential to ensure community safety.



Understanding how people make decisions in response to the bushfire risk is an important step in developing effective education programs. Figure 1 identifies the logic of the decision making necessary for people to be prepared and to respond effectively to a bushfire, some of the factors influencing the decision making process, and several critical contextual conditions.

Figure 1



## Exploring the association between participation in education programs and level of preparation and intended response to bushfires

Figure 2

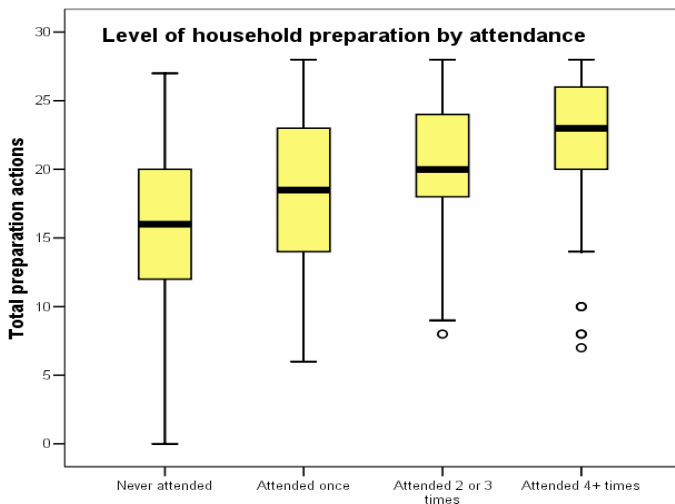
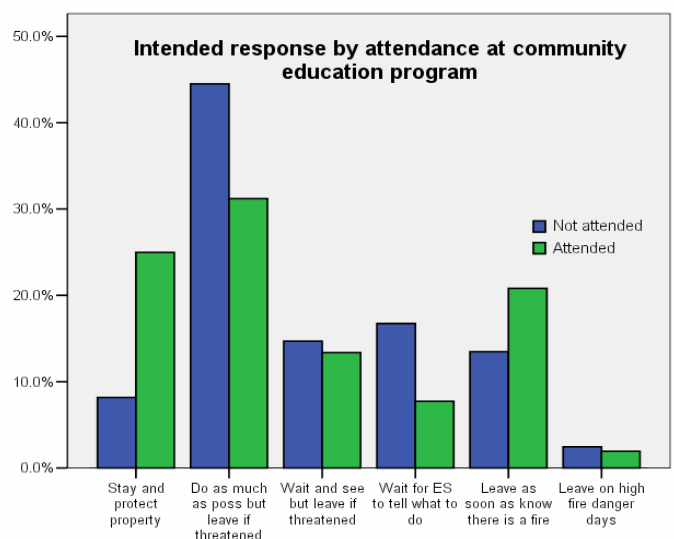


Figure 3



A survey of 600 residents of high bushfire risk areas in Victoria was conducted during early 2005 to explore some of the factors influencing decision making and also the association between attendance at CFA's community education programs and household preparation and intended response to a bushfire. Preliminary analysis shows a statistically significant association between the participation in the program and higher levels of household preparation (Figure 2) and higher levels of adoption of more appropriate protective action intentions (Figure 3).

Future work in this project will involve developing a more elaborated model of the decision making process and the factors influencing people's decisions. This model will be used to guide evaluation of several key community education programs. Data will be collected through observation, interviews and surveys to identify the ways in which education programs may be able to influence the adoption of more effective preparation and response to bushfires.