

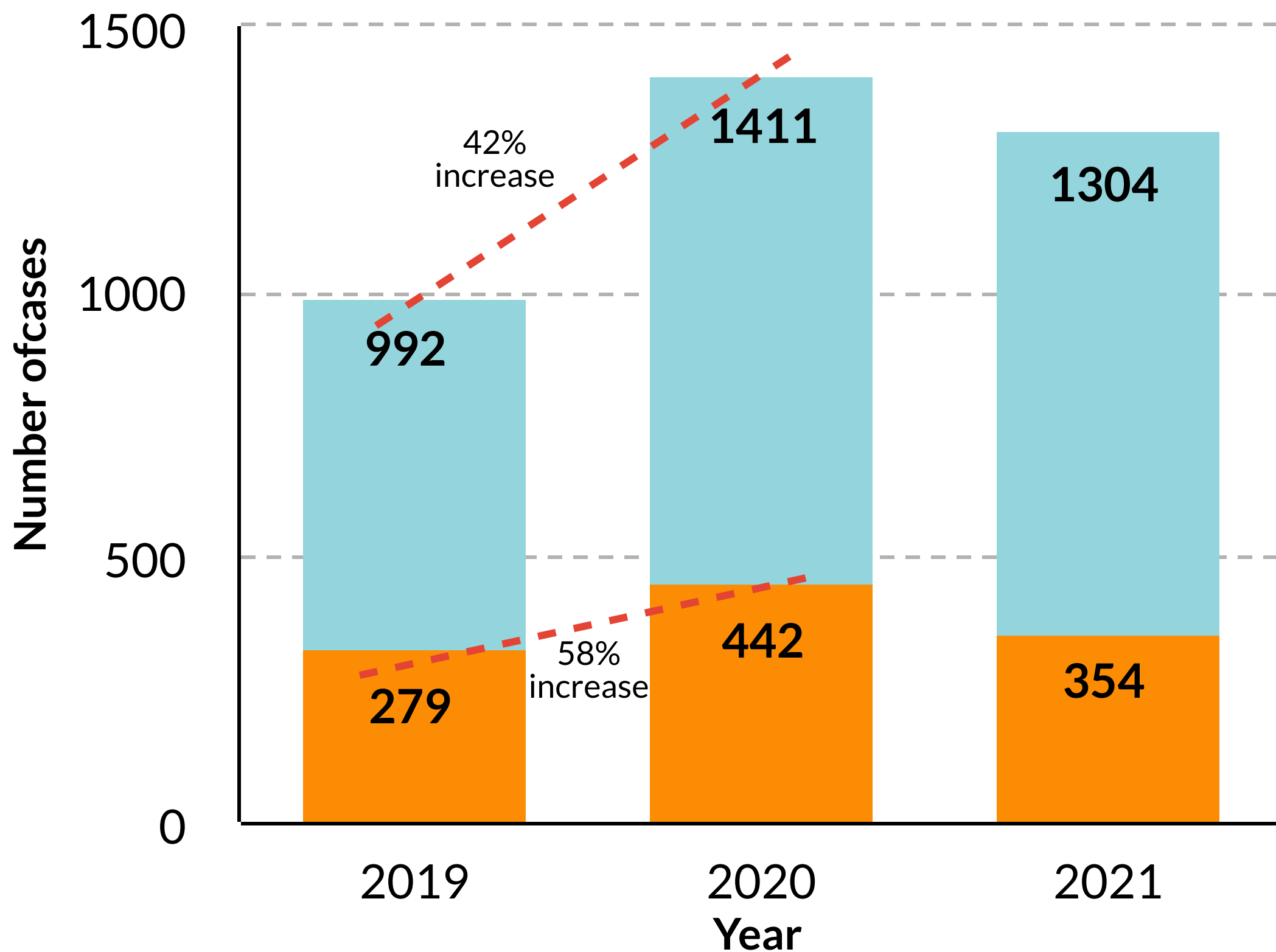


Exposure Trends During the COVID-19 Pandemic

Issued March 1, 2022 | Contact mryuk@wapc.org with questions

The following data analyzes poison exposures reported to the Washington Poison Center during the years of 2019, 2020, and 2021. For definitions of data terms, see our [glossary](#).

Unintentional Misuse of Household Cleaning Products among patients 18 years and older (2019-2021)



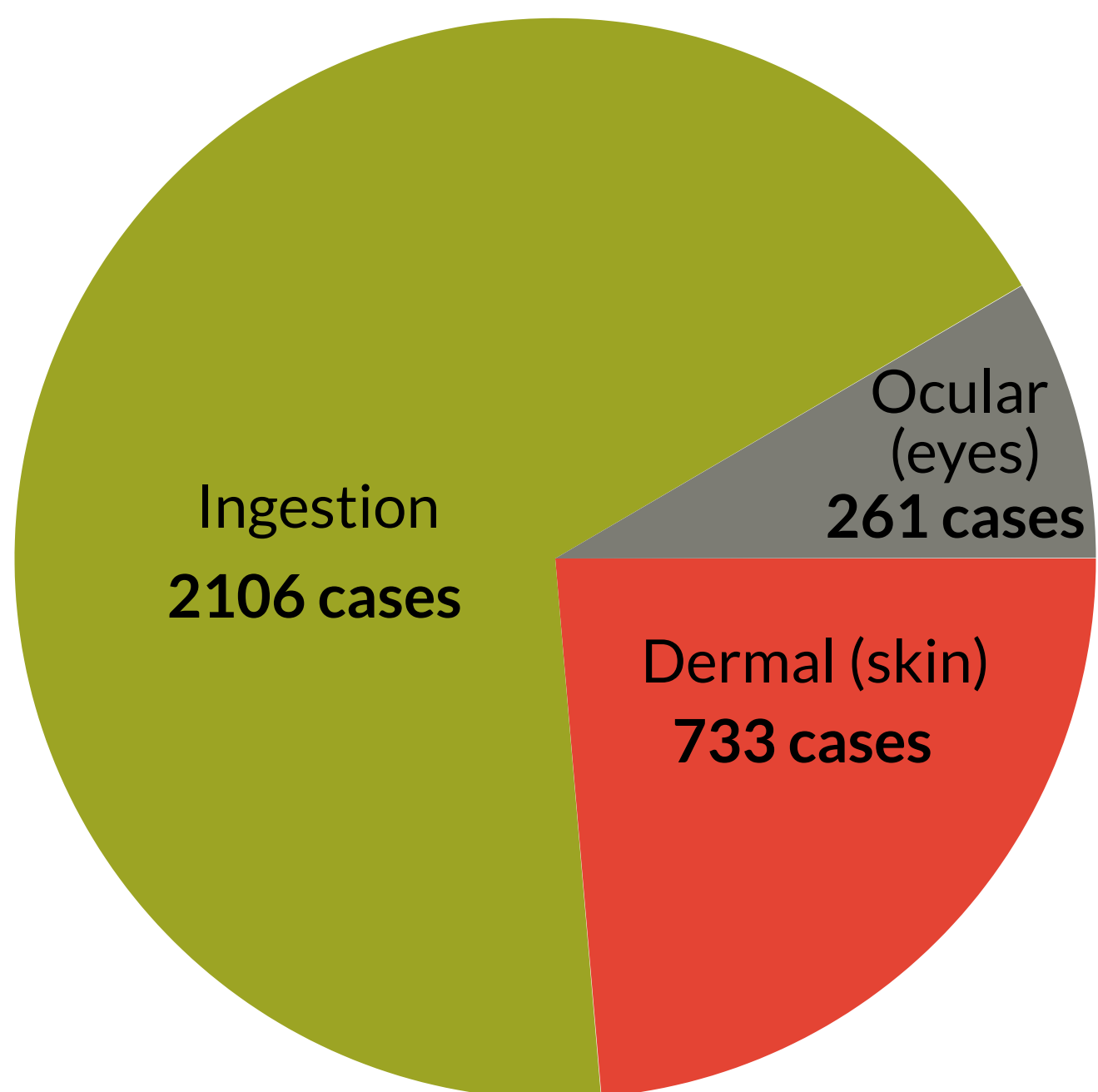
"Unintentional misuse" exposures involve accidentally using something the wrong way or for the wrong purpose.

Common scenarios from 2019-2021 included:

- Mixing cleaning products
- Incorrectly diluting a product
- Using a cleaning product on something the product is not intended to be used on (like food packaging, masks, or skin)

- All household cleaning products
- Bleach-containing cleaning products

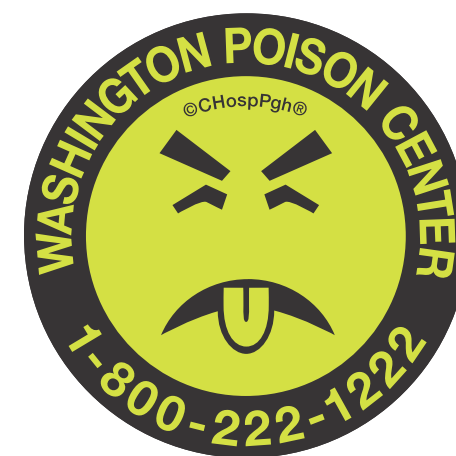
Route of Exposure with Household Cleaning Products Accidents among children ages 0 - 5 years (2021)*



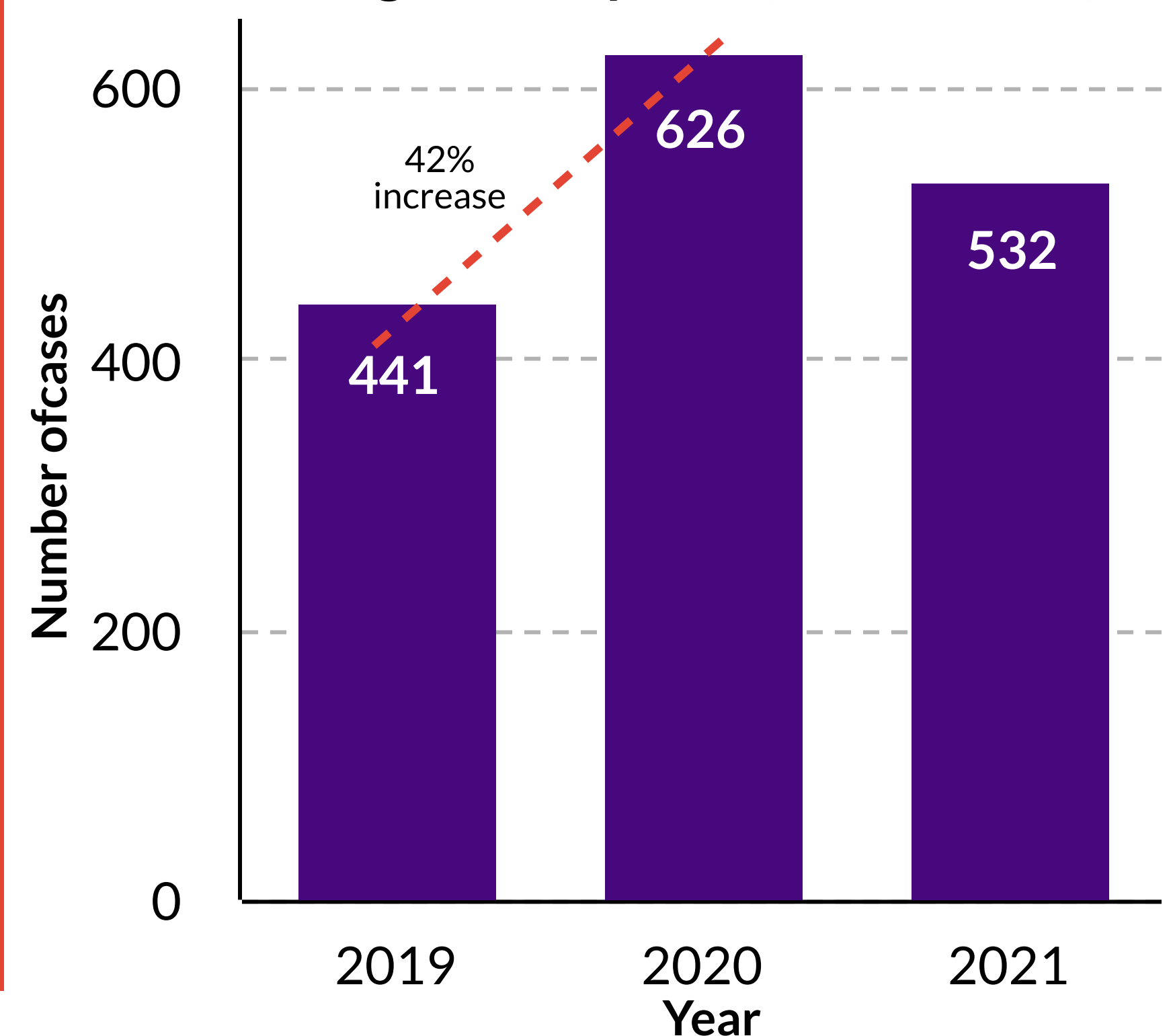
*A single case may have more than 1 route of exposure; not all routes of exposure are included in this chart

Most accidents in young children (ages 0-5 years) occur when a product is left within reach of the child, such as on the counter, floor, or in a purse/backpack.

Always remember to **LOOK** (Lock it up, Out of sight, Out of reach, Keep it safe) with household cleaning products, hand sanitizers, and any other potentially harmful substances. Use Mr. Yuk stickers when appropriate. And, never let a child use harmful products without supervision.



Accidents with Hand Sanitizers among children ages 0 - 5 years (2019-2021)



Top Exposure Reasons in 2021

| Age | Reason #1 | Reason #2 | Reason #3 |
|-------|-----------------------------|----------------------|-----------------------------|
| 0-5 | accident | medication error | environmental |
| 6-12 | accident | medication error | unintentional misuse |
| 13-17 | self-harm/suspected suicide | medication error | unintentional misuse |
| 18-24 | self-harm/suspected suicide | unintentional misuse | medication error |
| 25-54 | unintentional misuse | medication error | self-harm/suspected suicide |
| 55+ | medication error | unintentional misuse | self-harm/suspected suicide |

Over the course of the COVID-19 pandemic (March 1, 2020 - December 31, 2021), we treated

53,547 people at home

who would have otherwise sought help at a healthcare facility. Doing so prevented potential COVID-19 exposures and transmission, reduced the burden on our strained healthcare system, and

saved approximately \$80,320,500 patient dollars

(based on an average of \$1500/emergency room visit).