

Heads UP!

The official newsletter of SMARTRISK

Winter 2009-2010

Injury Alliance research under way

Funded by the Ontario Trillium Foundation, a study is under way to find collaborative opportunities for Injury Alliance members (Safe Kids Canada, Safe Communities Canada, ThinkFirst Foundation and SMARTRISK). The study will wrap up in about six months and we look forward to sharing the results with you.

It's not too soon to think golf!

SMARTRISK has booked June 22, 2010, for our 16th annual charity golf tournament, at the beautiful Glencairn Golf Club in Halton Hills, Ont. You can get involved in many ways to help SMARTRISK prevent injuries and save lives, while enjoying a great day of fun and fellowship: sign up a foursome to play in the scramble-style game, become an event sponsor and/or donate to the live or silent auction.

For details, please email golf@smartrisk.ca or call 416-596-2700.

No Regrets Live: book for 2010

New SMARTRISK show heads out on the road this spring

The evolution of our SMARTRISK Heroes travelling road show for high schools is set to launch this spring as SMARTRISK No Regrets Live. The name change reflects a closer integration between this hour-long show and the No Regrets program that lives in high schools year-round, managed by a team of SMARTRISK-trained students.

The new show is designed to help SMARTRISK reach thousands more young Canadians each year, at a reduced cost to communities and their schools, and with greater flexibility in show dates. Here's what you can expect.

- An experienced creative team is updating and revamping the video portion of the show to freshen it up with new images, music and spokespeople. With Canadian teens able to access unlimited amounts of sophisticated media and technology, it's critical to ensure our video is relevant and appealing to them.
- SMARTRISK is working to increase our list of presenters from across the country. We introduce you to one of our newest No Regrets Live presenters on the next page. Our roster will widen to include not only people who were seriously injured themselves, but also those who have been deeply affected by injury. For example, a bereaved parent, or the driver

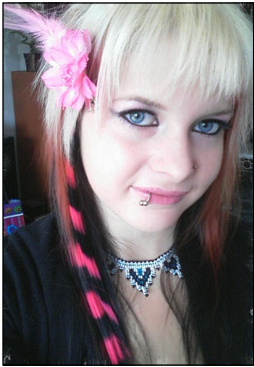
of a car involved in a serious collision that led to an injury or death, may address students. Feel free to get in touch with us for more information if you, or someone you know, might be an appropriate presenter for No Regrets Live.

- The staging of No Regrets Live has been simplified, as we have permanently retired our aging tractor trailer and truck and the large amount of sound and lighting equipment we used to bring from show to show. Instead, our presenters will arrive with the DVD of the video portion of the show and the schools will provide the minimal equipment necessary to present it. This has allowed us to offer No Regrets Live at a much reduced cost to communities. It also means that the show can be presented in more than one location at a time, allowing for greater flexibility in show dates.
- Research told us our presenters are critical to the success of the live show. For those of you who have experienced Heroes, you can expect the same intense, emotionally charged presentations and question-and-answer sessions from our presenters.

For more information or to explore bookings shows, please contact noregretslive@smartrisk.ca or 416-596-2703.

A PROFILE

Krystle Shewchuk



Grade 7 had just finished for Krystle Shewchuk, 13, when she travelled with a friend's family to the lake to celebrate Canada Day. "We had a blast, went swimming, watched the fireworks, just had a good time," she remembers.

Driving back the next day, they had just about reached Krystle's home on a farm outside the small community of Birch Hills,

Sask., when a series of bad choices changed her life forever. Her friend's Mom neglected to signal her right turn off the highway. While that common error by itself typically leads to little more than a mildly annoyed driver following behind, in this case, the driver of the truck behind them was talking on his cellphone. Compounding it all, Krystle believes (she can't remember for sure) she may have been wearing her seatbelt with the shoulder belt tucked behind her, as she regularly did.

The driver behind clipped their car, sending it careening into the oncoming lane where it was hit twice, leaving it spinning out of control down the road another half mile. In fact, the car came to rest in front of Krystle's house. Her mother heard the crash and raced from inside her home. She was comforting the woman who had been driving the other vehicle that had hit Krystle's car when police told her they believed her daughter was severely injured in the car across the road.

Krystle almost didn't survive the crash. She broke 14 bones, her spleen was ripped in half and she ended up paralyzed from the waist down. The three drivers were not badly hurt but the boy sitting in front of Krystle suffered a head injury and two broken legs. He had been sitting with his seat extended back and the crash's impact sent Krystle's teeth into his skull.

Krystle's family was very supportive while she was in hospital and renovated the house to make it suitable for her. Formerly into all kinds of sports, including soccer, basketball, volleyball and karate, she now had to re-learn the basics, including how to get in and out of bed on her own, dress herself and the like.

Many of her old friends disappeared from her life after her injury, leaving her to make new friends. Life in a wheelchair also presents other challenges. Now 20, Krystle finds shopping for clothes at certain popular stores impossible: the racks are so close together she can't wheel through and the counters are often too high for her to use the debit machines.

But she has made the best of it, taking up sports again, sampling sledge hockey, basketball and water skiing. Krystle hasn't joined the teams as it means a two-hour-plus trip south to Saskatoon. She loves to drive and has two cars, including a 1971 Dodge Charger she takes to shows. She's taking university classes in art and psychology and hoping to teach one day.

Krystle also presents for the Prevent Alcohol and Risk-Related Trauma in Youth program and enjoys sharing her story with young people. "Even if it helps just one person, it makes a big difference," she says. She finds her story resonates with many students. Krystle admits that even she has to remind herself to silence her phone's ringer or turn it off when driving.

One of SMARTRISK No Regrets Live's newest presenters, she's looking forward to helping young people "to think before they get behind the wheel and to see what could happen. I want to make them think twice before doing an activity, before they take the risk."

Krystle knows her crash was completely preventable. "I knew if we had signalled and the man had not been on his cell, it would have been prevented. We were so close to home."

Sponsor news

SMARTRISK is pleased to announce that a donation from Great West Life, London Life and Canada Life will allow us to introduce SMARTRISK No Regrets to 30 high schools in the London and Durham regions of Ontario in 2010.

This generous donation means an extra 21,000 young

people will be exposed to No Regrets in the next school year.

We invite you to join with SMARTRISK and help us to prevent injury and save lives.

Donate today by visiting www.smartrisk.ca.

RISK RADAR

Winter is skiing and snowboarding season

Here's how to reduce your risk of injury

While the world's elite athletes get ready to compete for top honours at the Winter Olympic Games on Canada's west coast, you may be heading to the slopes with a more leisurely program in mind. But just as the pros take care to avoid injury, you too won't wish to miss any winter weather due to injury.

Skiing and snowboarding are popular among amateur athletes of all ages in Canada. While it's great to participate, it's important to manage the risks so you won't become an injury statistic. In Ontario hospitals alone, there were close to 11,600 emergency department visits from skiing and snowboarding injuries during 2007-2008, with upper and lower limb injuries most common, then head injuries.

Regarding the most severe injuries, however, Canadian research finds head injuries are most common, followed by chest, spinal and injuries to the extremities. Traumatic brain injury is the most common cause of death and catastrophic injury. Injuries are most often due to falls and collisions with natural objects.

MANAGING THE RISKS

Following are tips to help you lower your risk of injury.

Look First

- Ensure all ski equipment is professionally checked each year. Ensure bindings, boots and skis fit properly.
- Ski or snowboard with friends or family, not alone.

- Remain alert for hazards and visibility changes from fluctuating weather.
- Be extra vigilant on your first and last runs of the day as these pose the highest risk of injury.

Wear the Gear

- Helmets reduce the risk of head injury anywhere from 22-60% and are valuable for skiers and boarders of all skill levels and ages. The Canadian Standards Association recently developed a standard for alpine helmets but helmets tested to this standard are not yet available. In the meantime, look for certification from CE, Snell or ASTM.
- Snowboards should have full-length steel edges and stiff, secure bindings. The board leash

must be securely attached and children should ride a short board (no longer than chest high.)

- Dress to avoid frostbite and damaging ultraviolet rays from the sun. Wear goggles or sunglasses and sunscreen.

Get Trained

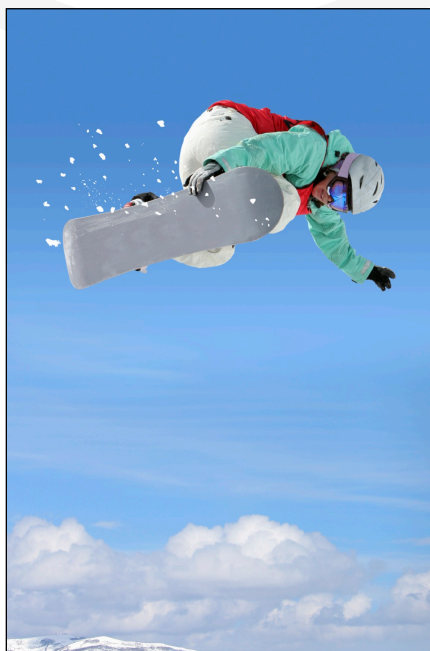
- Take lessons from a qualified instructor. Experts say children under 7 years of age are too young to snowboard.
- Choose runs which suit your ability. Learn and follow the alpine responsibility code (e.g., stay in control, avoid people in front of you, do not stop where you would obstruct a trail, observe and obey posted signs, keep off closed trails and areas.)

Be Sober

- Stop before it gets too dark or you become too tired.

More information

- See www.safekidscanada.ca, www.thinkfirst.ca and the Canadian Ski Patrol System at www.cspcs.ca
- If you are heading into avalanche country, see the Canadian Avalanche Centre at www.avalanche.ca/cac/ for information on getting trained in avalanche skills, wearing the gear and how to sign up for avalanche bulletins.



From the CEO's desk

Looking forward in 2010

Happy New Year!

At SMARTRISK, we enter 2010 looking forward to presenting our revamped live show for the first time this spring and full of enthusiasm for where we're headed. I'd like to share with you some highlights of what SMARTRISK has been up to recently.



First, you'll recall us asking for your support in getting our No Regrets training idea into the finals of the Aviva Community Fund competition. Our staff and No Regrets students worked hard, encouraging their friends to vote for our idea every day, to push us into the top 25 ideas which would then enter the final judging round. As it happened, we finished a few slots lower than the 25, meaning we didn't get an opportunity for our idea to be judged by the panel. Though we were disappointed that our hard work didn't result in us getting a chance to compete for the fund's cash, I was overwhelmed by the support we did receive. We ended up with more than 17,000 votes in just over two weeks of voting and in the last few days we were tallying an impressive 1,800+ votes each day.

It was a great learning experience for SMARTRISK. We mobilized our networks in ways we had never attempted before and we were heartened by the positive feedback we received. If you voted for us, please accept my thanks and rest assured, we will continue to seek out new sources of funds to bring our award-winning No Regrets program to many more schools in 2010. In fact, we anticipate offering training to as many as 100 high schools across Canada this year.

On a very positive note, SMARTRISK managed to weather the recession and is moving forward in a stronger position. Our transformation of SMARTRISK Heroes to No Regrets Live will help us to maintain this positive financial footing, as it is a much less costly program for us to tour and stage.

Indeed, after several intensive months working to put the new live show together, we're all excited to witness the results of this transformation in the spring. Do let us know if your community might like to bring No Regrets Live to local high school students and introduce them to the notion of smart risks.

As always, I appreciate your support and I very much look forward to another successful year ahead as we continue to help Canadians learn to choose smart risks and enjoy their lives injury free.

Bob Baker

President and CEO, SMARTRISK

SMARTRISK is a national, charitable organization, dedicated to putting an end to the No. 1 killer of young Canadians: injury.

Find out about our award-winning injury prevention programs for youth by contacting us at:

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