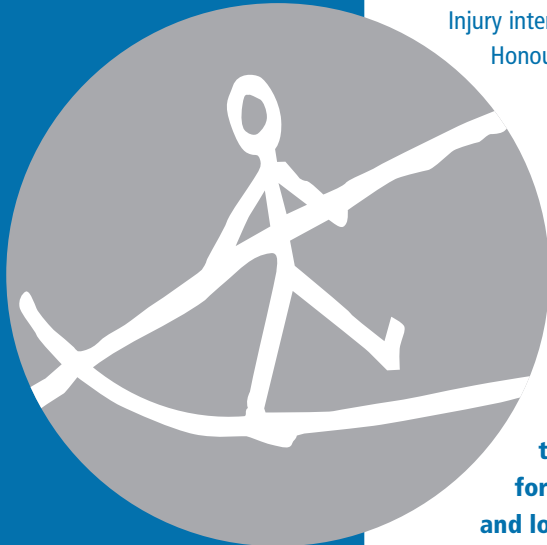


# HEADS UP!

The official newsletter of SMARTRISK.



## The Mission

SMARTRISK helps people see the risks in their everyday lives and shows them how to take those risks in the smartest way possible so that they can enjoy life to the fullest.

SMARTRISK



SAUVE-QUI-PENSE  
preventing injury with smart thinking

## Table of Contents

### In this issue...

- SMARTRISK No Regrets . . . . .1
- A profile . . . . .2
- Risk radar . . . . .2
- Dr. Conn's point of view . . . . .3
- CHN news . . . . .3
- Injury interpreter . . . . .4
- Honouring donors . . . . .4

## SMARTRISK Heroes: book now for 2008

**SMARTRISK Heroes toured western Canada in the fall before visiting northern Ontario and finishing 2007 in southern Ontario. The new year brings more Ontario dates and a trip to NASA headquarters in Texas. Book now for spring or fall 2008. For a list of show dates and locations, or to find out more about booking SMARTRISK Heroes, visit [www.smartrisk.ca](http://www.smartrisk.ca), e-mail [smartriskheroes@smartrisk.ca](mailto:smartriskheroes@smartrisk.ca) or call 416-596-2703.**

# SMARTRISK NO REGRETS

Where are they now? SMARTRISK talks to former peer leaders across Canada

As SMARTRISK No Regrets enters its fifth year, we wanted to share with readers what has become of some of the program's original student peer leaders. The students we tracked down are at university and reminisced fondly about their experiences with this peer leadership program. They talked of how being a youth leader helped them develop their leadership abilities for a cause they truly believed in. And they related how SMARTRISK philosophies now permeate their own lives.

Was being a pioneering No Regrets peer leader easy? Of course not. For example, **Rebecca Lockwood**, who is studying at McGill after attending North Toronto Collegiate Institute says the students had to fight "a lot of rolling eyes and dismissals from many students and some teachers. The 'Happy Helmet Club' was our name for a while. But while many peers joked about it, the name stuck and the ideas did too. I have friends now from high school who I don't see for months on end, but when I do, they somehow bring up a SMARTRISK message in everyday conversation. I believe in a domino effect, where if you make just one person think a little differently, they will in turn help someone else to think differently and the message will ripple through the crowd."

**Alex Kelly** also went to North Toronto and is now at Queen's University. Alex says, "At North Toronto it was a bumpy road in the beginning, but it is obvious that the kinks have been ironed out and that No Regrets is a positive, permanent installation. In speaking with my former Staff Adviser, as well as hearing about the activities that the new group has dreamed up, I am confident that No Regrets has been embraced." Alex

adds, "No Regrets was not just a high school program, but rather, an experience that helped me to define who I am and how I want to live."

After being a youth leader at Leo Hayes High School in Fredericton, **Sandy Kell** is studying for a bachelor's in education at the University of New Brunswick, while working for the RCMP as a 911 dispatcher. Sandy says, "It has really helped me manage risk, especially within my working environment. Every day, I have to make a decision to hang up with a caller or keep them on the line. I have to be able to give them sound advice that will not put them in danger. I have to know when to check up on an officer because I know he's on a dangerous call."

**Alana Chute** is at the University of Alberta, studying secondary education, after being a youth leader at A.E. Peacock Collegiate, in Moose Jaw, Sask. Alana says, "My involvement in SMARTRISK No Regrets has helped me prepare for my professional career as a teacher. I feel I will be better prepared to handle different situations and help my students take smarter risks."

The last word goes to **Tamera Burnett**, who attended South Kamloops Secondary and now studies at McGill: "The chance to work on such a unique and innovative project pushed me as a person to think creatively, work at the edge of my limits and most importantly, exposed me to a style of thinking which has stuck with me ever since. I may not recite the five mantras every day, but No Regrets has allowed me to live exactly as its name suggests in terms of taking chances and being happy with whatever result."

# A PROFILE

Unlike most SMARTRISK Heroes injury survivor presenters, Melissa Hague is in a wheelchair today not because she made a poor choice, but due to a stranger's bad choice.



Melissa was 12 years old when she was out running errands with her Mom on a Friday night. On their way home, they crested a hill to find a car bearing down on them in their lane. Her mother had no time to avoid it. Melissa later learned the driver had been drunk.

When she awoke in hospital in a lot of pain, she asked for her mother but no one would tell her where she was. "Finally, on Monday night my Dad sat down beside my bed and took my hand. I asked him where Mom was and he told me she had died in the car crash. I didn't know how my life was ever going to be the same again." Soon after, Melissa's doctor broke the news that she would not walk again. "I was 12 years old. I had no idea what paralysis meant! My life until that point had involved running, playing basketball, swimming, skating, hiking, climbing and dancing. I couldn't imagine not ever being able to do the things I loved. Somehow I convinced myself that I was going to be the 'miracle patient' – the one who walked despite what the doctors thought.

"It finally hit me that no matter how much I wanted to, I was never going to be able to make my body do what I wanted it to do. With this realization, I worked really hard for the six months that I was in the rehab hospital to learn how to live my life in a chair ... Since being injured, I have had to deal with a world that was not built for people in wheelchairs. Some days, this reality can be extremely frustrating, particularly when I can't get up stairs or in a door, but I figure out a way to navigate the situation.

With about 13 years of presenting, Melissa is one of SMARTRISK's most experienced survivor presenters. She remembers first seeing Heroes when it came to her hometown of Peterborough, Ont. The show's lack of preaching, instead its sharing of choices and stories, spoke to her more powerfully than anything she'd ever seen. "It's a completely different way of educating people," she says.

Being a SMARTRISK Heroes presenter helps Melissa share with young people that "it's not just how they live their lives but how their choices impact on others."

She continues to tour because she knows she's having an impact. For example, Melissa talks of one recent show after which a shy teen came up to her with tears in his eyes. He told her, "It was a really powerful show and I just wanted to tell you, I'm going to change the way I live my life." She doesn't get up on stage because she enjoys public speaking, Melissa says. But that kind of response is what motivates her.

Melissa sees herself as a survivor. "The crash is what changed my life but that's not what defines me. It's what I've done since."

# RISK RADAR

## TOBOGGANING INJURIES: It's a slippery slope. Understand and manage the risks.

**T**obogganing is a fun and popular winter pastime enjoyed by children and adults alike. But any time there is a slippery slope and a sled, there are potential risks for injury. In fact, toboggans can reach speeds as high as 35 km/h.

Many Canadians aren't aware how often tobogganing injuries happen. Specialized trauma units that treat some of the most serious injuries across Canada report nearly as many tobogganing injuries as hockey injuries. Tobogganing incidents have killed at least eight Canadians since 2003. In Ontario alone, more than 1,700 people visit an emergency department and more than 100 people are hospitalized each year. Over three-quarters of these injuries are due to a collision with an object, such as hitting a tree, rock or fence, or being thrown from a toboggan, and the remaining injuries are due

to a collision with another person.

### MANAGING THE RISKS

Tobogganing is a joyous part of Canadian tradition. Rather than packing away the sled, you can recognize and manage the risks while continuing to do the activities you enjoy. From the hill you choose to how you dress, here are tips to help you manage those risks while tobogganing this winter.

#### Pick the right hill

- Ensure the slope is gentle enough for you to stay in control of your speed and steering.
- Avoid hills that end at roads, parking lots, frozen bodies of water or other hazards.
- Find a hill with a runoff at the bottom that is long enough to allow for a natural stop. Check to see that the hill and runoff are free from trees, rocks, fences

and other potential hazards.

- Look for ice patches, bare spots or rough snow that could cause a loss of control. Recheck the snow conditions after every few trips down. Friction and temperature changes can quickly change the hill.

#### While on the hill

- By going down the hill in a kneeling position, facing forward, you'll have better control of the sled or toboggan, you'll be better able to see potential hazards, and you can more easily roll off to avoid hitting something. Make sure everyone is out of the way before starting down the hill.
- Toboggan down the middle of the hill and use the sides to walk to the top.
- Avoid putting too many people on a toboggan. Overloading can make it difficult to steer and

# CANADIAN HEALTH NETWORK TO CLOSE

For eight years, the Canadian Health Network has provided invaluable online access to credible health information to help Canadians stay healthy, and prevent injury and disease. Proud to serve as the Injury Prevention Affiliate for CHN, SMARTRISK helped support the creation of an Internet-based health information service to provide Canadians with practical, timely and quality-assured information on health issues.

Due to a Grants and Contribution program

reduction exercise on the part of CHN's funder, the Public Health Agency of Canada, CHN will shut down by March 31, 2008. The PHAC and CHN Affiliates, including SMARTRISK, will operate in a business-as-usual manner until then. It is anticipated the PHAC will continue to look for effective and innovative ways to provide Canadians with high quality, credible health information through means including the Agency's own Web site, as well as linkages to other health-related Web sites.

## SPONSOR NEWS

SMARTRISK is delighted to welcome a major new supporter to SMARTRISK No Regrets and a returning sponsor for SMARTRISK Heroes.

Bill Holland, CEO of CI Financial, and his wife Susanne, have made a significant three-year pledge to SMARTRISK, which will allow us to reach 50,000

youth through our No Regrets program in high schools.

We are also pleased to announce that CN has renewed its agreement for three years at an increased level of funding, allowing us to reach hundreds of thousands of youth through SMARTRISK Heroes, as part of CN's overall commitment to the community and to preventing injury.

- stop.
- Hazards can be difficult to see, especially when it's getting dark or when it's snowing. Toboggan when you can clearly see and be seen by others.
- Be prepared for others, especially children, to act unpredictably and to not be watching where they're going.

### Wear the Gear

- Check your toboggan to make sure it's in good condition. Avoid using a toboggan with broken parts, sharp edges or cracks.
- Wearing a helmet will help to prevent head injuries for both children and adults.
- Avoid frostbite by dressing in layers and keeping your head, ears and hands covered.
- Wear bright coloured and reflective clothing that will allow others to easily spot

you. Scarves, drawstrings and long hair can get snagged and should be tucked inside your coat. Consider wearing a neck warmer instead of a scarf.

### Helping children manage risks

- When buying a toboggan, note any age restrictions.
- Adults should supervise and accompany children while tobogganing.

Remember, both children and adults often get more adventurous after a few trips down the hill, and start taking bigger risks. By understanding how and why the risks should be managed, you can help make sure every trip down the hill is a fun one.

For more information, visit *Safe Kids Canada* at [www.safekidscanada.ca](http://www.safekidscanada.ca) or *Health Canada* at [www.hc-sc.gc.ca/cps-spc/pubs/cons/winter-hiver\\_e.html](http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/cps-spc/pubs/cons/winter-hiver_e.html).

## An Opinion: Dr. Conn's Point of View



Part of the challenging work we do at SMARTRISK is raise money for our programs. While our staff are busy running the programs that help people learn to see and manage risks appropriately, we also must find sources of funding to support this critical work. Our goal is to continue to expand our work so we can bring our messages to all of Canada's youth in their schools to help them build a lifetime of good smart risk habits. If young people can learn to take smart risks while they're driving, playing and working, the number of needless, costly and emotionally devastating injuries and fatalities will plunge. In addition to fewer lost lives and suffering, a lower injury rate will also serve to free up scarce health care resources.

But it's always been a challenge to explain to people who haven't yet given any real thought to the issue of injury and its prevention, why the issue is so pressing and why it deserves much more attention than it's gotten to date. Once they come to understand, however, that injury is taking the lives of more young Canadians than any other cause, and that most of those injuries can be prevented, they are often willing to help in whatever way they can.

For the second year in a row, our dedicated board of directors along with many volunteers, including local No Regrets students and a staff adviser and even a number of former SMARTRISK employees, came together to help host "An Evening to Make a Difference" fundraising event in November. We showcased our SMARTRISK Heroes program and I explained to people why I left my career as a pediatric heart surgeon to found SMARTRISK more than 16 years ago.

Many of our guests were invited by board members and were people I'd never met before. I considered how to explain to them why I felt it necessary to give up my surgical career. Since we were hoping our guests would see fit to invest their dollars in our programs, I thought it fair to provide them with some numbers. I spoke of how injury accounts for 70% of all teen deaths, more than all other causes combined. I talked of how 800 teens lose their lives to injury each year - equal to wiping out the population of an average high school. And I explained the economic burden of teen injuries is \$625 million a year - money that we shouldn't have to spend treating and caring for young people who are healthy and active one moment, then badly hurt or killed due to an unforeseen, catastrophic injury the next.

I explained how, if we assume it costs about \$100,000 to fund a heart transplant and (ideally) save a life, and if we assume I could do three of these every week, then I would have performed 1,500 surgeries in the last 15 years, at a total cost of about \$525 million.

By comparison, in that same time period, we've reached about 1.5 million Canadian teenagers through our SMARTRISK Heroes program, and more recently SMARTRISK No Regrets. We have invested about \$5 million in our programs for young people during these years. It costs us about \$6.25 to reach each teenager with smart risk messages. I believe that helping youths learn to take smart risks is the most effective type of preventive medicine, setting them on the path for smart, active, healthy living. And I am thrilled to report that many of our invitees responded as we had hoped, acknowledging that investing in youth is a worthwhile cause. I invite you to take up the cause with us.

*Robert Conn, President and CEO*

# Injury Interpreter



Don't just read about injury statistics.

Learn from them. Here's a roundup of recent and relevant injury news and research, from trends to statistics, fads to hard facts.

## New report details children's farm injuries

From 1990-2003, 274 children and teens were killed on the farm, according to a new report from the Canadian Agricultural Injury Surveillance Program. Young people accounted for 17% of all agricultural deaths.

Between 1990-2000, 2,828 children and youth spent at least one night in hospital for farm-related injuries. Report co-author, Louise Hagel, said no clear trend

suggests deaths are increasing or decreasing.

The data showed that children aged 1-4 are most vulnerable to a fatal injury, while youth 15-19 are at greatest risk for hospitalization. The top three causes of hospital admissions were animal events, machine entanglements and falls from height.

Source: Read the report "Fatal and hospitalized agricultural injuries among children and youth in Canada," at [www.caisp.ca](http://www.caisp.ca).

## Kids in Crocs getting caught on escalators

Popular among children and adults alike, Crocs sandals and their imitations have been implicated in 40 instances of people getting their feet caught in escalators in Japan. In six cases, victims suffered minor injuries but in one case, a 5-year-old girl broke a toe.

Japanese officials believe most of the mishaps occurred when children put their feet beyond the yellow outline painted on escalator steps and then the sandal became caught in the space at the front or side of an escalator step.

Officials continue to investigate but warn parents to ensure their children take care on escalators.

Source: "Escalator incidents linked to popular sandals," *Injury*

*Prevention* 2007;13;365.

## Aggressive, alienated youth high crash risk

A New Zealand study considered the link between personality factors among adolescents and later traffic crash involvement.

Of the over 1,000 young people studied, no significant personality predictors of crash risk existed for females. For males, high levels of aggression predicted being a driver involved in a crash and a sense of alienation predicted being a driver involved in an injury crash.

Source: *Gulliver, P et al., "Personality factors as predictors of persistent risky driving behavior and crash involvement among young adults," Injury Prevention* 2007; 13:376-381.

## HONOURING OUR SUPPORTERS

Thank you to our generous donors! **SMARTRISK Champion (\$5,000+)**

Clairvest Group Inc., CIBC World Markets - Children's Foundation, Robert Conn, Stephen Dent, John David & Signy Eaton Foundation, Charles & Rita Field-Marsham, the Ira Gluskin & Maxine Granovsky Gluskin Charitable Foundation, William & Susanne Holland, John B. MacIntyre, Osler, Hoskin & Harcourt LLP, ONEX Corporation, the P J Phelan Sailing Foundation, Mike & Lorna Robbins, Joe Robertson, William & Meredith Saunderson, Elizabeth Samuel & Samuel, Son & Co. Limited, Geordie Dalglish and the W. Garfield Weston Foundation.

**SMARTRISK Hero (\$2,500-\$4,999)** Andy Macaulay & Anne Sutherland, Panmar Trust, Jim H. Kenzie & Speyside Media Services, John Sutherland & Sons Ltd.

**SMARTRISK Guardian (\$1,000-\$2,499)** Jane Armstrong, Aronovitch Macaulay Rollo LLP, Blake E. Hutcheson & CB Richard Ellis, Stewart & Gina Burton, Peter F. Creaghan, Goldman Sachs Canada, Bryan Graham, Phil & Mary Groff, Nestor E. Kostyniuk, Mike Keilhauer, Bernita Kieffe, Bruce Langstaff, Kara MacIntosh, David Morrith & Allyson Landy, Marc Lipton, Robert Nicol & 407 ETR Concession Company Limited, Alanne O'Gallagher, Peter O'Neill, Randall Pratt, William & Cindy Quinn, RBC Foundation, Ian Sorhaug, Andrew Sheiner, Stuart Waugh, Aaron Wills.

**SMARTRISK Supporter (\$25-\$999)** William Abott, Michael Adams, Robert Armstrong, Marg & Sam Barnes, C. & V.S. Bawating, Robert E. & Joyce Blair, Bousfields Inc., Thomas Bosley, Joseph C. Canavan, Christopher & Kelly Cimek, David & Leesa Civiero, Shawn S. Cooper, Freda Colbourne, Tom & Patty Davidson, David &

Kate Debenetti, Marcel & Dorthée Dequier, Jennifer L. Dobson, Desmasdons Boatworks, Robert D. Evans, Marilyn Field-Marsham, Bill & Sharon Fielding, Dennis & Kathleen Freeman, Eric Friedman, B. Garfield French, Charles Gluckstein, Robert & Katie Gorrie, Eric Gross, Martin Guest, Stephen Hafner, Geordie & Janet Hendrie, Patrick Horan, Grant Irwin, Alan James, Peter & Susan Jugoan, C.C. Kennedy Co. Ltd., Claire Kennedy, Gary LaBine, Bruce H. Lloyd, Manitou Investment Management Ltd., Gary & Lisa Maavara, Hugh & Dorothy Macaulay, Danielle Martin, David & Dianne MacNicol, Paul & Erika Hooftman Mann, Peter MacKenzie, Robert & Heidi McKee, Gregory McCaughey, Michael McCabe, Michael & Chris McCain, McKenna Gale Capital, Medcan Health Management Inc., David Middleton, Janet Nelson, Nelson Advisors Inc., Beth Oakes, Daniel Oehy, Watson Gardner Brown & 716311 Ontario Limited, Payne Marine Ltd., Martti Paloheimo, Bill & Lauree Patrick, Frank Penfold Building

Contractor Ltd., Pointe au Baril Islanders' Association, Cathy L. Pin, Dana Porter, Ian B. Reid, Donald & Lois Ross, George Rossolatos, Kathryn Park-Russell, Derek & Rollande Ruston, Sandra Schapira, Paul Sands and Sands Restoration Services Ltd., James Shulman, Glen Silvestri, Robert & Marilyn Spindler, Elizabeth Ann Stevens, Robert W. Stevens, Thomas A. Stevens, F. Gregory & Jennifer Thompson, Joe Trager, Dave Turner, Trent Valley Sand & Stone Limited, Les Viner, Tony Walter, Madeleine & Dan Welton, John Welton, Phil Wiseman, Nigel Wright.

### DONATE TO SMARTRISK

Mail or fax this form to the address at right, or donate online at [www.smartrisk.ca](http://www.smartrisk.ca).

Registered Charity Number: 133088419RR0001

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Amount of Donation \_\_\_\_\_

## Talk to Us

790 Bay St.  
Suite 401,  
Toronto, Ontario, M5G 1N8

Call us at:  
(416) 977-7350

or fax us at:  
(416) 596-2700

or e-mail us at:  
[info@smartrisk.ca](mailto:info@smartrisk.ca)

Visit our website at:  
[www.smartrisk.ca](http://www.smartrisk.ca)