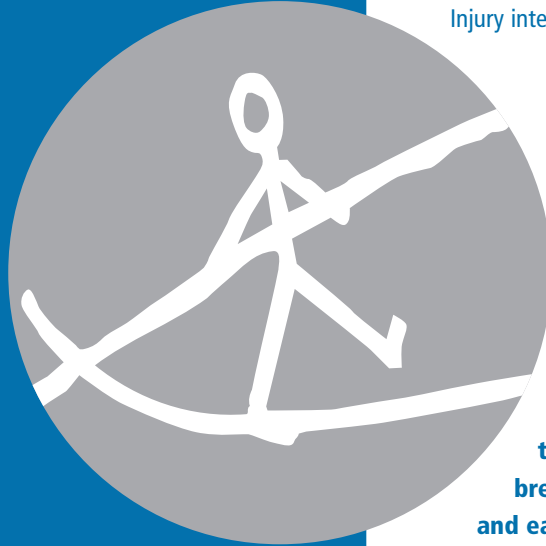


HEADS UP!

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...

Medical students	1
A profile	2
Risk radar	2
Point of View.	3
Sponsor news	3
Injury interpreter	4

SMARTRISK Heroes tours Yukon, west

SMARTRISK Heroes opened its fall tour in the Yukon, where it presented five shows in Dawson, Whitehorse and Watson Lake. It continued south into B.C. and then east, with shows in every province on the way to Ontario, where it will spend the winter break. Dates are open for spring 2009 in Ontario and eastern Canada. To book a show or for more information, e-mail smartriskheroes@smartrisk.ca or call 416-596-2703.

MEDICAL STUDENTS

SMARTRISK recruits Canada's future doctors to the cause of preventing injury

Every year, several University of Toronto second-year medical students perform research at SMARTRISK as part of their Determinants of Community Health course. This course trains students to understand health beyond the traditional health care system by having them work on a project to benefit a community agency. SMARTRISK has partnered with U of T in this program since the course began. As we begin the fall by looking forward to working with new students at SMARTRISK, we share with you highlights of the work of last year's students.

The medical students work one afternoon per week for 12-16 weeks on projects agreed to by the student, the community agency and the university. Last year, four students worked with SMARTRISK's research and evaluation team and the youth programming team to conduct small evaluation pilot projects related to SMARTRISK No Regrets.

One student evaluated the reaction to SMARTRISK HQ, our new social networking website for No Regrets youth leaders, finding that the features of the site were generally well received, but that its true value will only be seen once it is better established and thus receiving a higher flow of traffic.

A second student conducted telephone interviews with community partners who have helped bring SMARTRISK No Regrets to a number of schools, to determine what role they are playing or could play in the ongoing life of the program. Results indicated that community partners are currently playing a wide range of roles, with highly varied levels

of commitment, and would likely benefit from enhanced training and support by SMARTRISK to realize their full potential.

The two remaining students conducted surveys of staff advisers and of youth leaders to gain insight into what additional services and supports could assist each group with program sustainability. They both found that their respective groups could use some additional opportunity for personal contact and skills development, as well as additional resources to assist with such issues as local fundraising and media relations.

While these results must be interpreted with some caution, as short timelines for these student researchers necessitate smaller sample sizes than might be ideal, they nonetheless provide insights for our youth team in planning future initiatives, and for our research and evaluation team in planning further investigations of these issues.

SMARTRISK benefits from working with these students in a number of ways. While we appreciate the extra research assistance, we also value being able to educate our future doctors on the critical issue of injury prevention and the importance of helping people learn to take smart risks. In turn, we hope they will influence their colleagues and patients.

The students and the university evidently value SMARTRISK's role as well. Our contributions were recognized with an award from the medical students association last year. We look forward to continuing this productive relationship.

A PROFILE

SMARTRISK's new President and CEO, Bob Baker, learned first hand the value of taking smart risk to prevent injury. Two years ago, Bob suffered a concussion from an all-terrain vehicle crash that left him fearing he might never be able to think coherently again. It was at the close of a day at a friend's cottage. "We had spent six hours driving to the cottage that day and were enjoying a great evening of good food and camaraderie," says Bob. He decided to take the ATV out for a midnight spin. He crashed and was knocked unconscious for a few minutes. "I crossed the Stupid Line. I was quite tired and not wearing a helmet and should never have put myself in that situation. For five days, I did not think I would ever be the same again."

Fortunately, he recovered and learned from the experience. Discovering SMARTRISK and its messages was a revelation for Bob, who says he now takes "far more care to ensure I'm taking smart risks in everything I do."

Bob says, "It shocked me when I learned that not only was injury the number one cause of death for youth, but that it kills more teenagers than all other causes of death combined. In effect, we have an epidemic. I want to build on the great work that's been done and help eradicate the epidemic."

Bob has immense respect for SMARTRISK founder and CEO for 17 years, Dr. Robert Conn, and plans to continue seeking guidance and advice

from Robert as a leading expert in the field. "My mandate is to put the structures in place to raise more dollars so we can continue to do the work and build the brand so SMARTRISK is better known," Bob says.

Bob has spent his 23-year career in the charitable sector, spanning healthcare, social services and education. He brings experience to SMARTRISK in developing partnerships among various levels of government, education and the private sector. "Organizations I've worked for have been causes I've believed in," Bob says. "I'm drawn to a return on investment being to improve life, and in this particular case, to save lives. It's more rewarding."

Most recently, Bob was Executive Director of Development for Ryerson University, leading a team that raised in excess of \$27 million last year in philanthropic support. Prior to Ryerson, Bob was the National Vice President of Development for the Canadian Diabetes Association, where he led a nationwide development team of volunteers and staff charged with successfully generating more than \$32 million annually. In this position, he was also a member of CDA's senior management team and strategic planning committee, playing a key role in developing the Association's overall position and scope. Bob has also held senior positions with TVOntario and the Richard Ivey School of Business at the University of Western Ontario. He is an MBA graduate from the Richard Ivey School of Business at UWO and holds a BA in Communications Studies from the University of Windsor.

Bob learned the hard way about the value of taking smart risks while riding an ATV. As with the rest of the SMARTRISK team, Bob's goal is to help Canadians learn to take smart risks so they can enjoy life injury free – rather than learn it the hard way.

RISK RADAR

FALLS AMONG INFANTS AND TODDLERS:

How to protect your children from fall injuries in the home.

Home is traditionally thought to be a safe haven for children and their families. But for caregivers of young children, it's important to manage the risk of falls in the home, both by modifying the environment and through close supervision.

Children under five are the age group at highest risk for turning up at hospital after a fall and for these children, head injuries are most common. For example, during 2005-2006, children aged 0-4 had 35,437 emergency department visits due to falls and 347 hospitalizations. Falls from slipping, tripping and stumbling, as well as falls from one level to another, often involving furniture, were most common.

MANAGING THE RISKS

There are a number of ways to lower the risk of falls.

Consider these issues:

Heights

- Always have direct contact with infants when they are on a change table, sofa or counter top. Even small infants can manoeuvre their way to the edge of a sofa and a fall from this height can result in serious injury.
- Keep babies on the floor as often as possible, even when changing a diaper, for example. Infants in chairs, bassinets and car seats should remain on the floor at all times.
- Use safety straps when children are in strollers, car seats, high chairs, change tables and shopping carts.
- Secure dressers, bookshelves and other heavy objects, such as televisions, to the wall to prevent them from falling onto an infant or toddler.

Stairs

The stairs can be dangerous as young children see them as a source of adventure, but lack the necessary motor skills to use them safely. They can also be dangerous for infants, as there is a risk that a caregiver trips while carrying a baby up or down the stairs, often from trying to pick up something on the stairs at the same time.

- Keep clutter off the stairs and always have a free hand to hold onto the hand rail while climbing the stairs with your baby.

Safety gates

Safety gates are designed to prevent a child from falling down the stairs as well as prevent access to selected areas of the home.

- Install a stair gate at the top of each stairwell before the infant

SPONSOR NEWS

SMARTRISK is pleased to announce renewed funding from three groups to expand our No Regrets peer leadership program.

Nova Scotia Health Promotion and Protection funded No Regrets in 10 schools in the province last year. Additional funding this year brings SMARTRISK No Regrets into another five schools.

The Northeastern Ontario Trauma-Related Educational Committee has supported

SMARTRISK No Regrets since 2005. Funding for this year will extend the reach of the program by almost 5,000 high school students in five communities.

The North Peace Drug Awareness Society will sponsor three schools this year in the Fort St. John area of B.C.

Thanks also to RBC Foundation, Health Canada, Saskatchewan Government Insurance (SGI) and the Island Network for Injury Prevention for their continued support.

SMARTRISK HOSTS EVENT TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE

SMARTRISK hosts its third annual "Evening to Make a Difference" fundraiser at Toronto's Carlu on Oct. 30, featuring Dr. Dave Williams.

An Ambassador for SMARTRISK and now a member of our board of directors, Dr. Williams set a Canadian record by spending almost 18 hours outside during three space walks. Recently retired from active astronaut status, Dr. Williams will show

some remarkable video and share his views on managing risk to prevent injury. Learn how you can help SMARTRISK make a difference at www.smartrisk.ca



is four months old or starts to crawl.

- The gates used on stairs should be hardware-mounted (anchored to door jams or walls with screws and plates). It is dangerous to use pressure-mounted gates at the top of stairs. If a toddler leans against it, there is a risk of the gate falling over.
- Buy new safety gates – second-hand gates may not meet current safety standards and may have worn over time.
- The effectiveness of any safety gate depends, in large part, on proper installation and use.

Windows and balconies

- Use window locks/guards on all windows.
- Move furniture away from windows, balcony rails and counter tops to prevent children from climbing. Remember,

window screens can easily give way under the weight of a child.

It is important to keep in mind that a combination of home safety products and close supervision will minimize your child's risk of injury and that falls are just one of the injury risks children face, with poisoning and burns also major home risks.

As babies and toddlers are unpredictable, caregivers cannot rely solely on safety equipment, such as safety gates, to keep them from falling. While these products will go a long way to reduce the risk of injury, nothing replaces the close supervision of an alert adult caregiver.

For more information on reducing the risks of injury to young children, visit Safe Kids Canada at www.safekidscanada.ca

Point of View



It is time to put an end to the silent epidemic that is the number one killer of Canadian teenagers. Preventable injury kills 800 youth every year. Seventy percent of teenage deaths are a result of injury. There are more than 16,000 hospital visits annually as a result of preventable injuries. The cost? In addition to the devastating collateral damage to the person injured and their families – which is life altering – the impact for all injury on our economy is more than \$14 billion each year.

It is appalling to me that society is not taking the necessary steps to change behaviours that will reduce injury and save lives. When an infectious disease or poisoning of a community causes deaths or severe illness, the public and government call for inquiries and take action. We have had incidences in recent years in which dozens of lives were tragically lost to such events. In Canada, 15 young people are killed each week – on average – due to injury. That is five-dozen each month. So why is there no public outcry? When will the Royal Commission be called?

Not enough action has been taken – yet – because we in the injury prevention community have not made enough noise. Politicians advocate for issues their constituents know about. Journalists report on stories that are “topical”.

It is time to mobilize our communities with a collective voice to ensure Canadians are aware of the devastation caused by preventable injuries. By doing so, we will begin to change behaviours resulting in a reduction of injury and more lives being saved.

SMARTRISK can and will make a difference in changing behaviours. The work accomplished by our Founder, Robert Conn, and his team provides a solid foundation going forward. As we embark on a new chapter for SMARTRISK, our team will focus on two strategic pillars: **preventing injury to Canadian youth and advancing the research agenda for injury prevention.**

We will accomplish our goals by implementing an integrated plan with emphases on:

- Reaching every Canadian high school student – and their parents – through our Heroes show, the No Regrets peer leadership program and other direct channels of communication
- Influencing and motivating federal and provincial governments to take action by adopting and funding a National Strategy for Injury Prevention with a goal to ensure that Canada has the lowest injury rates of any country in the world
- Positioning the injury prevention cause for greater visibility to support our call to action through media relations and promotional activities
- Developing a sustainable funding model to support our initiatives
- Building a committed national grassroots network to advance our goals.

Let us now begin to work together to eradicate this epidemic. It is time.

*Bob Baker, President and CEO,
SMARTRISK*

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.

Child cycling deaths fall with helmet law

New research suggests Ontario's bicycle helmet legislation has helped reduce the number of children killed in cycling crashes. An average of six child cyclists under the age of 16 have lost their lives each year since the law took effect in 1995; that's compared to 13 annually before the law was passed requiring cyclists under 18 to wear helmets.

Bike deaths did not fall for those over 16. The researchers suggest this study supports extending the bike helmet law to cyclists of all ages, as some provinces, including B.C., have done.

Source: Wesson, D.E. et al., "Trends in Pediatric and Adult Bicycling Deaths Before and After Passage of a Bicycle Helmet Law" *Pediatrics* 2008; 122:605-610.

Students don't believe they're at risk

Some insights into why teen injury rates are so high are offered in new research among Toronto high school students aged 15-17, exposed to an injury prevention program, Think First - Party Later.

Teens commonly believed that if they were hurt, the medical system would save them, with their youth protecting them from death. Many didn't see the risks in their lives, figuring that the cars they drive are safe and that the odds of them getting hurt in a crash were very small. Students said they rarely or never thought about injury. The students were surprised to learn that injury-related death or disability is much more frequent among youth than older people.

The good news is that meeting

with an injury survivor peer made a big impact on the students, who began to understand that they were, in fact, at risk for injury.

Source: Monneuse, O.J.Y. et al, "Attitudes about Injury among High School Students," *J Am Coll Surg* 2008;207:179-184.

Study of studies compiled on cellphones

As various provinces, states and countries continue to ban – or consider bans – on driving while talking on cellphones, (at least handheld cells), Calgary researchers have compiled the evidence to date and found that slower reaction times are the main problem.

The researchers found 33 studies that met inclusion criteria to include in their meta-analysis. A mean increase in reaction time of a quarter second was found in all types of phone-related tasks, on both handheld and hands-free phones. In addition, drivers do not compensate for that expected slower reaction time by increasing following distances or reducing speed, the authors found.

While hands-free phones seem no

less risky than handheld ones, there are inherent problems in passing legislation banning hands-free phones, the authors acknowledge, including how police officers would spot a driver on the phone. They note that hands-free use has the potential to be confused with passenger conversation – which has also been found to be risky – yet which society regards as acceptable.

Source: Caird, J.K. et al., "A Meta-analysis of the effects of phones on driver performance," *Accident Analysis and Prevention* 2008;40:1282-1293.

Register for Ontario's injury conference

The Ontario Injury Prevention Conference 2008, Blazing Trails - Exploring New Frontiers in Injury Prevention has a focus this year on skill building, practical applications and best practices.

The Nov. 16-18 conference in Toronto will feature an ATV stream as a case study to use as a template for best practice development for any injury issue. See www.oipc.org for more information and to register.

Talk to Us

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

Call us at:
(416) 977-7350
1-888-537-7777

Fax us at:
(416) 596-2700

E-mail us at:
info@smartrisk.ca

Visit our website at:
www.smartrisk.ca

DONATE TO SMARTRISK

\$2,500 \$1,000 \$500 \$250 \$125 Other _____

Name _____

Address _____

E-mail _____

Date _____

I wish to have my name included as a donor in print and electronic materials, including the SMARTRISK website.

I wish to remain anonymous in donor recognition listings.

Mail or fax this form to the address above, or donate online at www.smartrisk.ca.

I would like to make my gift with:

Personal cheque, enclosed Corporate cheque, enclosed

Post-dated cheque(s), enclosed

Visa MasterCard

Card #

Expiry Date: _____

Signature: _____

Yes, I would like to become a member of the SMARTRISK Monthly Giving Plan. Please begin deducting \$_____ on the 15th day of _____ (month), _____ (year) from my credit card (info above).

All gifts to SMARTRISK qualify for income tax deduction.
Registered Charity Number: 133088419RR0001