



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **Injury Alliance applauds the federal government for commitment to national injury prevention strategy for children**

TORONTO (March 4, 2010) – Preventable injuries are the leading cause of death in young Canadians. Safe Communities Canada, Safe Kids Canada, SMARTRISK and ThinkFirst Canada – the four national injury prevention organizations known as the Injury Alliance – congratulate the Government of Canada for its bold commitment to strategic action on injury prevention for children in yesterday’s Speech from the Throne.

“ Tragically, an estimated 90 percent of all unintentional injuries are preventable,” says Rebecca Nesdale-Tucker of ThinkFirst Canada. “We urgently need strategic action to create a safer Canada because life after a traumatic injury is never the same.”

Injury prevention organizations, including the Injury Alliance members and the Canadian Collaborating Centres for Injury Prevention, seek a society free of catastrophic injury. These organizations all work to help families, as well as institutions, invest in research and apply proven solutions to address the preventable causes of injury.

“With investment in proven solutions, we can build on the foundations of injury prevention in Canada and develop sustainable strategies to address the burden of injury in this country, says Paul Kells of Safe Communities Canada.

“As the Injury Alliance we are committed to applying our organizations’ collective knowledge, passion and experience in health promotion and injury prevention to reduce the devastation suffered by thousands of young Canadians every year. This announcement offers us a significant opportunity to use our demonstrated skills in community development, social planning and social marketing; our vast network of organizations, professionals and volunteers across Canada and the world; and our recognized reputations as collaborative national leaders,” says Pamela Fuselli of Safe Kids Canada.

“Preventable injuries in Canada cost our economy \$19.8 billion annually, more than any other health challenge,” says Robert Baker of SMARTRISK. “We need to work together to reduce this burden on individuals and society.”

**Safe Communities Canada** is a national charitable organization dedicated to helping communities across the country build the capacity and resources they will need as they commit to mounting coordinated, collaborative programs designed to reduce the pain and cost of injury and promote a culture of safety for all their citizens. Safe Communities Canada is an accredited certifying centre for the World Health Organization Collaborating Centre on Community Safety Promotion.

**Safe Kids Canada**

Safe Kids Canada's mission is to lead and inspire a culture of safety across the country in order to reduce unintentional injuries, the leading cause of death among children and youth in Canada. As a national leader, Safe Kids Canada uses a collaborative and innovative approach to develop partnerships, conduct research, educate and advocate to prevent serious injuries among children, youth and their families. Our vision is *Healthier Children. Fewer Injuries. A Safer Canada*. Safe Kids Canada is the national injury prevention program of The Hospital for Sick Children.

**SMARTRISK** is a national charity whose vision is a Canada where youth enjoy life to the fullest, injury free. We empower youth through education, programming and policy change to recognize and manage their risks of injury in the smartest way possible. SMARTRISK is dedicated to preventing injuries and saving lives by helping Canadians manage risk, primarily through our youth focused SMARTRISK No Regrets program, which is based on five simple choices: Buckle Up, Look First, Wear the Gear, Get Trained and Drive Sober.

**ThinkFirst Canada** is a national, charitable organization dedicated to preventing brain and spinal cord injury. Founded in 1992 by renowned neurosurgeon, Dr. Charles Tator, ThinkFirst Canada continues to be an injury prevention leader encouraging children, youth and those who care about them to be active and safe. ThinkFirst advocates for proven injury prevention strategies including helmet use. At the heart of ThinkFirst Canada are 19 Chapters that stretch across the country. ThinkFirst's injury prevention message is promoted through sport programs, schools, community presentations, concussion education and with the help of VIPs (Voices for Injury Prevention), a dedicated group of injury survivors who share the message that prevention is the only cure.

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