

Ontario Injury spotlight

A newsletter for injury prevention practitioners in Ontario

JANUARY - FEBRUARY 2009

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From the Centre

Practitioners urged not to avoid fights

Injury prevention practitioners should not fear picking public fights to get their issues on the agenda, delegates to the 2008 Ontario Injury Prevention Conference, Nov. 16-18 in Toronto, heard. Keynote speaker, author and *Globe and Mail* public health reporter, André Picard, spoke to why injury prevention is "a policy area woefully neglected by politicians" and people in general.

The answer lies mainly in better communication, he suggested. Approach the media with stories that offer the numbers and research but also use stories of real people affected by injury. Build alliances with others in injury and other affected groups, he added, and feel free to "pick fights" in public with people who don't see injury as an issue to be tackled, such as the Don Cherrys of the world.

Other highlights of the conference included keynote speakers Michael Adams, Environics president, speaking on the topic of his best-selling book, *Unlikely Utopia: The Surprising Triumph of Canadian Pluralism*; and retired OPP Sgt. Cam Woolley, now with CP24, who discussed how attitudes towards traffic deaths have evolved over the years with people now less accepting of preventable deaths.

Other conference highlights included:

- the all-terrain vehicle stream that ran throughout the conference and served as a model for an evidence-based approach to any injury prevention issue;
- ThinkFirst Foundation founder, neurosurgeon Dr. Charles Tator, was cheered by delegates when it was announced he is to be inducted into the Canadian Medical Hall of Fame.

Injury curricula offered in Toronto

The Ontario Injury Prevention Resource Centre offers several training opportunities in Toronto this winter. Contact Claude Meurehg for information at 416-596-2705 or cmeurehg@smartrisk.ca.

- The Canadian Falls Prevention Curriculum, Jan. 12-13. This two-day workshop offers participants the knowledge and skills needed to operate from an evidence-based approach to seniors falls and fall-related injury prevention.
- The Canadian Injury Prevention Curriculum, Feb. 23-24. This two-day workshop provides an understanding of the theory and practice of injury prevention and the tools needed to develop and implement effective programs.
- The CFPC Facilitators Course, March 12-13. This two-day workshop prepares graduates of the falls curriculum for certi-

fication as a CFPC Facilitator through presentations and group discussion.

Resources

Safety newsletter a hit with parents

Child Safety Middlesex London always receives positive reviews from readers of its seasonal newsletter, *Safety Never Hurts*, says Jan Tomlinson of the Middlesex-London Health Unit, who provides this report. Contact Jan at 519-663-5317, ext. 2278.

Debuting in 2003 as part of an Early Childhood Development Injury Prevention Project, the newsletter features "hot" topics with prevention strategies to reduce injury risk. Based on feedback from readers and professional partners, newsletter articles are brief with a literacy level of Grade 7 or below. Links are provided to local and national partner websites for more in-depth information. More than 13,000 copies of *Safety Never Hurts*, in both French and English, are distributed twice yearly to parents and caregivers via schools, physicians, early childhood educators, etc.

The newsletter is a collaborative effort, with articles by community partners. A renewed partnership with London Health Sciences Centre' Trauma Program, provides funding for the newsletter through the Children's Health Foundation. See the newsletter at www.healthunit.com/childsafety.



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From the Field

Kingston campaign targets parents of tots

Kingston, Frontenac and Lennox & Addington Public Health has launched its first new agency-wide injury prevention campaign into the Kingston area: *Injury Free – Be There, Be Aware, Be Prepared*. Thank you to Tanya Beattie for this report. Contact her for more information at 613-549-1232, ext. 293 or tbeattie@kflpublichealth.ca

The campaign was developed by the Family Health Team. These first messages being shared with our community are targeted at parents of children under six years of age and give examples of how parents can ensure the safety of their children by being there to supervise their children, being aware of risks for injury in their children's environment and being prepared with extra safety precautions for those risks that cannot be removed. The campaign is running inside all 40 City of Kingston buses and on the outside of two city buses that rotate routes, to ensure complete coverage in the community. Plans to further develop the concept include:

- Using the logo and messaging to promote all injury prevention information consistently throughout KFL&A.
- Creating key injury prevention messages for all public health staff to further ensure consistent messaging across the agency.
- Working with the local hospital to gather injury data.
- Holding regular meetings across teams at KFL&A who are involved in injury prevention programming.

Our Partners in Action

Safe Kids Week 2009 covers product safety

Safe Kids Week 2009 will be held from May 25-31, with a focus on product safety. Product-related injuries are a leading cause of injury for children under age 14. The campaign will emphasize education, engineering and enforcement solutions to reduce product-related injuries and fatalities.

Each year, hundreds of community organizations across Canada join Safe Kids Canada to participate in this large-scale injury prevention awareness campaign. Participation can range from distributing the free Safe Kids

Week resource to organizing a recommended event or activity. Registered partners can: order and receive free resources on product safety to support Safe Kids Week activities, apply for grant money in January 2009, use step-by-step guides for suggested community activities and participate in a free media training session. To register, visit www.safekidscanada.ca, contact Denyse Boxell at 416-813-5118 or email her at safekids.week@sickkids.ca

Ontario publishes new health standards

The new Ontario Public Health Standards are now in the hands of all the province's 36 boards of health. The standards establish the minimum requirements for fundamental public health programs and services, which include assessment and surveillance, health promotion and policy development, disease and injury prevention and health protection.

The public health standards and 26 protocols are available to download from the [Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care's website](http://www.health.gov.on.ca). As of Jan. 1, these standards replace the Mandatory Health Programs and Services Guidelines, 1997.

In his letter announcing the standards, Chief Medical Officer of Health, Dr. David Williams said they are "intended to achieve provincial consistency where required, while fostering local-level responsiveness and flexibility where appropriate."

The stated goal of the prevention of injury and substance misuse standard is to "reduce the frequency, severity and impact of preventable injury and of substance misuse." Boards of health are required to analyze surveillance data in the areas of alcohol and other substances, falls, road safety and other areas of public health importance for the prevention of injury. In addition, staff are to work with community partners to influence development and implementation of health policies and programs and safe and supportive environments addressing the same areas. A comprehensive health promotion approach is to be used to increase the capacity of priority populations to prevent injury and substance misuse. Public awareness of prevention of injury and substance misuse is to be increased in the same areas.

The standards are a joint initiative of the Ministry of Health Promotion, the Ministry of Children and Youth Services and the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care.

Calendar

PARC Physical Activity Symposium 2009, Toronto, March 4-5

This annual, provincial training event is designed for physical activity promoters across Ontario.

Register at www.ophea.net/parc

Alcohol: No Ordinary Commodity, Toronto, March 5

This sixth annual forum addresses Alcohol Across the Life Span: Current Research and Practical Applications for Alcohol Related Harm with a focus on Chronic Disease and Injury Prevention.

Visit Apolnet for information

Canadian Injury Prevention and Safety Promotion Conference, Vancouver, Nov. 5-6

Save the date! Safe Communities Canada, Safe Kids Canada, SMARTRISK, ThinkFirst Foundation of Canada and local co-hosts, B.C. Injury Research & Prevention Unit and the Ministry of Healthy Living and Sport, are planning an Olympic-calibre event.

Contact Peter O'Neill at 416-596-2721 or email poneill@smartrisk.ca

Highlights from the Ontario Injury Compass

November: Self-poisoning injuries

Self-inflicted poisoning injuries resulted in 12,028 emergency department visits and 5,890 hospitalizations in Ontario during 2005-2006. Females accounted for close to two-thirds of both.

Preventive measures include promoting legislation to limit over-the-counter acetaminophen sales and making effective treatment programs widely available.

December: Snowmobile injuries

Snowmobiling injuries led to 2,096 emergency department visits and 268 hospitalizations in Ontario in 2005-2006. Males accounted for 75% of emergency visits and 84% of hospitalizations. Teen males had the highest numbers of emergency department visits and males in their early 30s had the most hospitalizations.

Prevention tips include ensuring that riders plan ahead; wear protective gear; get trained; and avoid alcohol, drugs and riding alone.

Each month, the Ontario Injury Compass provides statistics and prevention tips on specific injury topics to practitioners in Ontario. To subscribe to the Ontario Injury Compass electronically, or to read back issues, visit www.oninjuryresources.ca