

Ontario Injury spotlight

A newsletter for injury prevention practitioners in Ontario

January-February 2008

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From the Centre **Needs and capacity: what you told us**

With the new year comes the desire to look ahead and plan for the next year and that's also what's happening at the Ontario Injury Prevention Resource Centre. The results of the recent needs/capacity survey will help to inform planning for 2008-2009 at the Centre.

The survey content revolved around the new public health standards for injury prevention and substance misuse prevention. Thanks to the 90 people who responded! Highlights follow:

- Where are skills strong already and where is help needed? You ranked collaboration with partners at the top of skills capacities for practitioners, their organizations and community partners. Evaluation and conducting epidemiological analysis of surveillance data rated lowest.
- Which injury topics are strong and which ones need work? Injury prevention practitioners say they have the highest capacity in alcohol-related injuries and the lowest in falls among adults. Their organizations have the greatest capacity in falls among older adults and the lowest for falls among youth. Community partners were rated as having the highest capacity to take action in road safety and the least to work in falls among youth, violence and/or suicide.

- What are your needs? You said it would be extremely useful for the Resource Centre to support networking opportunities among practitioners, community partners and injury prevention experts. You want training on specific injury topics, social marketing and setting injury priorities. Data reports on local, regional and provincial injury issues are extremely useful, as is help analyzing data, best practices and information on existing programs.
- Top five Centre resources practitioners want to use are: the website's Forum, consultations, the Spotlight, the Ontario Injury Prevention Conference and the Canadian Injury Prevention Curriculum.

Learning Series: seniors' falls next

The Jan. 24 session of the SMARTRISK Learning Series is on seniors' falls, presented by Aleksandra Zecevic of the University of Western Ontario. Dr. Zecevic works on research related to reducing falls.

The Feb. 27 session is Alcohol Liability, presented by Western University law professor Robert Solomon, who is also national director of legal policy for Mothers Against Drunk Driving.

Register online at www.oninjuryresources.ca or for more information, contact Nadja Gale at learning@oninjuryresources.ca.

From the Field **Think and Drive, says Niagara Region**

With the Niagara Region having one of the highest rates of fatal and serious injury motor vehicle collisions in Ontario, the Regional Niagara Road Safety Committee formed in 2003 to address road safety. Members include the Canadian Automobile Association, the region's public health and public works departments and police service.

The committee determined that speed, driver error and impairment are the main causes of these serious collisions, with most involving male drivers (75%) and occurring on rural roads (58%). It developed a five-year strategic plan to cut fatal and serious collisions by 10% in Niagara. The plan uses a comprehensive injury prevention approach that includes education, enforcement, engineering and advocacy.

The Think and Drive social marketing campaign is part of that strategy. The campaign goal is to raise awareness of the road safety problem, to educate drivers about how they can make a difference and to influence their driving attitudes and behaviours. The campaign was piloted in 2006 in one of 12 Niagara municipalities. Evaluation results showed respondents became more aware of the road safety problem, more knowledgeable about how they could improve road safety and increased their intentions to

change their driving attitudes and behaviours.

Following the pilot's success, on Oct. 16, Think and Drive was launched across the Niagara region, along with an interactive website, www.thinkanddrive.net

The website features a road safety challenge in which drivers can discover their personal "risk factor" to find out what may be lurking in their own driving behaviour. A Niagara collision map demonstrates how widespread collisions are across the region. The site provides updated road safety information, community news and events and introduces various contests that will continue throughout the campaign.

Many community partners are involved in the campaign and the Ontario Ministry of Transportation provides ongoing assistance and support. For more information, contact Linda Beyer, Chair, Regional Niagara Road Safety Committee, at 905-688-8248, ext. 7360 or linda.beyer@regional.niagara.on.ca.

Seatbelt challenge offers \$1,000 prizes

The 95% Challenge is a new seatbelt initiative from the Transportation Ministry's Road Safety Marketing Office. High school students are invited to plan, develop and implement seatbelt public education initiatives in their schools. The idea is to move seatbelt use up to at least 95%.

The Ministry has developed a package for schools, complete with facts and statistics and suggested activities. Students are also free to come up with their own activities.

Until April 4, 2008, students can submit their activities to the Ministry and compete for one of four \$1,000 prizes, funded by Insurance Bureau of Canada. Visit the Resource Centre website, and download the package in the [Upcoming Events](#) section in the Forum. For more information, contact Natalie Zeitoun at 416-235-4808 or by e-mail at Natalie.Zeitoun@ontario.ca

Research

Youth and alcohol trends report out

The [Alcohol Policy Network](#) has published a new report, *Alcohol and Youth Trends: Implications for Public Health*. The report sought to identify current patterns of alcohol use in Ontario, common reasons to drink and the

consequences of alcohol use among young people. A literature review was conducted, along with interviews with professionals and youths. The research found that a positive family environment, with consistent monitoring and rule setting, had a significant impact on whether youth chose to drink or not.

In addition to exploring the factors that affect whether young people choose to drink alcohol or not, the authors offer a number of recommendations, which they note are in line with those in the proposed National Alcohol Strategy.

Our Partners in Action

Safe Kids to form advocacy groups

Delegates interested in learning more about advocacy packed a workshop session run by Safe Kids Canada at November's Canadian Injury Prevention and Safety Promotion Conference. With a history of successful advocacy campaigns under its belt, including lowering hot water temperatures, banning baby walkers and most recently, lobbying for four-sided pool fencing, delegates were eager to learn from the agency's successes.

For those unable to attend, visit the public policy and advocacy section on the [Safe Kids website](#). Here, you will find resources for your advocacy efforts, including an Advocacy 101 Power Point presentation and a variety of resources by topic.

In addition, Safe Kids is planning to put together a group of people and organizations interested in advocacy for child and youth injury prevention under the name Taking Action for Safe Kids, or TASK.

For more information, contact Rebecca Nesdale-Tucker at 416-831-7286, or by e-mail at rebecca.nesdale-tucker@sickkids.ca or call Daniel Tiburcio at 416-813-7890.

Rural safety program launched in Ontario

Still with Safe Kids, the agency has launched its Ontario Children's Rural Safety Program, with support from the Ministry of Health Promotion. Safe Kids is offering resources to community professionals who work with farm families with children seven to 12 years old. Partners can order posters, booklets and gain access to radio and television ads to run in local media outlets. For more information, contact Kevin de Souza at 416-813-7654, ext. 1735.

Calendar

9th World Conference on Injury Prevention and Safety Promotion: March 15-18, 2008

This conference in Merida, Mexico, will give special attention to the processes of globalization and their implications for injuries and violence.

www.safety2008mx.info
safety2008@insp.mx

Workplace Health Promotion Annual Symposium: March 18-19, 2008

This two-day symposium will be delivered by The Health Communication Unit's Workplace Health Promotion Project and the Ontario Healthy Workplace Coalition in Toronto.

<http://www.thcu.ca/>
416-978-0522
hc.unit@utoronto.ca

Highlights from the Ontario Injury Compass

November: Head injuries

A total of 16,603 visits to Ontario emergency departments and 5,113 hospitalizations in 2004-2005 were for traumatic head injuries, most commonly as a result of unintentional falls.

Emergency room peaks in injury were seen among 9-22-year-olds and infants while hospitalizations peaked among infants, adults 77-83 years of age and teens 17-19.

Prevention tips include wearing helmets and preventing shaken baby syndrome.

December: Injuries among children

Children under 15 years of age made 281,437 visits to Ontario emergency departments during 2005-2006. A total of 6,145 children were hospitalized that year.

Among both boys and girls, 14-year-olds suffered the most injuries, both for emergency department visits and hospitalizations. Unintentional falls were the most common cause of injury.

Managing the risk involves prevention tips for the leading causes of childhood injury: slips and trips, playground falls, falls from furniture and cycling injuries.

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