

# IMPACT ON INJURIES

## Manitoba's Injury Prevention Newsletter

November/December 2005

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### ● **New Canadian Standard for Safer Cigarettes**

On September 30, 2005, Canada passed new legislation to reduce the fire hazards associated with cigarettes. The new legislation specifies a standard for ignition propensity. The regulation specifies that "Every manufacturer shall ensure that the cigarettes of every brand that it manufactures on or after October 1, 2005 burn their full length no more than 25% of the time when tested on 10 layers of filter paper using ASTM International Standard Test Method for Measuring the Ignition Strength of cigarettes.

Smokers' materials are the leading cause of residential fire-related fatalities and loss in Canada. The Office of the Fire Commissioner statistics show that during 2000-2004 in Manitoba, smokers' materials caused 669 fires, resulting in 21 fatalities, 107 injuries and an estimated \$16,778,774 loss of property.

Please note that the new standard does not make cigarettes fire-safe; any burning object is never completely safe from fire.

For more information, visit [www.gosmokefree.ca](http://www.gosmokefree.ca)

### ● **Canadian Injury Prevention & Safety Promotion Conference**

This year, I had the privilege of attending my first Canadian Injury Prevention and Safety Promotion Conference. It was the best-attended National IP conference yet, with over 600 delegates representing all levels of injury prevention stakeholders from across Canada. The conference was jointly planned by the national injury prevention associations: SMARTRISK, Safe Kids Canada, Safe Communities Foundation and ThinkFirst.

The conference theme was "From Evidence to Action" and the plenary speakers represented a range of interests. Stephen Lewis encouraged us to continue to fight the good fight, to use solid, irrefutable data and to put a face to our cause. Michael Ungar spoke about the resilience of youth and some of the lessons learned from working with at-risk youth. Tim Vandenberg provided a funny, thought provoking talk about the need for quality, effective approaches to injury prevention and the need for each of us, as IP people, to consistently model safe behaviors in all areas of our lives. IMPACT staff also made presentations. Dr. Lynne Warda spoke on Best Practices to Prevent Injuries in Manitoba; Development and Validation of a Safety Audit for Pediatric Health Care Facilities; and Development of National Injury Indicators. Shawn Feely spoke on Developing an Injury Prevention Strategy for First Nations in Manitoba and on Drowning Prevention: Applying Best Practices to Coordinated Safety Planning. Gemma Briggs presented Safe Transportation of Children Following Inpatient Care.

Throughout the conference, there was ongoing discussion about the need for a Canadian Injury Prevention Strategy. It was abundantly clear that now is the time for action. If you haven't yet completed a fax/e-mail letter of support to your selected government officials, please do it now. Go to [www.timeforaction.ca](http://www.timeforaction.ca) for the form letter. The website actually allows you to personalize the letter, send it to the politician of your choice, and faxes and e-mails your completed letter. You don't even need to buy a stamp. Encourage your family, friends and co-workers to register their support as well. A groundswell of support is needed to put the invisible epidemic of injuries on the public agenda.

We had an interesting experience on the return trip from the conference. Due to severe electrical storm in Toronto, co-worker Gemma Briggs, two community workers from Flin Flon and I (along with the rest of the passengers) were forced to stay on the plane on the airport tarmac for three hours until the lightning stopped, the "red alert" was lifted and it was deemed safe for the ground crew to resume their outside activities. At first, I was feeling agitated and put out, but then I realized that this was workplace safety in action. An appropriate ending to our trip!

- Wendy French, IMPACT

## • Safer Playgrounds for Brandon & Area

One of the initiatives of Brandon and Area Safe Community Coalition is a Playground Safety Advisory Committee that has evolved into a true partnership between the City of Brandon, Brandon School Division, local daycares and Manitoba Culture Heritage and Tourism. Like most communities, Brandon and area has had playgrounds for many years. One of the things our committee discovered was there are more playgrounds than we realized. Not only do the school division and city manage play spaces but nearly every day care has some designated play space. This has resulted in our trained inspectors now offering their services to an expanded number of local playgrounds.

The Playground Safety Advisory Committee is also in the process of designing safety message signage for all playgrounds, as well as planning to have a presence at the annual Pre-School Wellness Fair. Another valuable addition to our efforts will be a data collection and review process we are developing with the Brandon Regional Health Authority. We believe this will help us better understand the extent of the injury situation in our play spaces. We realize this is a long-term project as we begin to reshape people's understanding, thinking and actions related to childhood play spaces and by developing a community partnership, we believe it will stand the test of time.

Brian Kayes  
Brandon & Area Safe  
Communities

## • 8th Annual Safe Communities Conference

Each year a designated Safe Community hosts the National Safe Communities Conference. This year, three Safe Communities coalitions, Halifax, South Shore and Annapolis Valley, welcomed the network. This was my first SC conference and I was pleased to attend as the Manitoba Regional Coordinator. There is so much happening within Safe Communities around Canada. This ½ day conference gave me an opportunity to connect with other regional coordinators, Safe Community staff as well as representatives from many designated communities. I was so impressed with the commitment, organization and planning that each of these Safe Communities brought to the table. There are currently 48 designated Safe Communities in Canada, which account for approximately 22% of the national population. To date, Brandon & Area is the only designated Safe Community in Manitoba. I know that many communities are already actively involved in addressing injuries. Safe Communities offers support and a coordinated approach to long-term sustainable activity. If you are interested in finding out more, please call me at 787-1907.

- Wendy French

## • New "Action on Injuries" Website

The Working Party on Accidents and Injuries (WP-A1) has launched a new website to support public health activities that seek to reduce all accidents and injuries in the European Union. This website is targeted at a broad group of interested parties from injury prevention experts to stakeholders, from politicians to European citizens. It is supported by DG Health and Consumer Protection of the European Commission.

The website contains information on the vision and strategy, on current and finalised injury prevention projects supported by the European commission and lists contact details of Working Party members, Nations Data Administrators and field-related institutes. It includes a comprehensive injury prevention library, electronic versions of Action on Injury newsletter and an International Events section. Log on to [www.actiononinjuries.org](http://www.actiononinjuries.org).



## • Canadian Falls Prevention Curriculum

Researchers across Canada are joining together to create a Canadian Falls prevention Curriculum. The \$300,000 three-year project, funded by the Public Health Agency of Canada's Population Health Fund, will be a unique national initiative aimed at providing health professionals and community practitioners with proven methods of preventing falls among seniors.

The British Columbia Injury Research and Prevention Unit is working with the Alberta Centre for Injury Control and Research and the Centres of Aging at the Universities of PEI and Victoria to create the curriculum. A two-day pilot course will be pilot tested in Vancouver and Halifax and revised accordingly. A final pilot will be conducted in Ottawa. Once finalized, the course will be coordinated through BCIRPU and delivered by trained facilitators across the country on a cost recovery basis.

## • Manitoba's GDL program reduces injuries

A new Manitoba Public Insurance study of our province's Graduated Driver Licensing (GDL) Program, showed that young drivers were half as likely to be in crashes and that the number of injuries and deaths has been reduced. Four year trends show the program is meeting its objectives of saving lives and reducing injuries. The findings of the internal review show:

- Injuries fell by 57.4 per cent
- Damage claims dropped 55.2 per cent
- Crashes were reduced by 54.7 per cent, and
- Convictions declined by 69.4 per cent.

The findings are based on an internal review of claims information, driver records and convictions of drivers 15-19 years of age between 2000 and 2004. The data compared the experience of young drivers before GDL came into effect (2000-02) with those of young drivers after implementation (2003-04). Young drivers comprise 77 per cent of all participants of the GDL program.

An earlier review in 2003 also showed the program reduced crash rates, fatalities and injuries. A comprehensive review will be conducted in 2007 after the first group of drivers enrolled in GDL has been driving with no restrictions for a full year.

## • Booster Seat resource

The U.S. National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) has just updated "A Parent's Guide to Booster Seats". This simple, comprehensive two page information sheet is now available online in the Educational Materials section of NHTSA's Child Passenger Safety Webpage at [www.nhtsa.dot.gov/people/injury/childps/ParentGuide2005/index.htm](http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov/people/injury/childps/ParentGuide2005/index.htm)

## • Child Passenger Safety: Fact and Trend Report

The first annual Partners for Child Passenger Safety Fact and Trend Report was just released by the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia (CHOP). The report provides updated statistics and describes trends about children involved in U.S. motor vehicle crashes from 1999 to 2004. This is the world's largest study of children in crashes and was a result of a partnership between CHOP and State Farm Insurance Companies. The data were collected from January 1 – December 31, 2004 and trends were identified using data from 1999 – 2004.

Some of the findings were:

- From 1999-2004, child restraint use for all children to 8 years of age increased from 51 to 69%.
- 14% of children under age 13 rode in the front seat in 2004
- Front seating for children aged 4-8 years of age declined from 19% in 1999 to 7% in 2004
- As children age, their risk of being injured in a crash rises.
- Injuries to children were most common in side-impact crashes.
- The percentage of SUVs in crashes increased from 15% in 1999 to 26% in 2004
- 93% of the vehicles enrolled had driver airbags, 85% had passenger airbags, 69% had second generation airbags, and 31% were equipped with LATCH.
- Of the study's participants, most crashes occurred with one child passenger, 60% of the children involved were 8 years old or younger, 70% of the drivers were between 25 and 44 years old, 71% were women, and 76% were parents, stepparents or foster parents.
- Frontal crashes accounted for the highest percentage of crashes.

A full PDF copy of the report is available on the CHOP website at [http://www.chop.edu/traumalink/pcps/pdf/tl\\_trend\\_report.pdf](http://www.chop.edu/traumalink/pcps/pdf/tl_trend_report.pdf).

## • Smart Soccer with ThinkFirst

ThinkFirst Canada, in consultation with the Canadian Soccer Association, has developed *Smart Soccer*, an injury prevention program designed for soccer players (ages 6 – 14), and their parents, teachers and coaches. This program involves an education booklet that aims to enhance knowledge of injury prevention in soccer, and to provide important safety-related information on issues such as equipment, weather, technique, skill, and injury. The education booklet is currently in draft format and ThinkFirst is asking for feedback and suggestions before it is finalized. Comments from all audiences such as athletes, parents, coaches, teachers, and injury prevention experts, are welcomed by ThinkFirst Canada. Download your free copy of the booklet today from [www.thinkfirst.ca](http://www.thinkfirst.ca) and provide your feedback by completing the survey from the ThinkFirst homepage link. Your input is important and will help ThinkFirst Canada develop the program so that soccer is a safe and healthy activity for Canadian children.

For more information about the *Smart Soccer* program, the ThinkFirst Canada National Office at 1-800-335-6076 or visit [www.thinkfirst.ca](http://www.thinkfirst.ca)"

**thinkfirst**  **pensez d'abord**  
CANADA



## • Safe Kids and CN launch Safe Crossing Program

On October 27<sup>th</sup>, Winnipeg was one of ten launch sites for the new Safe Crossing Program developed by Safe Kids Canada and CN. The new program encourages parents, educators and caregivers to teach children how to cross railway tracks safely. The Safe Crossing Program includes a parent tip sheet, brochure, poster and web-based toolkit filled with information such as educational activities and topics for conversation. It is available to the public at [www.safekidscanada.ca](http://www.safekidscanada.ca) or by calling 1-888-SAFE-TIPS (723-3847).

The Safe Crossing Program is part of CN's All Aboard for Safety community education program in which CN police officers have been promoting rail safety for over 20 years. Every year, CN police officers make All Aboard for Safety presentations to more than 225,000 students and adults in schools and at community events in Canada and the United States.

Key concepts are:

- Always cross at a railway crossing with lights, gates and/or the crossbuck sign.
- Listen for the warning bell and train whistles
- Look both ways before crossing tracks
- If one train passes, make sure that a second train is not approaching on the same or another track
- Walking or playing on or near tracks is dangerous and illegal.

*Each year in Canada about 100 people are killed and another 100 are injured in train –related collisions.*



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**IMPACT's core funding is provided by  
Children's Hospital Foundation.**

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