

# Tips for promoting injury prevention in your practice!

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The overall focus of emergency care is assessment, diagnosis and treatment. Injury prevention is not usually a big part of clinical practice. While nurses and physicians are focused on the knowledge and skills needed to successfully and efficiently treat the patient, there may be some “teachable moments” to help patients avoid a future injury. Injury prevention strategies also include initiatives to reduce injury severity, such as helmets and seat belts — the device does not prevent the crash, but reduces the severity of injury should a crash occur.

Injury prevention does work, but over time. Safe Kids Canada released their report, *Child & Youth Unintentional Injury: 10 Years in Review 1994-2003* during Safe Kids Week June 5-11, 2006. The overall injury death rate among children from birth to age 14 declined by 37% between 1994 and 2003. The overall rate of injury hospitalizations from birth to age 14 declined 34% during that same period. The three leading causes of injury-related death are motor vehicle collisions (17%), drowning (15%) and threats to breathing (11%) such as suffocation, choking and strangulations. Falls account for nearly half (44%) of all injury-related hospital admissions, and occur at home, school and on playgrounds. Although the results are encouraging, the report reminds us that injury rates continue to be unacceptably high, and injury is an important public health issue. There is still plenty more that needs to be done.

Emergency nurses are a key target audience to become involved in injury prevention efforts in their hospitals and out into their communities. We are credible sources, see the consequences of injury and, hopefully, subscribe to the theory that most injuries are preventable.

Here are some suggestions for promoting injury prevention messages in your practice:

## Clinical practice

- History-taking and triage questions: Include questions about safety devices such as restraints, helmets, wristguards, etc., appropriate to the patient situation. If patients hear us ask those questions, they may get the message that these items are important.
- Discharge teaching: Try to include injury prevention information in your discharge teaching, where appropriate. It may not be appropriate to discuss helmets right away with the

family of a critical head-injured patient; a “teachable moment” may be promoting helmets and wristguards to a skateboarder who presents with a fractured clavicle.

- Include injury prevention literature in your waiting areas on topics such as child passenger restraints, helmets/protective gear for a variety of sports, driving distractions and fall prevention for older adults. See Table One for sources of injury prevention literature.
- Show safety/injury prevention videos on your waiting room televisions (although I know it will be tough to compete with the hockey game. Perhaps more success in children’s hospital waiting rooms).

## Educational presentations/ TNCC/ENPC courses

- For local current injury data, talk with your trauma registry staff, if your facility collects trauma data. All health regions collect what is called “corporate data” and include information on emergency department visits and hospitalizations. Provincial trauma data is usually available through the Ministry of Health.
- Include examples of injury prevention initiatives in your community, e.g. PARTY program\*, Emergency Nurses CARE\*\*, where appropriate in your course. Many of these programs have informational pamphlets and displays that could be at your course. Many of these programs rely on volunteers; participants may want to become more involved in these programs on a local level.
- Have a display table of injury prevention resources at your TNCC/ENPC course. Participants will be able to learn more about these subjects, and also get ideas for which resources they could use in their emergency department waiting rooms and minor treatment areas (See Table One).

\* For information on the HEROES and PARTY programs, contact SMARTRISK Foundation at [www.smartrisk.ca](http://www.smartrisk.ca)

\*\* For information on the Emergency Nurses CARE program, contact the Emergency Nurses Association [www.ena.org](http://www.ena.org) and click on “Injury Prevention / ENCARE”

## Opportunity for media coverage

- Media may approach your hospital/ emergency department for commentary on a specific injury case. Following your media policy, it may be deemed appropriate to promote messages that could help prevent a similar incident/tragedy in the future. For example, if the patient was not wearing a seatbelt or helmet and it is deemed that such a device likely would have reduced the injury severity, then providing a reminder to the public is appreciated.

<b>Table One. Key Canadian agencies for injury prevention and control</b>	
<b>Agency name</b>	<b>Website for Data, Resources, Handouts</b>
Agriculture Canada (Farm Safety Surveillance System and Injury Prevention)	<a href="http://www.agr.gc.ca">www.agr.gc.ca</a>
Block Parents of Canada	<a href="http://www.blockparent.ca/english/main.html">www.blockparent.ca/english/main.html</a>
Canada Safety Council	<a href="http://www.safety-council.org">www.safety-council.org</a>
Canadian Association for Suicide Prevention	<a href="http://www.thesupportnetwork.com/CASP/main/html">www.thesupportnetwork.com/CASP/main/html</a>
Canadian Association of Poison Control Centres	<a href="http://www.napra.org/practice/Toolkits/Toolkit6/poison_control.html">www.napra.org/practice/Toolkits/Toolkit6/poison_control.html</a>
Canadian Centre of Occupational Health and Safety	<a href="http://www.canoshweb.org">www.canoshweb.org</a>
Canadian Centre on Substance Abuse	<a href="http://www.ccsa.ca">www.ccsa.ca</a>
Canadian Firearms Centre	<a href="http://www.cfc.gc.ca">www.cfc.gc.ca</a>
Canadian Institute of Child Health	<a href="http://www.cich.ca">www.cich.ca</a>
Canadian Institute of Health Information (CIHI) – National Trauma Registry	<a href="http://secure.cihi.ca/cihiweb/dispPage.jsp?cw_page=home_e">http://secure.cihi.ca/cihiweb/dispPage.jsp?cw_page=home_e</a>
Canadian Parks and Recreation Association (Playground Safety)	<a href="http://www.cpra.ca">www.cpra.ca</a>
Canadian Pediatric Society	<a href="http://www.cps.ca">www.cps.ca</a>
Canadian Public Health Association	<a href="http://www.cpha.ca">www.cpha.ca</a>
Canadian Red Cross Society	<a href="http://www.redcross.ca">www.redcross.ca</a>
Fire Prevention Canada	<a href="http://www.fipreca.ca">www.fipreca.ca</a>
Health Canada – Seniors Injury Prevention (Aging and Seniors Section)	<a href="http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/seniors-aines/pubs/injury_prevention">www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/seniors-aines/pubs/injury_prevention</a>
Health Canada (Many divisions and departments with Injury Prevention Information)	<a href="http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca">www.hc-sc.gc.ca</a> (Home page)
Lifesaving Society of Canada	<a href="http://www.lifesaving.ca">www.lifesaving.ca</a>
MADD Canada	<a href="http://www.madd.ca">www.madd.ca</a>
Public Health Agency of Canada Includes Emergency Preparedness, Child, Adult and Seniors' Injury Prevention	<a href="http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/new_e.html">www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/new_e.html</a>
Rick Hansen Man in Motion Foundation (Spinal Cord Injury Prevention)	<a href="http://www.rickhansen.com">www.rickhansen.com</a>
SAFEKIDS Canada (Unintentional injury prevention for children, Birth-14 yrs)	<a href="http://www.sickkids.ca/safekidscanada">www.sickkids.ca/safekidscanada</a>
Safe Communities Foundation	<a href="http://www.safecommunities.ca">www.safecommunities.ca</a>
Statistics Canada (Injury hospitalization & mortality data)	<a href="http://www.statcan.ca/">www.statcan.ca/</a>
St. John Ambulance (First Aid training and prevention of injuries)	<a href="http://www.sja.ca">www.sja.ca</a>
ThinkFirst Foundation (Head and spinal injury prevention)	<a href="http://www.thinkfirst.ca">www.thinkfirst.ca</a>
Transport Canada (Road, rail, air, marine)	<a href="http://www.tc.gc.ca/en/menu.htm">www.tc.gc.ca/en/menu.htm</a>
War Amps of Canada	<a href="http://www.waramps.ca">www.waramps.ca</a>

- If your emergency department is seeing an increase in a specific type of injury, e.g. scooter-related injuries, trampoline injuries, it may be appropriate to approach the media (again following your media policy and working through your communications department) and suggest they do a story.

### Opportunity for continuing education

- SmartRisk has developed “The Canadian Injury Prevention and Control Curriculum” to provide practitioners with an understanding of the theory and practice of injury prevention and control, including the tools needed to develop and implement effective programs.
- Workshops are planned this fall for around Ontario and hopefully will be offered across Canada in the future. Topics covered will include:
  - The epidemiology of injury
  - The principles of injury control
  - The basic injury data systems
  - Applied research and planning methodology
  - Program development, implementation and evaluation

For more information about this workshop, and a brochure/registration form, please contact SmartRisk at (416) 977-7350 or by e-mail: [learning@smartrisk.ca](mailto:learning@smartrisk.ca)

### Opportunity to support national injury prevention strategy

- SmartRisk is the coordinating organization for Canada’s injury prevention strategy

- They launched the report “Ending Canada’s Invisible Epidemic: A Strategy for Injury Prevention” in October 2005
- We can all support this national injury prevention strategy through a letter campaign to members of both provincial and national governments
- SmartRisk has drafted a number of letters to key government officials
- We are encouraged to use our own words and personal examples and adapt the letters as we see fit
- For further information on this National Injury Prevention Strategy, please contact:

Peter O’Neill  
 Vice-President, Operations  
 SMARTRISK  
 (416) 596-2721  
[poneill@smartrisk.ca](mailto:poneill@smartrisk.ca)



Download a copy of the report and find letters to key government officials at [www.injurypreventionstrategy.ca](http://www.injurypreventionstrategy.ca)

Thank you for your support of injury prevention! 

For further information, Carole can be reached by e-mail: [carole.rush@calgaryhealthregion.ca](mailto:carole.rush@calgaryhealthregion.ca)

### Reference

Safe Kids Canada. (2006). **Child and youth unintentional injury: 10 years in review 1994-2003**. Toronto: Author.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cardiovascular</li> <li>Community Health</li> <li>Critical Care</li> <li>Critical Care – Pediatrics</li> <li>Emergency</li> <li>Gastroenterology</li> <li>Gerontology</li> <li>Hospice Palliative Care</li> <li>Nephrology</li> <li>Neuroscience</li> <li>Occupational Health</li> <li>Oncology</li> <li>Orthopaedics</li> <li>Perinatal</li> <li>Perioperative</li> <li>Psychiatric/Mental Health</li> <li>Rehabilitation</li> </ul>	<h1 style="margin: 0;">CERTIFICATION</h1> <h2 style="margin: 0;">2007</h2> <p>Exam Date: April 14, 2007</p> <p><b>Initial Certification Exam Candidates</b></p> <p>Application Deadline: November 17, 2006</p> <p><i>Maintain your credential</i></p> <p><b>Recertification by Continuous Learning or Exam Candidates</b></p> <p>Application Deadline: December 1, 2006</p>	<p>For information, contact:</p> <p><b>Canadian Nurses Association          Certification Program</b>          50 Driveway, Ottawa, ON K2P 1E2          Telephone: (613) 237-2133 or 1-800-450-5206          Fax: (613) 237-3520          E-mail: <a href="mailto:certification@cna-aiic.ca">certification@cna-aiic.ca</a>          Website: <a href="http://www.cna-aiic.ca">www.cna-aiic.ca</a></p>
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