



SAFETY CANADA

The member newsletter of the Canada Safety Council

School Bullies

Ever been beaten up? Threatened? Ridiculed over and over? Ever watched on helplessly while someone was humiliated in front of you? Ever picked on a weaker person because it made you feel better about yourself? Most of us have either seen or experienced bullying.

If a school is rife with bullying, it doesn't feel safe. Bullying poisons the social environment for everyone, has long-term consequences for the bully and the victim, and is a factor in suicides and violent incidents.

The National Film Board of Canada's *Bully Dance* video was the starting point for the Canada Safety Council's school safety campaign last October. In it, animated characters show what can happen in a bullying situation, and how the whole community must be involved in the solution. The Canada Safety Council has produced a poster which features *Bully Dance* graphics and content as a resource for children in grades four to six.

Bully Dance is part of the *ShowPeace* conflict resolution series which has won 21 international and national awards.

Bullying is Bad for Everyone

Bullying is a social relationship where an individual repeatedly picks on another individual. It can be

physical, verbal or psychological. Perpetrators are equally likely to be boys or girls. Boys are more likely to be physically aggressive — for instance hitting and kicking — whereas girls are more likely to be verbally aggressive when they bully. Extortion, intimidation and destruction of property are all part of the behavior pattern.

Bullying affects the whole community, not just the bully and the victim. Peers are more important than they realize. They can be part of the audience, support the destructive behavior, or intervene in a positive way, perhaps by reporting the situation.

As they grow up, playground bullies may transfer their abuse of power to other forms of harassment, violence, or abuse, and they may become workplace bullies. Boys who were bullies in elementary school are more likely to have criminal convictions by the time they are in their 20s. This is not surprising, given that many bullying activities are offenses under the Criminal Code.

Victims, on the other hand, typically suffer withdrawal and anxiety. Their school performance may drop and they may try to avoid going to school. In rare cases they lash out in revenge, endangering the entire school.

Hear No Evil, See No Evil...

Most children know when there's bullying, but they don't report it. Bullying problems tend to fester under the surface.

- A study of Toronto schools found that a bullying act occurred every seven seconds but teachers were aware of only four per cent of the incidents.
- Seven out of 10 teachers but only one in four students say that teachers almost always intervene. Close to 40 per cent of victims say they have not talked to their parents about the problem.

To page 2...



The Canada Safety Council's anti-bullying poster features graphics from the NFB's *Bully Dance*.

INSIDE

Disaster Preparedness	2
Intersection	
Drunk Snowmobilers	3
New Kind of Bike	3
Impaired Driving	3 & 4
Public Platform	
Seniors' Home Safety	5
Cyber-Safety for Kids	6
Kitchen Fires	8
On the Job	
Eldercare	7
School Activities	7
Kwiz Korner	7
Did you know?	8

New Driver Distraction Awareness Program

Driving is one of the most demanding activities we do – but too many people treat it as a secondary activity when they're behind the wheel. It is estimated that driver distraction in its various forms contributes to between 20 to 30 per cent of all collisions, and about nine per cent of serious or fatal crashes.

To help combat the problem of driver distraction, the Canada Safety Council has developed a new state-of-the-art instructional compact disc titled *Driven to Distraction*.

The *Driven to Distraction* CD contains a 10 minute video and an easy-to-use program guide. It offers helpful safety tips for any driver from beginner to professional. The bilingual program is being made available free of charge to employers, driving instructors, safety associations, insurers, police and schools.

To page 4...

President's Perspective

The unspeakable tragedies that struck New York City and Washington, DC. on September 11 raise questions and invite scrutiny on our country's state of emergency preparedness. Canada is not immune to large scale emergencies and disasters, and must be prepared. These include extreme weather, natural events (earthquakes), transportation disasters (bus, train, plane crashes), industrial accidents, large fires, mass murder/attempted murder (terrorism, shootings, bombings, poisoning).

Losses can be minimized if the emergency is identified immediately or if measures have been taken to prevent or control a predictable catastrophe. The federal government invests considerable resources to prevent disasters from occurring. For example, our firearms legislation is one of the reasons Canada has far fewer mass shootings than the US. Transportation of Dangerous Goods, the National Building Code and the National Fire Code are other examples of proactive legislation.

Local fire, police and ambulance services handle day-to-day emergencies such as 911 calls. They are always the first to be called if there is an emergency or disaster in the community. To be ready for unexpected catastrophes, communities need strong, well-funded, well-trained police, fire and ambulance services.

Budgets for these services must not be compromised, and they must be part of the decision making process whenever public safety is at risk. All governments, including the federal government, must ensure that these local services, as first responders, have the necessary funding and resources to get the job done, regardless of the size or nature of the emergency.

Preventing and preparing for small-scale incidents is critical if Canada is to be ready for large-scale catastrophes.

Emile Therien

Bullies, from page 1.

- Ninety per cent of children say they find it unpleasant to watch bullying.
- Peers are present in 85 per cent of bullying episodes on the playground and in the classroom.

First Steps

Lack of intervention implies that bullying is acceptable and can be done without fear of consequences. Bullies and their accomplices need to understand the harm they cause and that their behavior will not be tolerated at school. They can change.

Victims are often too fearful to ask an adult to intervene, but they can start by calling Kids Help Phone, or joining a Kids Help Phone online forum. The toll-free number is 1-800-668-6868, and the forum is at kidshelp.sympatico.ca.

The Canada Safety Council anti-bullying initiative was funded by the National Strategy on Community Safety and Crime Prevention, the Government of Canada's initiative to help Canadians deal with the root causes of crime and victimization. △



The Honourable Anne McLellan, Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada with Canada Safety Council president Emile Therien at launch of National School Safety Week, October 18, 2001.

SAFETY CANADA

Safety Canada is the member newsletter of the Canada Safety Council. It is also published on CSC's Web site. Articles may be reprinted with credit, except those copyrighted to other organizations. Please send a copy to the editor.

ISSN: 0048-8968

President: Emile-J. Therien

Editor: Ethel Archard (ext. 228)

Canada Safety Council

1020 Thomas Spratt Place, Ottawa, ON K1G 5L5

Telephone: (613) 739-1535 Fax: (613) 739-1566

E-mail: csc@safety-council.org

Web site: www.safety-council.org

Charitable BN: 11882 8565 RR 0001

Bullying is repeated, harmful behavior against a victim, such as:

Damage

Exclusion

Extortion

Gossip

Hitting

Humiliation

Intimidation

Kicking

Name-calling

Put-downs

Rejection

Teasing

Threats

Intersection

Alcohol + Snowmobiling a Deadly Combination

In the 12 years between 1987 and 1998, snowmobile crashes killed 1,046 people in Canada. During that period, participation in the sport quadrupled. A study of these fatalities by the Traffic Injury Research Foundation of Canada (TIRF) found that vehicle operators accounted for over 80 per cent of the deaths. (Drivers represent just under half of road fatalities.)

The data reveal a distinct high-risk profile: a male in his mid 20s or 30s who operates a snowmobile after drinking on weekend nights.

- Fatally injured operators aged 26 to 35 were about seven times more likely to have alcohol present in the blood than those over 55.
- Fatal crashes occurring at night were 6.7 times more likely than daytime crashes to involve a drinking operator.
- Weekend crashes (Friday night through Sunday) were almost twice as likely to involve alcohol than those during the week.
- About 70 per cent of fatally injured operators had alcohol in their blood (compared to 46 per cent of highway drivers). Over half of these had a very high BAC, over 150 mg/dl.

A recent Ontario study which examines sports/recreational injuries in 1999-2000 highlights the severity of the problem. Almost half of hospitalizations involved motor vehicles. Of these, the highest proportion (one-third) were snowmobiles. Snowmobiling injuries were more severe and resulted in longer hospital stays than other recreational injuries. Alcohol was found in 65 per cent of those hospitalized for major snowmobiling injuries.

These data clearly show that the impaired driving problem does not stop where the road ends. Under the Criminal Code of Canada it is a criminal offense to operate a motorized snow vehicle while impaired or with a BAC over 80 mg/dl. The same sanctions apply as for impaired driving on our highways.

The difficulty of enforcing the law off-road is a major obstacle. Countermeasures which have proven successful against impaired driving

Ontario Federation of Snowmobile Clubs



need to be explored. New approaches may be needed to prevent and catch offenders.

Another challenge is the practice of combining alcohol consumption with recreational snowmobiling. Thanks to public education, drinking and driving has become more and more socially unacceptable. The same attitude change must be achieved among snowmobilers. Δ

Sources:

D. Beirness, Traffic Injury Research Foundation of Canada, published in the Canadian Journal of Public Health, September-October 2001
Ontario Trauma Registry Bulletin, July 31, 2001, published by the Canadian Institute for Health Information

Contact the Canada Safety Council for information on the SnoPro training course and CD-ROM package.

What's Needed Next in the Fight Against Impaired Driving?

On September 25, 2001, the Canada Safety Council hosted a Roundtable to discuss the current status of the impaired driving problem in Canada. Representatives from national stakeholder organizations participated. Following are some of the points raised in that meeting.

Fund the System: There was general agreement that the resources to combat impaired driving are inadequate. However, funding must be provided throughout the system. If police lay more charges, the courts and Crown Attorneys must be available to process those charges; and treatment must be available for offenders with an alcohol problem.

Prevent Recidivism: Proper treatment has been shown effective with 80 per cent of those who take it. There should be consistent assessment and treatment of offenders, including first offenders. Ignition interlock has proven it can be effective; but such programs must include monitoring of "fail" readings so that appropriate action can be taken.

Specialized Courts: Outcomes in the judicial system influence enforcement; i.e. if the courts are unable to convict offenders, police will be less willing to lay charges. The high volume of impaired driving charges should justify courts to hear exclusively this type of case. Such courts would have judges and prosecutors specialized in all aspects of the Criminal Code as it relates to impaired driving.

To page 4...

Coming Soon: A New Kind of Bike

The next craze in recreational vehicles may be the power assisted bicycle. Manufacturers are poised to start producing these bikes, which should hit the market in 2003.

The bikes use fuel-cell technology with pollution-free hydrogen gas to generate an electric current that enhances the pedal power of the cyclist. A prototype developed by an Italian bike maker can reach speeds up to 32 km/h.

The bikes are expected to be popular among seniors. The Canada Safety Council is concerned that potential risks must be identified so that safety measures can be taken as the bikes enter the market. Δ

Chronic Drunk Drivers Still a Big Problem

Canadians admit they probably drove drunk on more than five million occasions last year. However, 87 per cent of those impaired driving trips were taken by just five per cent of the drivers, according to the second report from the Road Safety Monitor released by the Traffic Injury Research Foundation (TIRF). The Canada Safety Council provided financial support for the survey.

More than 1,200 drivers were surveyed by telephone in March and April 2001 on a number of road safety issues. The survey found that 85 per cent of Canadians still think drinking and driving is a serious problem. However, in the 25 to 49 age group, about one driver in five reports driving after drinking. Drivers age 19 to 24 are most likely to report driving after drinking (23.2 per cent). A disturbing 7.3 per cent (1.6 million) of drivers say that they have driven at some time during the past year when they thought they were over the legal limit.

Canadian drivers support new initiatives to deal with drinking and driving including: alcohol ignition interlocks; immediate impoundment of vehicles driven by impaired drivers; greater use of police spot checks, and a zero BAC (blood alcohol concentration) restriction for convicted offenders. The Canada Safety Council strongly supports all of these measures, which have proven to be effective ways to reduce impaired driving.

The findings suggest there are fewer drunk drivers on our roads than three years ago, when a similar survey was done. However, they also show that a small number (five per cent) of drivers accounted for 4.4 million impaired driving trips last year. These chronic offenders continue to pose a complex and resistant challenge in the fight against impaired driving.

In 1999, there were 1,134 people killed in Canada in road crashes involving an impaired driver, and approximately 3,500 drivers were involved in alcohol-related serious injury crashes. Δ

What Next, from page 3.

Convict the Guilty: Those accused of impaired driving rarely plead innocent, but there is no record of why accused are found not guilty. Charges are often dismissed on procedural complaints. If the individual is obviously guilty, judges must be able to over-ride technicalities. Nonetheless, the conviction rate for impaired driving is very high; there is no trial for those who plead guilty.

Enforce .08 BAC: There was discussion of BAC levels in the Criminal Code. Most participants felt a lower limit would be of no benefit. Police are challenged to enforce the current limit. Other countries which have very low Criminal Code BAC limits have seen a rise in the use of illicit drugs with no decline in the impaired driving toll.

Community Action: Although impaired driving causes more deaths and injuries than violent acts, police (and to some extent the community) still consider it only a traffic offense. This culture must change. Community action must be harnessed in order for resources to be dedicated to the problem. At present, community activists often focus on issues with little or no impact on safety, such as traffic calming. Δ

Driven to Distraction, from page 1.

To obtain copies of the CD (limited copies available in VHS video), contact the Canada Safety Council by fax at 613-739-1566 or by e-mail at csc@safety-council.org.

Tips on Managing Driver Distractions

Multi-tasking while driving has become commonplace. Drivers eat, drink, read, discipline their kids, use cell phones and even shave or apply make-up on the road. According to a study commissioned earlier this year by TheSteelAlliance and the Canada Safety Council, three-quarters of those surveyed admitted to performing personal and work-related tasks while driving.

- **Be familiar with the equipment in your car**, such as the stereo system and cell phone. This is especially important if you have a new phone or car, or a rental vehicle. Practice before driving so you can perform basic functions without taking your eyes off the road
- **Keep your hands on the wheel and your eyes on the road.** If you have a phone, use a hands-free model and keep it in its holder.
- **Make sure your children are comfortable and properly buckled up.** To keep children from distracting the driver, provide them with safe items they may need for the road trip.
- **Pull over to eat or drink.** By stopping, you can give yourself a break from the traffic and enjoy your refreshments. Children or adults may choke on food while in the vehicle, causing a severe distraction for the driver.
- **Check your route before leaving.** If you are unfamiliar with where you're going, study a road map to avoid unnecessary stress and distractions. Do not attempt to read the road map while driving.
- **Do your grooming before leaving.** Don't rely on the time in your vehicle to take care of your personal routine such as applying make-up, combing your hair or shaving.
- **Do not engage in emotionally charged conversations**, either with the passengers or on your mobile phone. Such discussions can result in aggressive or erratic driving behavior.
- **Don't take notes while driving.** Always find a safe place to stop before writing things down.
- **Drive defensively.** Be prepared for the unsafe actions of other motorists or for poor driving conditions. Δ

Answers to Kwiz Korner (page 7)

1. **False.** Don't let the snow pile up. Shovel frequently, removing smaller amounts at a time to reduce the need for heavy lifting.
2. **True.** Do back and side bends before you go out, lift properly, and drink water before and after. If you're a bit out of shape, don't over-exert yourself.
3. **True.** Avoid lifting heavy shovel fulls of snow. By pushing, you also avoid twisting or turning movements that could injure your back. Use a lightweight, pusher-type shovel.
4. **True.** As with any heavy object, bend your knees when lifting, and keep the shovel as close to you as possible.
5. **False.** Rest if you feel tired. Stop shoveling immediately if you feel chest or back pain. The combination of lifting and cold weather can lead to a heart attack.

Public Platform

Home Safety a Key to Independence for Aging Canadians

As Canada's population ages, increasing numbers of seniors are enjoying longer, more fulfilling lives. To many, a fulfilling life means good physical and mental health, lasting vitality and life-long prosperity. For most it is also the freedom of living independently.

This is certainly the case for Bob Gray, a recent retiree and vice-chairman of the Veterans, Service and Seniors Committee of the Royal Canadian Legion. "As I enter into retirement, the most important thing that I can do is to ensure that I will be able to enjoy life in my own home for as long as possible. To have this freedom taken away would be devastating."

Mr. Gray is not alone. Many aging Canadians rate 'independence' as the most important factor for quality of living. However, as a person's age increases, so too does the risk of injury from a fall or other such mishap. In fact, one in three seniors will have a fall this year – and some of these falls will result in injuries that seriously impair their ability to live independently.

The fact is that many falls can be prevented. If seniors understand the hazards and take the necessary precautions, they can keep their independence by reducing the risk of a fall.

Make Your Home a Safer Place

Most falls-related injuries happen in and around the home – about one-quarter of them around stairs and bathrooms. In many cases, simple changes can prevent a fall from ever taking place. The Canada Safety Council recommends a few common sense precautions:

- Install proper lighting throughout your home, particularly around the stairs (with a light switch at both ends of the stairs) and in the washroom. Use nightlights in the hallways, particularly between the bedroom and bathroom.
- Be sure to have at least one handrail (preferably two) on all stairways and steps in your home. Ensure handrails are securely attached and in good repair.
- Check that stairs are in good repair and are slip resistant. If stairs are broken, have them fixed promptly. Adding a strip along the edge of

each step in a contrasting colour can help make them easier to see.

- Take the same precautions for outdoor steps. In addition, arrange to have leaves, snow and ice removed on a regular basis. Use salt or sand throughout the winter months.
- Wear proper footwear. Shoes, boots and slippers should provide good support and have good soles. Avoid loose slippers or stocking feet.
- Install grab bars in all bathrooms, by the toilet and in the bathtub or shower. It's a good idea to have two bars in the tub, one on a side wall and one on the back wall. If you need extra support, consider a bath seat or bench so you can have a shower sitting down.
- Use a rubber bath mat along the full length in your tub, and a non-skid bath mat beside the tub.
- Use walking aids and other safety devices for extra safety. If you use a cane or a walker, check that it is at the right height and that the rubber tips are not worn.
- Keep your floor and stairs free of clutter. Avoid using throw mats or scatter rugs that are not securely attached (not slip resistant).
- Review your medications with your doctor every six months. Tell your physician if your medication makes you dizzy or lightheaded.

Simple precautions can prevent a fall from happening.

To page 6...



Bright, uncluttered stairways with sturdy handrails make your home a safer place.



A message brought to you by the Canada Safety Council
Funded by the Health Canada/ Veterans Affairs Canada Falls Prevention Initiative

Safety in Cyberspace

Canada is the most “connected” country in the world. In March 1999, we became the first country to connect all schools and public libraries to the Internet. As of one year ago (in early 2001), half of all Canadians over 12 were using the Net.

Children and teens are drawn to this exciting medium, and parents appreciate its educational potential. However, parents tend not to be as net savvy as their children and surveys show they often don’t know exactly what their kids are doing on-line.

Half of Canadian parents say inappropriate content is their biggest concern. Such content falls into several categories. Illegal content includes online child pornography and hate propaganda. The law restricts gambling and alcohol to adults, but minors can access such sites because there is no way to verify age. Indeed, some are linked from sites popular with young people. Parents also want to keep their children away from offensive content, such as sexually explicit sites and graphic violence. This type of content is actively promoted — and children who meet people online are sometimes surprised when they get inappropriate content from a new “friend.”

Chat rooms and Instant Messaging (IM) are very popular with young people. One-third of children 9 and 10 years old use chat rooms. That rises to almost three-

Set rules for use of the Internet, and make sure you know what your kids are doing online.

quarters of all teens. More than half of teens (ages 13 to 17) visit private and adult chat rooms. This exposes them to unsolicited contacts — which may explain why about the same proportion of teens report they have received pornographic spam. One in five 11-12 year-olds reported receiving e-mail messages that have bothered or frightened them. Of those, only 20 per cent told an adult.

Of particular concern to police and parents are online predators. Forty-three per cent of teens ages 15 to 17 have been asked by someone they have met on the Net to meet in person. Of those, one in five accepted; and of that group, one out of five went alone.

The Canada Safety Council urges parents to set rules for family use of the Internet, and to make sure they know what their kids are doing online.

The Council’s Elmer the Safety Elephant Web site (www.elmer.ca) includes Internet safety. The Media Awareness Network (Mnet) is an excellent source for finding children’s sites, tracking where children go while online and protecting children from on-line predators (www.media-awareness.ca). For practical information and hands-on activities to give children “cyber-smarts” visit MNet’s Web Awareness site (www.webawareness.org). △

Cyber-Safety Rules for Kids

When using the Internet, I will always use a pretend name or nickname that doesn’t reveal anything about me.

I will not open e-mail, files, links, pictures or games from people that I don’t know or trust.

I will not arrange to meet a friend I have made on the Internet unless one of my parents has been informed and will be present.

Mnet (www.media-awareness.ca)

Picture from Bruno and Alice, a Health Canada publication.



Seniors, from page 5.

Help is Available

If you want to make your home safer but don’t know where to start, ask your family doctor. He or she can refer you to an occupational therapist whose services may be covered under your provincial medical plan, or refer to your yellow pages for a listing of occupational therapy services. You may also “Ask an OT” about home safety at www.otworks.ca. Just visit the site, post a question and you will receive an answer within three to four business days.

Public health units and seniors’ organizations are also a good source of support for seniors. They can provide excellent information, resources and home safety checklists, and advise on where to go for more help. This includes advice on how to access subsidy programs, safety aids and services, and fall prevention programs.

Installing proper lighting, handrails and grab bars will cost money. Spending a little money is certainly worth your independence. But what if you can’t afford the necessary changes? In most communities there are programs which may help with the cost of assistive devices and repairs.

Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) and Veterans Affairs Canada offer financial assistance to help cover the costs of renovations or adaptations needed to help you stay in your home. (Eligibility criteria may apply.) CMHC also offers some excellent publications. For information on CMHC programs phone 1-800-668-2642 or visit the agency’s web site (www.cmhc-schl.gc.ca). For information on the Veterans Independence Program, whether you qualify and how to apply, contact your nearest Veterans Affairs Canada District Office or go to the ministry’s web site (www.vac-acc.gc.ca).

In November 2001, in conjunction with National Seniors’ Safety Week, the Canada Safety Council launched a series of public service announcements to raise awareness that seniors can make their home a safer place. Television, radio and print messages focus on having grab bars in the bathroom, and handrails on steps and stairs. The Council’s web site (www.safety-council.org) suggests resources and helpful links. The public awareness program was funded under the Falls Prevention Initiative of Health Canada and Veterans Affairs Canada. △

On the Job

Employees and Eldercare

The proportion of working Canadians who care for both children and elderly family members is on the rise. A 1999 Conference Board of Canada survey found 15 per cent of employees in that situation, compared to 9.5 per cent a decade earlier. One in four employees reported that they or others in their household provided care or support to an elderly family member or friend, up from one in five in the similar 1989 survey.

Increasingly, employers are becoming sensitive to this concern. In 1989, only six per cent of firms in the Conference Board study offered eldercare information and referral services, and 10 per cent offered services for care of relatives with disabilities. The 1999 survey found these proportions had risen to 37 per cent and 32 per cent respectively. It also found that employees perceived employers have an important role in dealing with these issues.

The most common forms of support for elders were visits (88 per cent), transportation (85 per cent) and help with shopping (79 per cent). One-quarter of caregivers reported higher levels of personal care, including dressing, bathing or feeding.

According to 1996 Statistics Canada data, 1.3 million women provided care to an elderly person with a long-term health problem; two-thirds of these women were also in the paid workforce.

As Canada's population ages, blending paid work with the care of older family members will become more and more common. Employers need to be sensitive to this as they are to concerns related to children.



Seniors should have grab bars in all bathrooms, as well as non-slip mats in and beside the tub. A bath seat or bench is often very helpful.

Home Safety Resources

Caring for an elderly person who wishes to remain at home rather than moving to a care facility can often create challenges. The following resources, available free on request from the Canada Safety Council, may be useful to have on hand for employees faced with this situation. Send requests by fax to (613) 739-1566 or by e-mail to csc@safety-council.org.

Maintaining Seniors' Independence Through Home Adaptations – A Self-Assessment Guide

This excellent 24-page guide from Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation identifies renovations that can help overcome difficulties associated with aging.

The Safe Living Guide – A Guide to Home Safety for Seniors

Health Canada's 48-page guide gives practical tips and recommendations to help seniors live comfortably and safely in their own home for many years to come.

Bruno and Alice – A love story in 12 parts about seniors and safety

This Health Canada publication is the story of two active seniors who, through lack of prevention, end up in awkward situations and almost miss their rendez-vous with love.

These checklists can be downloaded from the Canada Safety Council's Web site:

Are you in Jeopardy?

This is a comprehensive checklist to help people identify ways to prevent falls and injuries, maintain independence, and make their home a safer place. (Trauma Prevention Council)

Environmental Hazards

This checklist focuses specifically on preventing falls in the home. (City of Ottawa Public Health and Long-Term Care Branch) △

Kwiz Korner

Safe snow shoveling: true or false?

1. To minimize exposure to cold do your shoveling all at once, after the snow has fallen. T/F
2. Shoveling is like a sport: e.g. you need to warm up, practise good techniques and drink lots of water. T/F
3. It's better to push the snow to the side rather than to lift and throw it. T/F
4. Treat snow shoveling like picking up a heavy object. T/F
5. If you feel tired or short of breath, you are benefitting from the exercise. Keep shovelling. T/F

Answers on page 4.

Risky School Activities

Skiing and snowboarding represent over 40 per cent of the injuries reported on school field trips, and have led to two fatalities since 1995. Snowblading and tubing are relatively new activities. Both are also high-risk, and require a high level of supervision as well as expertise.

Snow and ice sliding (sledding and tobogganing) may seem less risky. However, they can cause serious injuries to children. Although the number of claims and injuries are relatively few, when an injury occurs, it is serious. This activity accounted for 25 per cent of the claims payments for field trips.

The Ontario School Boards Insurance Exchange (OSBIE) is advising school boards to ask the following questions when planning ANY school activity:

Risk Avoidance - Do we need to do it?

Risk Assessment - If we do it, is it foreseeable that someone can be injured?

Risk Reduction - What can we do to prevent an injury?

Asking these questions can quickly determine whether the activity is appropriate for the students, and whether a school has the qualified staff to undertake the activity safely.

OSBIE reminds anyone organizing a school field trip not to forget the biggest single question: Is there any educational value to this trip? △

Did you know?

The World Health Organization (WHO) estimates that, in 1998, more children in Africa died from road crashes than from HIV and more young adults (aged between 15 and 44 years) were killed by road crashes than by malaria. WHO has forecasted that, by the year 2020, road crashes will be the second most common cause of premature death in the world (out of a list of about 120 different causes). It is conservatively estimated that between 30 and 45 injuries occur for every road death. Many will involve life long disability.

Global Road Safety Partnership

The US has over three times the number of guns per capita as Canada; the number of handguns per capita is 63.3 times higher. The rate of murders with firearms in the US is eight times higher than Canada; there were 549 homicides in Canada in 1998, compared to 17,874 in the US. Americans are twice as likely to commit suicide with a firearm as Canadians. In addition, murders without guns are almost twice as high in the US.

Research and Statistics Division, Department of Justice Canada (Kwing Hung), June 2001

In Spring 2001, the Institute for Social Research, York University, surveyed 4,211 students in grades seven through 13 (OAC). The survey found that alcohol use is up: more young people are drinking and getting drunk. The percentage of youth who reported drinking alcohol was 63 per cent (up from 57 per cent in 1993). More students engaged in binge drinking (drinking five or more drinks at a time) — 25 per cent in 2001, compared to 18 per cent in 1993. The percentage who admitted to getting drunk rose from 17 per cent in 1993 to 27 per cent in 2001. About 32 per cent of all students said they had been a passenger in a vehicle driven by someone who had been drinking.

Centre for Addiction and Mental Health News Release, November 19, 2001

Suspected drunk drivers in Alberta can lose their licence for 90 days even if their criminal impaired driving charges are dropped or dismissed. The Court of Queen's Bench ruled that the province's license suspension program is independent of criminal charges because it ensures public safety.

National Post, September 7, 2001

More than 97,000 people died of preventable injuries in the United States in 2000. Unintentional injuries are the fifth leading cause of death in the United States. About 29,500 people died from unintentional injuries in the home and community, 9,300 of them from falls. Falls are the number one cause of injury-related death for males 80 and older and for females 75 and older.

Injury Facts 2001, National Safety Council

In Ontario, 18 per cent of fatal crashes and 30 per cent of personal injury crashes occur at an intersection. In 42 per cent of fatal crashes and 29 per cent of injury crashes, disobeying a traffic signal is a factor. This adds up to about 61 fatal crashes and 4,800 injury crashes. Extrapolated to the whole of Canada, running red lights could account for as many as 200 fatal crashes and 13,000 injury crashes each year.

The Road Safety Monitor, October 2001, Traffic Injury Research Foundation

Unintentional firearm deaths (UFDs) comprise a small proportion of all firearm deaths. On average there are 50 per year in Canada. In addition, hospitalization data show at least 10 times that many nonfatal injuries. At least half of the victims are under age 25. A recent study revealed a strong association between gun ownership levels and UFD rates across Canada. The implication for policy is that UFDs can best be prevented by combining safety training for all owners with a reduction in ownership levels.

Unintentional Firearm Deaths, Canadian Journal of Public Health, September/October 2001

CSC Public Awareness Campaigns for 2002

National Farm Safety Week
(March 14 to 21)

National Summer Safety Week
(May 1 to 7)

National Road Safety Week
(May 18 to 24)

National School Safety Week
(October 17 to 23)

National Community Safety and Crime Prevention Campaign (November)

National Seniors' Safety Week
(November 6 to 12)

National Home Fire Safety Week
(November 24 to 30)

National Safe Driving Week
(December 1 to 7)

The Most Dangerous Room

What's the most dangerous room in the home when it comes to fires? According to the Canada Safety Council, it's the kitchen — and most kitchen fires can be prevented.

Deep frying leads to a lot of these home fires. Oil or grease can heat up very fast and catch fire. For those who enjoy fried food in the cold weather, this means taking a few simple precautions.

Above all, never, ever leave cooking unattended. It's safest to fry food in a CSA certified electric deep fryer with a temperature control. If you must use a sauce pan or frying pan, heat the oil slowly. Always turn off the heat as soon as the cooking is done. Built-up grease can easily catch fire, so clean your burner pans and stove top regularly.

What if grease catches fire in the kitchen? You should have a fire extinguisher nearby for this type of emergency, in addition to a working smoke alarm.

Never try to put a grease fire out with water. If possible, cover the pan with a close fitting lid to smother the flames; you may use baking soda on shallow grease fires. If you can't control the fire immediately, get yourself and your family out fast, and call 911 from a neighbour's phone. Δ