



SAFETY CANADA

The member newsletter of the Canada Safety Council

Helmets: Attitudes and Actions

Most Canadians know that wearing a helmet can prevent a serious injury. Four out of five parents say their kids wear helmets when cycling or in-line skating. However, over half of adult cyclists don't wear a helmet when they ride. These are the findings of a recent survey of attitudes on helmet use.

There were 42 cyclists killed in 2000, down dramatically from 106 in 1990. One reason fewer people are dying in bicycle crashes is that more and more cyclists are wearing helmets. Studies in the late 1980s show bicycle helmet use among children was as low as 2%. Head injuries account for a stunning 80% of bicycle fatalities.

The Canada Safety Council and Liberty Mutual Insurance Company commissioned *Helmets: Attitudes and Actions*, a national Ipsos-Reid telephone survey to assess public opinion on the use of helmets when participating in various "wheel" sports. Although cycling boasts the highest participation level, in-line skating is also very popular, and scooters are more than a passing fad. Canadians were questioned on their attitudes and behaviour regarding sports helmets, and how they felt about measures to increase usage.

Like Parent, Like Child

Those who never wear a helmet are more likely to be male, under 34, rural, less educated, and lower income earners. Their kids don't wear helmets either. Three-quarters report their children never wear bicycle helmets,

and over two-thirds say their children don't wear helmets when in-line skating, skateboarding or using a scooter.

The survey shows that parents can and do make sure their children wear a helmet. The parents' influence cannot be overestimated. They can also make sure the helmet fits right and is worn correctly. It should be snug but not too tight. The child should wear it straight on the head, not angled back, and with straps adjusted to keep it secure.

Excuses, Excuses....

The number one reason given by Canadian women for people not wearing a helmet is 'appearance' (at 17%, versus 11% for men). Men most frequently mention that helmets are

'uncomfortable' (at 14%, versus 9% for women). For those in rural areas, the leading reason given for people not wearing a helmet is 'don't bother' (18%), but for their urban counterparts, the top reasons are 'appearance' (14%) and 'not cool' (14%).

The poll found that 97% of Canadians realize helmets prevent serious injury. Yet a lot of people simply won't go to the trouble of wearing one. Only 3% think cost or not having a helmet is the reason. Safety efforts now need to convince Canadians to translate their knowledge into action.

What can you do if you find a helmet unattractive or uncomfortable? CSA-certified helmets come in a wide range of colours, styles and sizes. You should look for the CSA mark to assure safety and performance, but you have a choice when it comes to style and fit. Shop for a helmet with the same care you would shop for shoes. You need the right fit and you have to like how it looks. Then make sure you wear it properly.

Helmets and the Law

British Columbia, Alberta, Ontario, New Brunswick and Nova Scotia all have legislation mandating the use of bicycle helmets. The survey found that awareness of the law is 90% or higher in those provinces with legislation in effect.

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A helmet must be worn straight on the head, with straps adjusted to keep it secure.

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How Many Canadians are Killed by Drunk Drivers?

Impaired driving has been called the leading criminal cause of death and injury in this country. Given the high profile of the issue, one would expect the number of Canadian victims to be readily accessible. Not so.

Highly respected sources published widely diverging statistics in the first half of 2002:

"It is our National Tragedy that 1,700 Canadians are killed by drunk drivers every year."¹

"Approximately 1,350 people die each year in alcohol-related motor vehicle crashes."²

"In 1999, there were 1,134 people killed in Canada in road crashes involving an impaired driver."³

"In 1999 (the most recent year for which data are available), 906 people were killed in Canada in road crashes that involved a driver who had been drinking."⁴

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President's Perspective

This issue of *Safety Canada* describes two new Canada Safety Council public opinion polls, and refers to surveys done by other organizations.

A telephone survey can only measure what respondents are willing to say and what they personally believe, whether factual or not. When asked if their province mandates bicycle helmets for children under 18, for instance, 78% of Quebecers answered yes. In fact, Quebec has no helmet law, but the positive answers suggest potential receptiveness to such legislation.

Due to their subjective nature, public opinion surveys must be designed with care and conclusions drawn cautiously. A CSC survey found that 65% of respondents felt Canada's impaired driving laws are not strict enough. However, the survey also revealed a lack of knowledge of the law and widespread misconceptions of how it is applied. (*Safety Canada*, January 2001) In context, the findings implied a need for more public awareness and education—not tougher laws.

The scope or nature of questions can create misleading impressions. For instance, a survey that asked questions only about truck drivers found a high degree of concern about drowsiness. Another survey did not specify the type of road user, and identified general public concern about drowsiness of all drivers (page 3).

Polling, combined with factual information and solid research, can serve an important role in safety. By establishing a benchmark of attitudes and reported behaviors, survey findings can help focus and direct efforts. For instance, our recent survey suggested key "reasons" for not wearing a helmet, which safety campaigns could address. Another function is to quantify a hidden problem, such as drowsy drivers.

Polling is often used to gauge the political climate, and can be applied to safety legislation. Despite vocal opposition to photo enforcement, a CSC survey found very strong overall agreement and a small percentage who strongly disagreed. Politicians did not need to fear losing office if they approved red light cameras. (*Safety Canada*, April 2001)

Last but not least, survey findings are newsworthy. By attracting media attention, they offer opportunities to increase public awareness about safety.



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Impaired Driving Victims, from page 1.

Using wrong numbers can distort an issue and mislead the public. Misconceptions can lead to demands for legislative changes that are not justified when the most accurate data is examined. The consequences could result in flawed public policy and failed attempts to curb this very serious problem.

Why the Differences?

One reason for the discrepancies is that fatalities have been dropping. Impaired drivers do not kill the same number of people each year in Canada.

In the U.S., the number of impaired driving fatalities has not changed since 1994. In contrast, Canada has made significant progress. Changes in attitudes and behavior — backed by tough laws, enforcement and other countermeasures — have led to impressive annual decreases.

Another reason for varying figures is that there are different ways to count the data. Some traffic deaths which involve alcohol do not involve a drinking driver.

Deaths in "alcohol-related crashes" include people with alcohol in their blood who were killed by non-drinking drivers. (For example, in 1999 a total of 414 pedestrians and 69 cyclists were killed. Two out of every five pedestrian fatalities and one out of every five cyclist fatalities had alcohol in their blood.)

The Correct Answer Is...

According to the Traffic Injury Research Foundation (TIRF), road crashes involving a driver who had been drinking killed 906 people in 1999⁴. This marks a 30% drop over five years; the equivalent statistic for 1995 was 1,296. Preliminary figures for 2000, to be released officially this Fall, indicate a further 5% drop.

However, even these data do not answer the original question. Is it fair to include drinking drivers who were killed due to their own impairment? (Of the 906 fatalities, drinking drivers comprised about half.) What exactly is meant when we talk about an "impaired" or "drunk" driver? (There is no simple definition that can be used as a scientific basis to collect data.) The correct statistic depends on what information is being conveyed.

Due to the complexities of the issue there is no official number of people killed annually by drunk drivers in Canada.

Alcohol-related crashes still cause far too many unnecessary and preventable tragedies on our roads. The fact we are making progress is encouraging, but we can't let our guard down. Hard work and resources will be needed to reach our national goal of a further 40% reduction in road users fatally or seriously injured in crashes involving a drinking driver by 2010.⁵

Canada's progress to date is an indication that such an ambitious goal can be achieved. Δ

1. This statement is widely used by MADD Canada. On its Web site (May 2002), MADD gives a more specific number (1,680) and names the source as Health Canada, 1997.

2. This statement appeared on page 7 of Transport Canada's SMASHED magazine (revised 2002 issue) and also on page 176 of the Canadian Journal of Public Health (May-June 2002).

3. *Safety Canada* (January 2002)

4. *The Alcohol-Crash Problem in Canada: 1999, Traffic Injury Research Foundation* (January 2002).

5. *Road Safety Vision 2010, approved in 2000 by the Council of Ministers for Transportation and Highway Safety.*

The Canada Safety Council is an official 2002 sponsor of the RIDE Program in Ontario and the Safe Celebrations campaign in British Columbia.

Intersection

Speeding, Stressed-out and Sleepy

The aggressive driving situation on our roads is not getting any better. The *Nerves of Steel* Aggressive Driving Study, commissioned by the Canada Safety Council and TheSteelAlliance, found that 88% of us admit to aggressive driving in the past year. That's up from 84% in the first *Nerves of Steel* study, four years ago. Speeding and running traffic lights remain the most common aggressive behaviors.

Stress, not surprisingly, is the main reason given for aggressive driving. Demanding schedules could explain why 76% of Canadian drivers surveyed say sleep-deprived drivers are a common problem on Canadian roads. It seems many Canadians are also driving while drowsy themselves: over half of drivers surveyed admit they have driven while tired over the past year and almost 60% highlighted afternoon and evening as the time they feel most drowsy while driving.

In other surveys, concerns about fatigue have focused on truck drivers. The *Road Safety Monitor*, an annual public opinion survey of the Traffic Injury Research Foundation, found that 70% of Canadians believe truck drivers who are tired by long hours of driving are a serious problem. (The Canada Safety Council is also a sponsor of that survey.) However, the questions asked only about truck drivers. *Nerves of Steel* identifies fatigue as a more general traffic safety concern.



Today's pace of life not only fuels aggressive driving and drowsy driving, it also leads drivers to multi-task while in the car. Three-quarters of *Nerves of Steel* respondents admit to having multi-tasked while driving. Tasks include eating, reading, using a cell phone or even shaving. In turn, 87% of respondents are frustrated when they see other drivers multi-tasking behind the wheel – an 11% increase from last year.

Running traffic lights is both illegal and dangerous. It is also the most common act of aggressive driving. Yet when asked what they thought causes the most collisions, fewer than one percent suggested running red lights. (Driver inattention, speeding and impaired driving were named most often.)

Canada's traffic fatality rate has dropped over the past thirty years to an all-time low. Our road safety record is second to none in the world when distance is taken into account.

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Saskatchewan Rewards Safe Drivers

Saskatchewan motorists are being rewarded for safe driving habits. Starting July 1, 2002, Saskatchewan Government Insurance (SGI) is rewarding safe drivers with a discount on their vehicle insurance, while ensuring drivers who display risky behavior pay their share of fines.

Under the Safe Driver Recognition program, two out of three Saskatchewan vehicle owners (about 350,000 people) will receive a discount on their vehicle insurance.

Initially all Saskatchewan motorists will be placed on the Safety Rating Scale based on their driving record since 1995. Safe drivers with a positive rating will get a break on their vehicle insurance — to a maximum of seven percent. SGI's records show 55% of eligible Saskatchewan vehicle owners will receive a discount of five percent or more on their plate insurance.

Drivers who start the program with a negative safety rating will not be eligible to receive a discount, but they will also not be charged any new fines for incidents that occurred before the program launch. Drivers will begin to pay new fines once the program is in place. This will help offset the cost of discounts for safe drivers.

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A Wake Up Call

Every year, police see “mystery crashes” in which it is not possible to determine a cause. Many of these incidents are thought to involve a fatigued driver who fell asleep at the wheel. A typical mystery crash might occur on a highway when one vehicle drifts out of its lane into the path of oncoming traffic and hits another vehicle head-on, often with tragic results.

Drivers suffering from lack of sleep can find it difficult to perform tasks such as driving that require coordination and mental alertness. Even losing a few hours of sleep can significantly affect drivers' ability to judge or maintain speed, and to keep in the proper lane. Fatigue slows reaction time, impairs judgement and increases the risk of a collision.

No Excuses

In our 2002 *Nerves of Steel* survey, one out of 10 drivers admitted to falling asleep behind the wheel in the past year; that includes dozing off for a fraction of a second. Over half admitted to driving while drowsy.

Part of the problem is our busy lives. The survey revealed that 30% of all respondents (45% of those under



age 30) said they cut down on sleep to fit more activities into a day. Other factors may include sleep problems related to sleep apnea or shift work, and the long distances that Canadians travel between locations. One of our most heavily traveled routes is Montreal to Windsor.

Traveling that distance in Europe would take you all the way across France and halfway into Germany. The Canadian route is also more monotonous, another factor that can make a driver sleepy.

None of these “reasons” justifies driving when overtired. Fatigue is a form of impairment. A safe driver never takes the wheel when tired. If you can barely keep your eyes open, you should not be driving. Period. Δ

See page 4 for **Tips to Avoid Drowsy Driving.**

Tips to Avoid Drowsy Driving

- **Drive only when rested.** Don't take the wheel if you feel fatigued, no matter when or where you are driving. Have some sleep or exercise first, avoid or delay the trip, or let a rested person drive.
- **Keep your mind alert.** Listen to talk shows or up-tempo music. Try to have company on long trips. Change position frequently, keeping your head up and shoulders back. Chew gum. Actively watch road signs and traffic.
- **Find a safe place to stop.** On a long trip, every couple of hours or if you start to feel sleepy, pull off the road for a break, exercise and fresh air. When possible, spend the night at a hotel or stop in a safe place to take a nap. Don't rely on coffee!
- **Be careful about what you eat and drink.** Coffee, sugar or other stimulants may wake you up physically but they do not ensure mental alertness. Drink water, juice or soft drinks low in sugar and caffeine. Choose high-protein snacks over heavy or fatty foods such as fries. Avoid alcohol and medications (including cold remedies). If you require medication, consult with your doctor to minimize effects on driving.
- **Drive defensively.** Be prepared to prevent collisions in spite of the actions of others—including drivers around you who may be drowsy.



Elmer the Safety Elephant is active in Canadian schools, thanks to sponsorship from Liberty Mutual. Here he is with Sr. Cst. Eric Booth of the Kanata OPP, Ottawa, Ontario.

Saskatchewan, from page 3.

Certain incidents will cost drivers points on the Safety Rating Scale. These include: at-fault accidents, specified traffic convictions and traffic-related Criminal Code convictions such as impaired driving.

The more incidents a motorist has, the more demerit points they'll receive and the higher fines they'll pay. These fines will take the place of current driver's licence surcharges and will be assessed immediately following an incident.

The Safety Rating Scale will make the rating and penalty system simpler to understand, allowing motorists to see for themselves how their driving habits affect their auto insurance costs in a more timely manner.

For more information about Safe Driver Recognition, visit SGI's Web site (www.sgi.sk.ca). Δ

Saskatchewan Government Insurance, April 25, 2002

Nerves of Steel, from page 3.

The national goal is to reduce the number of motor vehicle deaths (which stood at 2,917 in 2000) to fewer than 2,100 by the year 2010.

Nerves of Steel reveals where we need to improve. Too many Canadians seem to take the driving task for granted. They break fundamental rules of the road, and try to fit more and more into a day even if it jeopardizes their safety. These behaviors are rooted in attitudes which must be addressed in order to achieve further reductions in traffic deaths and injuries. Δ

2002 Nerves of Steel Aggressive Driving Study

Commissioned by TheSteelAlliance and the Canada Safety Council

- Although Canadians believe aggressive driving is a safety concern, 88% of those surveyed admit to at least one act of aggressive driving in the past year, up from 85% the previous year.
- 68% of respondents admit to running yellow lights turning red or speeding – the most common acts.
- Younger drivers are most likely to drive aggressively than their older counterparts: 96% of those aged 18-29 admitted to aggressive driving.
- Most aggressive drivers are in: Ontario (92%)
- Least aggressive drivers are in: Man/Sask (82%)

Multi-Tasking on the Road

- 87% of drivers surveyed become frustrated when they see other drivers multi-tasking on the road – an 11% increase from 2001.
- 76% of respondents have engaged in at least one form of multi-tasking while driving in the past year and 92% have seen other drivers multi-tasking on the road – mostly using cell phones (82%).
- What frustrates those surveyed the most is when they see other drivers: read (69%) or use high tech devices like laptops and hand-held devices (67%), followed by cell phone usage (62%) and putting on make-up, shaving or combing hair (62%).
- Most drivers who have multi-tasked in past year: Alberta (85%)
- Least drivers who have multi-tasked in past year: Quebec (70%)

Drowsy Driving

- 9% of those surveyed have fallen asleep while 54% reported feeling drowsy while driving in the past year.
- 76% of respondents say it is common for people to drive while drowsy.
- 59% of drivers surveyed feel the most tired while driving in the afternoon and evening.
- Highest number of drowsy drivers: Alberta (62%)
- Lowest number of drowsy drivers: Quebec (39%)

The survey was conducted by Thompson Lightstone & Co. by telephone among a proportionately representative, random sample of 1,001 Canadian residents, 18 years of age and older between April 11 and 18, 2002. The sample is accurate to within +/- 3.1 percentage points.

Public Platform

Sun Safety Alert

Sports and outdoor activities are an important part of a healthy lifestyle. Unprotected exposure to the sun is not.

Head protection is *de rigueur* in sports like cycling. A safe cyclist rides defensively to prevent a crash from ever happening but also wears a helmet for head protection in case of a crash. Use the same principle for sun safety. The key is to prevent harmful exposure from ever happening, so your first priority should be to stay out of the sun. If you must be outside, take measures to protect yourself from the sun's rays.

Skin injured by the sun may be easier to ignore than a broken arm or a concussion. Nonetheless, the long-term effects, especially on young people (who are the most likely to seek a tan), can be very serious.

Skin Cancer on the Rise

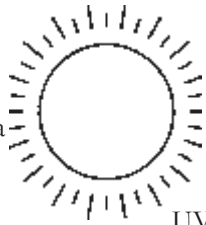
Sunburn, skin cancer, skin aging and cataracts are all blamed on over-exposure to UV radiation. Avoiding skin damage from UV rays could prevent 60 to 70% of skin cancer cases.

Melanoma is the least common but most serious form of skin cancer. The Canadian Dermatology Association estimates that 3,900 new cases will be reported in 2002, over 60% more than 1989. Between the ages of 15 and 34, melanoma is the fourth most common cancer. If found at an early stage, it is curable; but if detected late, it can kill. There is no effective chemotherapy at present. The incidence of non-melanoma skin cancer is rising even faster — up 80%, from 40,000 cases in 1989 to a forecast 72,000 in 2002.

Generally skin cancer appears 10 to 25 years after initial sun exposure. The more time young people spend unprotected in the sun, the higher their risk for developing skin cancer later in life.

Made-in-Canada UV Index 10 Years Old

Three Environment Canada scientists invented the solar UV Index 10 years ago. It was developed in 1992 in the midst of concerns about ozone levels after the eruption of Mount Pinatubo in the Philippines. It is now an



international standard, used in weather forecasts around the world to warn people about the strength of the sun's UV rays.

Even though the UV Index is a Canadian invention, a recent poll conducted for Environment Canada found 44% of Canadians have never used it.

How Sun Smart Are We — Really?

There is evidence that Canadians are not as careful about sun safety as they should be.

A study of parents and children on beaches in British Columbia revealed a reliance on sunscreen to protect against sunburn. Half of the parents interviewed were wearing sunscreen, while 65% said their children were wearing sunscreen. Most (over 80%) of parents had not re-applied their own or their children's sunscreen. Fewer than one in 10 of the children observed wore a shirt or a hat of any kind — fewer still, a proper wide-brimmed hat. Moreover, despite the high UV-exposure setting, very few parents or children took advantage of shade under nearby trees or umbrellas.

The Canadian Dermatology Association reports that while 80% of Canadians claim to use sunscreen for beach activities, only 42% use it for other outdoor activities. For example, few golfers protect themselves from the sun, yet they often play during the middle of the day, when the sun's radiation is at its peak.

Sun Safety Basics

Pay attention to the UV Index and minimize exposure to the damaging rays of the sun. UV rays usually reach their peak around noon, so keep out of the sun in the middle of the day. When you are outside, stay in the shade, and make it a habit to wear a wide-brimmed hat, long sleeves and protective sunglasses.

Canada Sun Guide: see page 7.

New Locks for Old Cedar Chests

Lane Home Furnishings asked the Canada Safety Council to help locate and make safer for children airtight cedar chests made from 1912 to 1987.

Lane estimates that up to one million of these pre-1987 cedar chests may be found in dwellings throughout Canada. The company is offering owners a new, safer lock free-of-charge. The new locks, used on all chests since 1987, must be latched manually from outside the chest and will not be engaged automatically when the lid is closed.

Long after these chests have passed from generation to generation or through estate sales, they are sometimes used as toy boxes or left empty in basements, garages and sheds. Unsupervised children playing in a chest can close and lock the lid, making an airtight seal. There have been tragedies of this kind.

Owners of old Lane or Virginia Maid chests owners can obtain a safe, new lock by calling toll-free 1-800-856-8758 or registering at Lane's Web site (www.newlock.net). As of May 2002, hundreds of chest owners in Canada have inquired about, ordered and received the new locks. Δ

Your first priority should be to stay out of the sun.

Apply plenty of sunscreen before going outside, whether it's sunny or cloudy, hot or cool. Make sure it has an SPF of at least 15 against both UVA and UVB rays, use it generously and re-apply it after swimming or exercise.

To be sun smart, combine all four *Canada Sun Guide* basics — and enjoy your outdoor activities! Δ

References:

1. *The Canada Safety Council developed the Canada Sun Guide™ in partnership with Active Living—Go for Green! and other partners. It was published in 1996 to help Canadians combine sun safety with outdoor activities.*
2. *Sun Protection Among Parents and Children at Freshwater Beaches, Jean A. Shoveller et al., Canadian Journal of Public Health, March-April 2002*
3. *1996 National Survey on Sun Exposure & Protective Behaviours, Institute of Health Promotion Research, University of British Columbia, 1998.*

Helmet Use, from page 1.

Helmet use in all sports surveyed is higher in those provinces with legislation. In British Columbia and the Atlantic provinces, where helmet use is mandatory for all bicyclists, three out of five adults say they always wear a helmet. Children in those regions also have high usage rates: 87% in B.C. and 84% in the Maritimes.

B.C. was the first province to mandate helmets for all cyclists, in 1996. A study comparing usage in 1995 and 1999 found that three years after the legislation, B.C. cyclists were two to three times more likely to be wearing a helmet.

Ontario and Alberta mandate helmets for children under 18. In Ontario, 94% of parents and in Alberta 85% say their children wear a helmet when cycling. However, Alberta's law only came into effect April 1, 2002, so the rate of helmet use by children in that province may not be strictly due to legislation. In both provinces, only 1/3 of adult cyclists say they always wear a helmet.

Having a law in place is only part of the solution. Sometimes helmets are worn too far back, straps too loose, straps clipped together on top of the helmet or not clipped at all. An improperly adjusted helmet may provide very little head protection in a crash — it's not purely aesthetic.

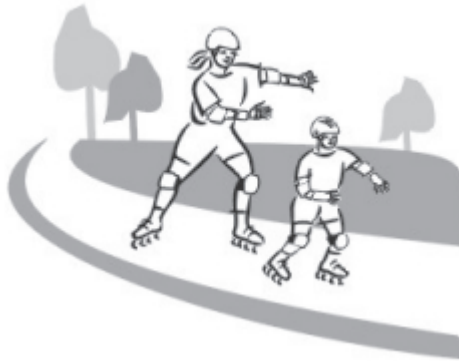
In provinces with no provincial helmet legislation, seven or eight respondents out of every 10 mistakenly thought there was. This may indicate Canadians are receptive to helmet laws; perhaps there is a comparison with seat-belt laws. Three-quarters of all respondents agreed that legislation is an effective way to increase helmet use.

Results Provide Direction

The survey findings imply progress may stall unless more adults start wearing helmets. Role models, including parents, can change perceptions and behavior. In addition, advertisers and celebrities must create a 'cool' image for helmets."

Canadians seem to agree that a combination of tactics is needed. When asked which of three approaches they felt would be most effective to increase helmet use, respondents gave the strongest approval to public information and awareness campaigns (88%). Safety courses and events rated a close second (81%), then government regulation (77%).

Helmets: Attitudes and Actions gives a useful snapshot of how Canadians feel about wearing helmets in various sports on wheels and helps identify areas for further safety efforts.



Helmets: Attitudes and Actions Key Findings

- Over half of Canadian adults (52%) who ride bicycles never or rarely wear a helmet when they bicycle, while fewer (40%) wear one always or most of the time.
- The majority of parents report that their children wear a helmet when bicycling (84%), in-line skating (79%), riding a scooter (73%), and skateboarding (69%).
- Topping the list of suggested reasons why Canadians do not wear sporting helmets, are 'don't bother' (14%), 'appearance' (14%), 'not cool' (13%), 'uncomfortable' (11%) and 'inconvenient/cumbersome' (10%).
- Almost all (97%) Canadians strongly agree or somewhat agree that wearing a helmet for activities such as bicycling, skateboarding, in-line skating and using a scooter can prevent serious injury.
- Nearly as many (95%) strongly agree or somewhat agree that it is important always to wear a helmet while participating in such activities. △

The Ipsos-Reid Canadian Express omnibus survey conducted 1,000 interviews by telephone between 8 and 10 January 2002, among a representative random sample of Canadian adults aged 18 years and older. The results of the survey are accurate to within ±3.1%, 19 times out of 20. The margin of error for subsets of this population will be larger.

Helmets: Attitudes and Actions can be downloaded from the Canada Safety Council's Web site (www.safety-council.org).



www.dogsandkids.ca, from page 7.

When you take your new dog to the veterinarian for its physical examination, discuss any concerns related to behaviour and aggression. The importance of spaying/neutering your pet cannot be over-emphasized. Spaying and neutering may help eliminate various behavioural problems, in addition to preventing many medical issues.

Dogs & Kids includes a section on what dog owners should do in the interest of safety.



Teaching Kids About Dogs

Whether or not they own one, parents need to ensure their children know how to behave around dogs. Even a friendly dog may bite if threatened, angry, afraid or hurt. Dogs protect things they care about, including their food, puppies, favourite toy or owner. They also protect spaces — their own and their owner's. Children need to understand that dogs are protective by nature, and to recognize situations that may frighten or anger a dog.

Never leave babies or young children alone with a dog. It is essential to teach children not to play fight with, tease, yell at, or chase dogs or other animals. Kids and their parents should visit the site at www.dogsandkids.ca to learn more about safety around dogs.

First National Partnership to Prevent Dog Bites Among Children

The National Companion Animal Coalition was formed in 1996 to promote socially responsible pet ownership and enhance the health and well-being of companion animals. It is comprised of representatives from the Canadian Veterinary Medical Association, the Canadian Federation of Humane Societies, the Pet Industry Joint Advisory Council of Canada and the Canadian Kennel Club. Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada is an observer member, and the group also draws upon key individuals involved in animal welfare and municipal animal control.

The Coalition and the Canada Safety Council are working together on this special project to increase public

Protecting Children from Dog Bites

National Companion Animal Coalition To Launch New Web Site

COMING SOON

There are an estimated 3.7 million dogs in Canada. Many are pets in households with children.

A dog can be a child's best friend. The right dog, properly socialized and trained, makes a safe, reliable companion. Nonetheless, a dog is an animal, and in some unfortunate circumstances dogs can and do bite. Children under 10 years of age are the most common victims, and summer is the most likely time of year.

The majority of these bites happen in and around the child's own home. Typically the biting dog is a family pet or belongs to someone the family knows. The advice provided on a new Web site could prevent many of the incidents.

The National Companion Animal Coalition has combined its efforts with the Canada Safety Council

to develop an educational Web site with the goal of reducing the incidence of dog bites, especially in children under 10. The site, www.dogsandkids.ca, provides safety tips for young children, their parents and educators to help prevent dog bites. The Coalition and the Canada Safety Council thank the British Columbia Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals for allowing the use of its dog bite prevention program **Bite Free** in the development of this Web site.

Choosing Your Dog's Personality

Are you in the market for a dog? The *Dogs & Kids* site advises you to choose carefully. Dogs that have been bred to be non-aggressive family pets are the best bet. If you want to know what to expect from a puppy, find out about the behaviour and characteristics of the parent dogs and of the breed in general.

The Canadian Kennel Club can help identify key issues before adopting a dog, and identify breeds that match your requirements. Pet specialty shops, humane societies and SPCAs are excellent sources for a pet dog. Most societies conduct temperament evaluations of the dogs in their care and will help you find a dog that is a good match for you and your lifestyle. In addition, your veterinarian can offer helpful advice to guide your selection.

Raising and Training Your Dog

Every owner or potential owner of a dog must understand and accept the responsibility of taking appropriate obedience training and socializing their dog properly. As an owner you are ultimately responsible for your dog's behaviour and all of the safety issues regarding your pet.

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Canada Sun Guide

Minimize Sun Exposure

- ✓ Schedule outdoor physical activities when UV rays are at their weakest — before 11:00 a.m. and after 4:00 p.m., especially between the months of April and October.
- ✓ Always keep children under the age of one out of the sun.
- ✓ Remember that skin doesn't have to be hot to burn, so don't be fooled by cloudy or overcast weather.
- ✓ Remember too that water, snow, sand and concrete can reflect and increase the sun's burning rays.

Seek and Create Shade

- ✓ Seek natural shade from trees and buildings.
- ✓ Plant trees in school yards and other play areas.
- ✓ Use shade umbrellas, or create other forms of shade if natural shade is not possible.
- ✓ Keep playpens, strollers and carriages in shaded areas.



Cover Up

- Eighty per cent of skin cancers occur above the neck.
- ✓ Cover children's heads, necks and ears with a broad brimmed hat when outdoors.
 - ✓ Protect arms and legs with tightly woven, loose fitting, cotton clothing.
 - ✓ Children should wear a T-shirt over their bathing suit, and long shorts instead of short shorts.
 - ✓ Wear UVA/UVB protective sunglasses — children can wear them too.

Use Sunscreen

- ✓ Have children use a broad spectrum sunscreen (protects against both UVA and UVB rays) with a sun protection factor (SPF) of 15 or more.
- ✓ Apply sunscreen generously before all outdoor physical activities such as swimming, skateboarding, biking or even walking. Remember to apply at least 20 minutes before sun exposure. Reapply often, as perspiration will reduce the effectiveness.



The UV Index

The UV Index is a measure of the strength of the sun's burning ultraviolet rays. The higher the number, the stronger the sun. The daily UV Index forecast is a prediction of the maximum (early afternoon) UV Index for the day.

Sunblocks

Sunblocks are opaque creams which create a physical barrier, blocking or reflecting UV radiation. These blockers can be applied to particularly sensitive areas, such as the nose or tops of ears, for additional UV protection.

Tanning Parlors

Avoid them. No tan is a safe tan. Tanning parlors and sunlamps are not a safe way to tan. Sunlamps may accelerate the aging of the skin and contribute to the development of skin cancer.

You can download the *Canada Sun Guide* from the *Sports and Active Living* section of the *Canada Safety Council's* Web site.

Did you know?

In 1998 to 1999, UK statistics show there were almost 17,000 firearms offences, 60% of which involved air guns. The following year, air gun offences increased by 17%. One in five offences caused injury and in almost one in 10, the victim had to be admitted to hospital because of shock, fracture, or multiple wounds. There are about four million air guns in UK households. The law does not require a licence; children under 14 can use them if supervised by an adult. An article in the journal *Archives of Disease in Childhood* calls for air gun use to be restricted to supervised target ranges and for the power of their pellets to be reduced.
BBC News, March 25, 2002

Stress on the job is fueling an alarming increase in workplace outbursts, according to a new survey of 6,000 employees conducted by TMP Worldwide, Australia's largest recruitment firm. About 16% said they worked in an office where yelling and verbal abuse happened frequently, and one in 10 said they had been a victim of violence in the workplace. An additional 65% admitted losing their temper with a boss or co-worker, and 90% said they had witnessed a workplace outburst by their boss or co-worker.
The Daily Telegraph, April 22, 2002

In the 10 years from 1990 to 1999, pedestrian deaths in Canada went down by almost half, injuries by a quarter. Nevertheless, in 1999, there were 414 pedestrian fatalities and 13,671 injuries. Almost 70% were killed in urban areas, almost 2/3 at intersections. Canadians over age 65 accounted for 1/3 of pedestrian deaths although they represent only 1/8 of the population.
Road Safety in Canada - 1999, Transport Canada

According to a British Columbia study, individuals who use cell phones while driving are inherently riskier drivers. They have more violations for speeding, impaired driving, seat-belt non-usage, aggressive driving and non-moving violations than drivers who refrain from cell phone use in vehicles, or have low usage. This indicates differences in lifestyle, attitude and personality that need to be considered in the design and targeting of public awareness campaigns.
Collision and Violation Involvement of Drivers Who Use Cellular Telephones, Jean Wilson et al, Insurance Corporation of British Columbia, (May 2002)

The BC government is giving police the ability to impound vehicles involved in road racing. New legislation gives police the authority to impound vehicles involved in racing for 48 hours on a first incident. Drivers caught racing again within two years can have their vehicle impounded for 30 days. In addition to vehicle impoundment and penalty points, drivers who race can also face fines up to \$2,000 and charges under the Criminal Code.
British Columbia Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General, May 14, 2002

In the thirteen months after it was introduced, Ontario's Administrative Driver's Licence Suspension (ADLS) Law resulted in a 17% reduction in the proportion of fatally injured drivers who have blood levels over the legal limit. The law requires anyone charged with driving with a blood alcohol level over 80 mg% or failing to provide a breath sample would have their license suspended immediately for 90 days. The ADLS law came into effect on November 29, 1996.

Centre for Addiction and Mental Health, in the Canadian Journal of Public Health, May/June 2002

According to the U.S. Department of Transportation, the percentage of traffic deaths that were alcohol-related in 2001 remained unchanged at 40%. The study estimated the number of total highway deaths at 41,730 in 2001, compared to 41,821 in 2000. The number of injuries dropped from 3.2 million in 2000 to 3.0 million in 2001. Each year since 1994, alcohol-related traffic deaths in the U.S. have hovered between 16,000 and 17,000, while the percentage of highway deaths that have been alcohol-related has remained at about 40%.
National Commission Against Drunk Driving, Washington, DC, April 24, 2002

Car drivers wearing seat-belts are five times more likely to die in a crash if their back-seat passengers are unrestrained. Japanese researchers analysed data on about 100,000 car crashes between 1995 and 1999 in Japan, where rear seat-belt use is not compulsory. They concluded that the number of deaths in the collisions studied could have been reduced by 79.2%, if the rear seat passengers had also used belts. Overall, deaths and severe injuries could be reduced by nearly half.
The Lancet (vol 359, p 43), cited in NewScientist.com, January 4, 2002

Transportation incidents, in particular highway crashes, continue to be the leading cause of workplace deaths in the U.S. According to a report by the AFL-CIO, they account for 2,613 or 43 percent of all work-related fatalities in 1999. Highway crashes account for one-quarter of the fatal work injury total (1,491) and are at the highest level since the Bureau of Labor Statistics fatality census began in 1992.
1SafetySource.com Safety News, May 23, 2002

About 246 million children ages 5 to 17 worldwide are involved in child labour. Some 110 million children in hazardous work are under age 15. An estimated 8.4 million are trapped in the most abhorrent forms of child labour, including slavery, trafficking, prostitution and other such activities. Most child workers are in the informal sector where they have no legal or regulatory protection; 70% are in agriculture, commercial hunting and fishing or forestry. Each year 12,000 children die working in hazardous conditions.
International Labour Organization, World Day against Child Labour, June 12, 2002