



## Connection

A newsletter for  
Child & Youth Injury Prevention Advocates  
September 2009/Issue 15

# ExxonMobil Funds CSL's Falls Strategy

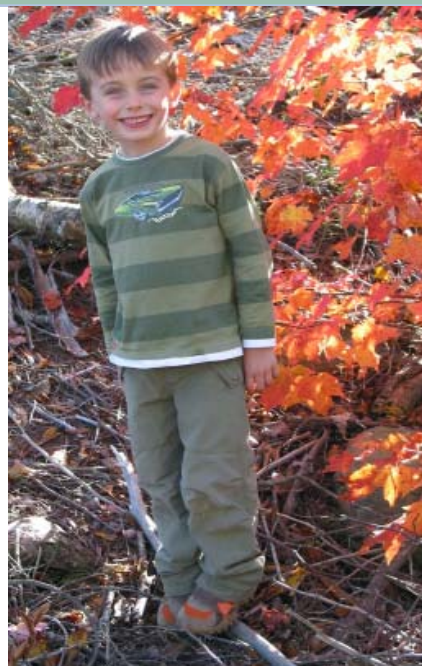
ExxonMobil has been a proud supporter of the Child Safety Link for many years, starting with funding of the Child Safety Link's Car Seat Safety Growth Chart, which has been one of CSL's most requested resources and also made popular in Ontario.

This year, ExxonMobil is providing financial support to another invaluable program. The Children's Falls Prevention Strategy will investigate how to reduce the number and severity of falls in children, especially as they relate to home and playground injuries. Every day, the IWK Health Centre treats seven fall-related injuries. For children under five, falling is the number one cause of their injuries. The Children's Falls Prevention Strategy will look at the frequency of falls per age group, the types of falls and, most importantly, how to prevent them. The goal is to gather stakeholder input and current data, and have an implementation plan for the next steps in place by January 2010.

"The falls prevention strategy is an essential research project and it would not be possible without the generosity of ExxonMobil," says Robbie Shaw, President and CEO of the IWK Foundation. "We are very appreciative of ExxonMobil's role as a prominent employer in this region, and as a responsible corporate citizen that gives generously to causes that match corporate and employee values."

This past summer, CSL Health Promotion Specialist Sarah Blades had the exciting opportunity to share information about children's falls in the Maritimes with more than 50 of ExxonMobil's Halifax staff at their quarterly safety meeting. Says Sarah: "This was a wonderful opportunity to let staff know that their organization is supporting a valuable initiative against the major cause for children's injury hospitalization."

Kids will be kids, and minor scrapes and bruises will happen. However, by supporting this worthwhile initiative, ExxonMobil will help parents and caregivers receive the information and support they need to ensure that their children are able to spend more time having fun and less time in the hospital.



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## September 12-18: Child Passenger Safety Week in NS

CSL celebrated **Child Passenger Safety Week** the week of September 12-18, 2009.

Motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of death among children in Canada, but properly buckling children in age and size-appropriate car seats can reduce the risk of injury and death by 70 per cent. However, many Nova Scotian children are still in danger every day because their parents and caregivers struggle to install car seats correctly or are not aware of the risks.

“The goal of Child Passenger Safety Week is to bring public attention to the importance of safely transporting children,” explains Sandra Newton, Manager, Child Safety Link. “An unrestrained child in a car crash at 50 km/hr experiences the same force that they would from falling off a three-story building.”

As part of Child Passenger Safety Week, some special events took place around the province, including:

- a car seat information session for parents in North Preston on September 12
- several car seat road-side educational stops with HRM Police in the Porter’s Lake area

For more information, please contact Kim Mundle Car Seat Safety Specialist, Child Safety Link, 1-866-288-1388 extension 1 (car seats) or 902-470-7324 or by email at [kim.mundle@iwk.nshealth.ca](mailto:kim.mundle@iwk.nshealth.ca).

## Community Highlight: 0-4 Falls Prevention Working Group of the South Shore Safe Communities

*by Sarah Blades, Health Promotion Specialist, Child Safety Link*

Injuries due to falls are the most common reason children are hospitalized in the Maritimes. Serious falls from heights, from high furniture or playground equipment, can cause severe injury to a baby or young child.

Child Safety Link would like to celebrate work being done against this injury issue, by a dedicated group of individuals in Nova Scotia’s Queens and Lunenburg Counties. Staff from Public Health Services including staff in the Healthy Development program, South Shore Health, local child care centres and other community organizations are working together to prevent children aged 0-4 from being seriously injured due to falls. This collection of passionate individuals forms the 0-4 Falls Prevention Working Group of South Shore Safe Communities. The goal of this working group is to reduce the number of children’s falls in Lunenburg and Queens Counties that occur in the home and at play. The group has been working together for only a few short years, but in that time they have accomplished great things. A large part of their efforts have been in developing and implementing community initiatives.

One program the 0-4 Falls Prevention Working Group has developed is an initiative to get baby gates into the homes of families who may not otherwise have access due to cost. Local Home Hardware stores, the 0-4 Falls Prevention Working Group and two family resource

centres partnered in distributing a total of 24 gates to families in these communities. The working group is now gathering feedback from partners in the program (families and family resource centres) to build an evidence-based sustainability plan for the initiative.

Another great initiative of the working group is the “Eye Spy the Safety Fly” pre-school safety curriculum: a series of fun activities for children that includes stories, rhymes, and take home activities that are introduced in a daycare setting. The group spent many hours on research, revisions and gathering materials for the program to run as smoothly as possible. This year, the curriculum was completed and pilot-tested at two child-care facilities in Queen’s County. Valuable feedback was collected from teachers, and evaluation forms were sent home to parents of the children to determine if any impact of the activities was reflected at home. Further revisions will be made to the curriculum, in hopes of securing funding to expand into more daycares in the future. Child Safety Link would like to send a big “Bravo!” to the 0-4 Falls Prevention Working Group on their progress to date!

For more information on the 0-4 Falls Prevention Working Group, and the South Shore Safe Communities movement, check out their website at: <http://southshore.safecommunities.ca/index.php>



## Report Released: *The Economic Burden of Injury in Canada*

by Jennifer Heatley, ACIP Executive Director

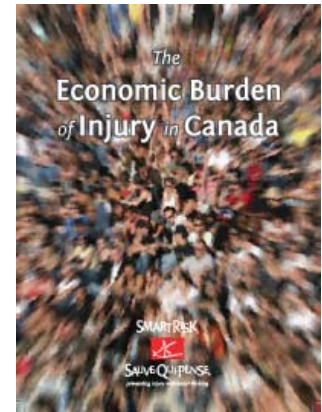
Injury costs Canadians \$19.8 billion annually – more than \$600 for each man, woman and child in the country, according to a new report released by SMARTRISK, *The Economic Burden of Injury in Canada*. In fact, injury – from falls, traffic, drowning, suicide, violence and other means – remains the leading cause of death for Canadians aged one to 44, taking the lives of 13,667 people in 2004.

In Atlantic Canada in 2004, injury took 1059 lives and cost more than \$1.3 billion. The cost for injuries to children aged 1-14 years alone was \$206 million. The highest per capita economic burden was in New Brunswick at \$616 for every person. The lowest was in Newfoundland and Labrador at \$518 per capita.

Falls, transport related injuries, and suicide/self-harm are the leading causes of injury death and hospitalization in all four provinces. In most of the provinces, transport injuries were the leading cause of death and falls were the leading cause of hospitalization. PEI has the highest mortality rate in the country for transport related injuries, but the lowest in the country for suicide and violence. Nova Scotia has the highest mortality rate for falls in the country, while Newfoundland and Labrador have the lowest. Mortality rates in New Brunswick for transport injuries, suicides, and falls are all higher than the national average.

The bottom line is that injury *is* preventable through a combination of educational programs, environmental modifications and enforcement mechanisms. Atlantic Canadians need not spend \$1.3 billion each year in health care costs and lost productivity due to injury.

SMARTRISK and its injury prevention partners call on both provincial and federal governments to invest in preventing injury, to protect the lives and health of their citizens and to reduce the tremendous economic burden of injury borne by all Canadians. See the full report at [www.smartrisk.ca](http://www.smartrisk.ca).



## IBC Launches Catapult Man Book across Atlantic Canada!

Since CSL's initial launch of *Simon and Catapult Man's Perilous Playground Adventure* in Halifax on June 17, our generous sponsor, the Insurance Bureau of Canada (IBC), has been making great progress on its promise to distribute the book to every school in Atlantic Canada. To date, the books have starred in the following presentations:



In photo: Amanda Dean, Manager, Government Relations, IBC Atlantic and the Hon. Gerard Greenam, Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development for PEI

- ✓ On June 17, Department of Education representative Natalie Flinn accepted IBC's donation for Nova Scotia schools at an event at the Halifax Military Family Community Centre.
- ✓ On August 5, Derrick Dalley, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Education accepted IBC's donation for Newfoundland and Labrador at the Royal St. John's Regatta.
- ✓ On August 27, New Brunswick Minister of Education Roland Hache accepted IBC's donation to provincial schools at the Kent Exhibition.
- ✓ On September 16, PEI Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development, Gerard Greenam, accepted the book donation on behalf of island schools.

IBC will continue to work with other regional partners where possible as part of its commitment. CSL sends our thanks again to IBC for this generous contribution to kids across the region!



## Announcements

We'd like to welcome Jackie Thompson to the CSL team as our new Health Promotion Specialist for the CSL New Brunswick office! Jackie holds a BA in Psychology and is also a Child Restraint Technician. She can be reached (506) 648-7991 or by email at [Jacqueline.Thompson@r2.rha-rrs.ca](mailto:Jacqueline.Thompson@r2.rha-rrs.ca)

Welcome, Jackie!

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We'd also like to welcome Jenna Hopson to the CSL team as a Health Promotion Specialist. Jenna, who has a Health Science degree and who worked for 5 years as a public health promoter in Ontario, can be reached from Monday to Thursday at (902)470-7167 or by email at [jenna.hopson@iwk.nshealth.ca](mailto:jenna.hopson@iwk.nshealth.ca)

Welcome, Jenna!

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*Special thanks to our partners in children's safety.*



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*This newsletter is published in  
September, December, March and June.*

## Upcoming Events

### Safe Communities Day: October 7, 2009

HRM Safe Communities will celebrate its 3rd annual event at Grand Parade, Halifax, at noon. For more info on the event, contact Jeanette McPherson at [mackayj@halifax.ca](mailto:mackayj@halifax.ca) or call (902) 490-6530.

### It's Your Move...

Public Health stakeholders and interested parties are invited to provide input re. the future of Public Health in Nova Scotia at the following public meetings:

- Halifax, October 8, 9:30 -3:30 p.m., Mount Saint Vincent University
  - Liverpool, October 22, 9:30-3:30 p.m., Best Western
  - Antigonish, November 5, 9:30-3:30 p.m., St. FXU
- RSVP by email to [yourmove@gov.ns.ca](mailto:yourmove@gov.ns.ca)

October 28th: The Atlantic Collaborative on Injury Prevention (ACIP) and Child Safety Link will be **launching a new report** developed with Safe Kids Canada on unintentional injuries to children and youth in Atlantic Canada. The Halloween-themed launch will take place at the Boys & Girls Club of Saint John, 1 Paul Harris Street. Time to be confirmed.

October 29th: **new ACIP Learning Series-Webinar** highlighting the new Atlantic report on child and youth injuries. Speakers: Sandra Newton, CSL; Jennifer Heatley, ACIP. Time: 1 pm Atlantic. Check ACIP listserv for more details to come.

## Funding Opportunity!

On October 2, the IWK Community Grants Program will issue a Call for Applications for the 2009/2010 grant program. The grant annually reallocates \$300,000 of IWK Foundation money back into communities across the Maritimes to non-profit and charitable projects that support the goals of the IWK. **This year, the application criteria has been expanded to include projects related to injury prevention.** Applications are available on [www.iwk.nshealth.ca](http://www.iwk.nshealth.ca) or [www.iwkfoundation.org](http://www.iwkfoundation.org). For more information, please contact Julie Harrington, IWK Community Grants Coordinator at (902)443-2563 or at [julie.harrington@iwk.nshealth.ca](mailto:julie.harrington@iwk.nshealth.ca)

