



Safety Canada

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Our Most Dangerous Game

The never-ending incidents of on-ice tuggery are turning hockey into our most dangerous game. Horrible incidents – such as the recent head shot by Patrice Cormier on Mikael Tam in a Quebec major junior game – call to mind everything that is wrong with hockey in our country: poor leadership; an elitist and exclusionary attitude; lofty and unrealistic expectations; overzealous coaches and parents; and no fun or recreational benefits for the players.

The long-term brain damage suffered by Reggie Fleming during his professional playing career, as revealed by researchers at Boston University, should serve as a wake-up call for those Canadians concerned with the health and safety of all players, especially minor leaguers, and the future of the game as we know it. The release of these findings coincided with statements made by Toronto neurosurgeon Charles Tator at the recent Hockey Canada sponsored concussion seminar who said there has been too much emphasis on “sock ‘em, kill ‘em type

of hockey” in minor hockey. Dr. Tator has been a long-time advocate of finding better ways to make hockey a safer game.

The consequences of traumatic hits to the head speak for themselves. Research has found that hockey-related brain injuries, via hits to the head or bodies colliding against the boards or other bodies, can cause post-concussive symptoms, cognitive disorders, depression, personality changes and substance abuse. As parents, my wife and I were always concerned about our son, Chris, sustaining injuries throughout his different careers at the various levels, up to his NHL playing days. We were particularly concerned about injuries to the face, eyes and head. Chris did suffer a concussion in the latter stages of his career. This was a very decisive factor in his decision to retire, after 12 years in the league. We wholeheartedly supported his decision to leave the game that he and we loved so much.

Chris was also plagued with a chronic shoulder injury from playing. This led

to surgery. It is generally accepted that injuries are part and parcel of such a rough game. Players accept this. But no one should have to endure injuries resulting from on-ice violence such as fighting and cheap shots to the head.

An emotional debate has been raging for years about our national sport. Should body checking be allowed in minor hockey? According to the Canadian Institute for Health Information, 8,000 people were treated for hockey-related injuries in Ontario hospital emergency rooms in the 2002-'03 season, in 93 cases the casualties were admitted to hospital, 15 directly to critical care units. Among young hockey players (18 and under) 62 per cent of the injuries were a result of checking. Injuries caused by body checks were the most common in the 14 to 16 age group, after players have been exposed to body checking for several years.

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President's Perspective

In July 2009, the Ministry of Public Safety and the Solicitor General surveyed groups, police and security personnel on the proposal to regulate the sale, possession and use of body armour in British Columbia. The Body Armour Control Act (BACA) received Royal Assent on October 29, 2009.

The BACA was created to enhance public safety by making it difficult for criminals to legally possess or purchase body armour. Criminals are increasingly using body armour to allow them to engage in firearms-related violence; increasing the risks to the public and police.

Here at the Canada Safety Council we have considerable expertise in injury prevention and in working with government ministries to achieve greater safety for Canadians. We have concerns regarding the BACA, which aims to restrict the sale and possession of body armour garments. Unfortunately, as presented, the proposed regulations would remove the opportunity for tens of thousands of British Columbians to purchase and use these important safety garments. While we strongly support legislation that will improve safety for police officers, these regulations will cast a net so wide that it will restrict protective garments for motorcyclists, ATV riders, dirt bike riders, forestry workers, farm workers and many others.

Synthetic materials such as Kevlar™ and ballistic nylon are widely used in everything from the protective gear used by loggers to thousands of motorcyclists, ATV riders, dirt bike

riders and others who wear protective jackets, pants, gloves and helmets while riding. In the case of motorcyclists for example, Kevlar™- reinforced ballistic nylon jackets and pants have become widely accepted as the most user friendly form of protective gear that can be worn while riding a motorcycle. CSC has recommend the use of protective equipment made from these materials for years.

The introduction of these proposed regulations would mean that tens of thousands would be forced to find alternative forms of protection from abrasive or puncture wounds as a result of recreational or justified professional use. Otherwise undergo a criminal record check and pay a permit fee. This is an unnecessary burden to those who are legitimately using these materials solely for safety purposes.

I have long supported personal safety in various sport and work environments. This proposed framework will put people at unnecessary risk of severe injuries and even fatality. I am strongly urging and recommending that the regulations, in their present form, be withdrawn and a much wider consultation with all affected stakeholders is undertaken.

Safety, It's an Attitude



Jack Smith, President

Canadian Pupil Transportation Conference

This year's Canadian Pupil Transportation Conference is being held in our nation's capital at the Crowne Plaza and Aberdeen Pavilion in Lansdowne Park from May 16 – 19, 2010. CPTC will provide attendees with superior opportunities to discover innovative best practices and seize leading edge strategies for management of student transportation. The conference will focus on a variety of topics, including how to improve upon child safety outside the bus through new technologies and training.

For more information visit www.cptc2010.ca



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In Quebec, players do not bodycheck until Bantam (ages 13 to 14), and even then it is only introduced at the elite levels of the game. Pee wee (ages 11 and 12) is when bodychecking begins in Alberta. A Canadian study found that Pee wee players in Alberta were 2.5 times more likely to get hurt and 3.5 times more likely to suffer a concussion than the pee wee players in Quebec. The joint University of Calgary, McGill University, and the University of Laval study tracked 2,200 Pee wee players from both provinces for the entire 2007-2008 season to measure injury frequency.

The decision to allow body checking in minor hockey, for players as young as 11, is unquestionably jeopardizing this wonderful sport and favourite pastime. It is easily argued this practice borders on child abuse. It certainly flies in the face of public health, safety and injury prevention; it trumps medical science, common sense and civility.

Hitting is driving many young players away from the game. The main reason kids play any sport is for fun and recreation. The risk of serious injuries, including concussions, removes the motivation. Enrolment in Hockey Canada-approved teams has seen a shocking decline in recent years.

Violence degrades the world's fastest, most physically challenging and most highly skilled game. Hockey is not, and has never been, a law of its own. And contrary to what proponents claim, violence, including fighting, has never been an integral part of the game.

Fighting is banned in minor hockey in this country, college hockey in both the U.S. and Canada, in the European leagues, in the Olympics, and in international play. Banning fighting in all leagues would greatly add to the skill level of the game, by eliminating

marginal players in favour of skilled talent.

The sad and harsh reality is that violence in hockey has proliferated as long as Hockey Canada and its predecessor organization, the Canadian Amateur Hockey Association, have been in existence. It is easily argued Hockey Canada, through its relationship with the CHL, has been a willing participant in promoting and condoning violence in hockey for years.

A case in point: Patrice Cormier should have been, according to International Ice Hockey Federation rules, thrown out of

the recent World Junior Championship for his violent hit on a Swedish player in an exhibition game. Unfortunately, this rule was not enforced.

Hockey Canada is calling for a safety summit. Hopefully, it is not too late to save the game of hockey in Canada, which has such strong and historical roots. A major overhaul is needed and soon. Who is up to the challenge?

Written by Emile Therien, past president of the Canada Safety Council, and the father of former NHL defenceman Chris Therien.



PUBLIC SAFETY :

Pellet, Air and Replica Guns

Pellet guns and air guns are dangerous consumer products. More than 50 young people are hospitalized each year in Canada as a result of injuries from these guns. They are a leading cause of eye loss and eye damage in children and young adults.

While firearms legislation does cover guns capable of firing a projectile over 152.4 meters (500 feet) per second, any guns which fire at or below this velocity are not covered by any current federal restrictions, thereby making them available for purchase at many retail stores. But, ballistic tests have shown a pellet fired at 182 meters (600 feet) per second is capable of killing an adult or child, or at the very least cause serious injury. This begs the question – shouldn't pellet guns be included under the same firearms legislation as guns?

Shockingly, the Hazardous Products Act does not regulate these items, even though stuffed toys are. Pellet guns and air guns have wreaked more havoc and injury than many other products regulated under the 40-year old act. These guns are regularly used in the commission of crimes by offenders who present them as a real firearm. Police officers involved in a high-risk call cannot easily tell the difference between a real gun and a pellet or air gun. Bringing the manufacturing and sale of pellet guns and air guns under the authority of this act would provide a measure of safety and an important step in protecting Canadians.

The Canada Safety Council has approached police to push for pellet guns and air guns to be regulated under the federal Firearms Act for several years now. This would require pellet and air guns to fall under the purview of the Firearms Act. Consequently, they are readily available at many retail stores.

The federal Firearms Act prohibits the ownership of some pellet guns, however, they must closely resemble real models to be illegal.

The Ottawa Police Services Board will present a resolution to the Canadian Association of Police Boards at the 2010 Annual General Meeting and request the federal government to adopt stricter regulations when it comes to the sale and purchase of pellet guns and air guns. This resolution is supported by Chief Vern White.

A related safety concern is the use of realistically looking firearms – replica or “toy” guns – used in criminal activity. The victim at the end of a barrel is in no position to judge if

the gun is real or fake. SWAT teams have been mobilized to deal with people wielding toy or replica guns. Any person threatening to shoot is at risk of being shot, and there have been tragic circumstances, including an incident in the Ottawa area a few years ago. Toy guns and replica guns comprise up to 40 per cent of guns seized by police.

In the past four years, police officers across the country have shot and killed several people holding guns that later turned out to be replicas. Among the incidents were the following:

Jan. 16, 2010, Edmonton: A 48-year-old woman, was fatally shot by police at an Edmonton apartment while holding an air-gun replica of a Sig Sauer handgun and failing to respond to police commands.

March 6, 2009, Ottawa: A 27-year-old bank robbery suspect, was shot and killed by police after pointing a replica pistol at police and threatening to shoot.

Oct. 13, 2006, Burnaby, B.C.: A 37-year-old man, was shot to death by police after getting out of a car holding a replica gun following a car chase.

Pellet guns and air guns, along with replica or ‘toy’ guns can all be dangerous in their own right. Lives have been lost and many have been injured as a result of these ‘guns’ getting into the wrong hands. The federal government needs to act quickly to regulate the manufacturing and sale of these products in the interest of public safety.



WHEELS IN MOTION :

Are Hybrid Cars Causing Collisions?

Most grade-schoolers learn to stop, look, and listen before they cross the street. Now the listening part may be getting harder for people of all ages as quiet-engine hybrid vehicles proliferate. A new federal study reports that hybrid electric cars are more likely than models with internal combustion engines to crash with pedestrians and bicyclists, especially during low-speed maneuvers when the hybrids are likely to be running only on electricity.

Conducted by Refaat Hanna for the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, the study relies on police reports of collisions in 12 states to compute proportions of crashes involving pedestrians and bicyclists colliding with Honda and Toyota hybrids versus similar cars from the same automakers without hybrid engines. In comparing crash rates for the vehicle groups, Hanna noted their wind and tire noise. The hybrids' overall likelihood of crashing with a pedestrian was 40 per cent higher than the other cars', increasing to a 50 per cent difference in areas where speed limits were 35 mph (approximately 56 km/hour) or slower.

Hanna looked specifically at crashes that occurred when cars were slowing or stopping, backing up, or entering or leaving a parking space because such maneuvers usually occur at very low speeds — important because hybrids operate mostly on electric power at such speeds, so this is when the sound difference is greatest compared with other cars. The percentage of hybrid crashes involving

pedestrians in these situations was twice as high as it was for non-hybrids. There was no significant difference between the crash rates of the two groups of cars when they were travelling straight down a road.

Rates of bicyclist crashes, like those involving pedestrians, were higher for the hybrids than for the other group of cars. Again, the differences were greatest among crashes that involved maneuvers at very low speeds.

This study isn't based on large numbers, and Hanna concedes that "a larger sample would allow us to perform a more detailed analysis." He adds that the study is too limited to estimate the size of the quiet-engine hazard nationwide.

"Hanna reports some useful findings about an issue that first was raised by the National Federation of the Blind and others," Anne McCartt, Institute senior vice president for research, points out. "The differences in crash rates are substantial enough that we believe quiet vehicles may be a concern for all pedestrians and bicyclists, not just those who are blind."

This concern is likely to grow as hybrid cars proliferate. Back in the 2000 model year there was a single hybrid model, the Honda Insight. In contrast, the total is 33 hybrids among 2010 models. Registrations of new hybrids increased 38 per cent between 2006 and 2007 alone.

Source: Insurance Institute for Highway Safety, Status Report Vol. 44, No. 11



CHILD SAFETY :

Safety in the Movies

Simple, everyday safety messages that you teach your children are often ignored in the movies. A new study in the journal *Pediatrics* indicates that the entertainment industry could vastly improve upon scenes where high-risk behaviour is represented to kids.

Unintentional injuries are the leading cause of death among Canadian children. Unsafe safety practices seen on screen can lead to unsafe practices in everyday life, because children often imitate what they see in the movies.

Experts with the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) watched 125 of the top-grossing domestic G-rated and PG-rated movies for 2003 through 2007 to see how the film industry depicts high-risk behaviours in movies geared towards kids. Although, some improvements have been made over the years, they determined that half the scenes still continue to show unsafe behaviour, and the consequences of these behaviours are rarely shown.

The authors of the study looked for scenes where the films depicted unsafe practices, such as characters who didn't wear seat belts, life jackets or bike helmets. Movies or scenes were excluded if they were animated, not set in the present day, or if they were fantasy, documentary or not in English.

The CDC authors then compared their findings to two previous versions of the study, one done in 1998-2002 and the other in 1995-1997. They found that in the most recent movies:

- 22 scenes involved crashes or falls, resulting in three injuries and no deaths.
- 75 per cent of boaters wore a personal flotation device (PFD), versus none ('98-'02) and 17 per cent ('95-'97).
- 56 per cent of car passengers wore seat belts, versus 35 per cent and 27 per cent.
- 35 per cent of characters used crosswalks, versus 15 per cent and 16 per cent.
- 25 per cent of bicyclists wore helmets, versus 15 per cent and 6 per cent.

The results of this study indicate that there have been improvements in safety portrayals in children's movies since the last two studies, but

the film industry still needs to make progress in representing safety to children.

In the 2003 Christmas movie *Elf*, it shows the lead character, played by Will Ferrell, as he tries to cross a street in New York City but doesn't look both ways and gets hit by a taxicab. In the movie, he gets up and walks away from the collision; in real life you most likely would not be able to do this.

Jon Eric Tongren, an author of the study, says that because the scene minimizes the accidents' dangers, it might give young children a false sense of safety. And for films that kids have on DVD, they might watch that unsafe behaviour dozens of times, becoming desensitized to these dangers.

The authors of the study call on the film industry to continue to make improvements on how it depicts safety practices in children's movies. Parents should highlight these representations of unsafe behaviors and educate children on the correct safe practices. Also, a great way for children to learn proper safety is to practice what you preach. Kids will follow by example.

If you want your children to wear a helmet when they ride their bike, so should you.



KWIZ KORNER :

Do you know what to do in case of an emergency?

Questions:

1. **If you are caught out in the open during a lightning storm, you should:**
 - a. Lie flat on the ground.
 - b. Crouch down with your feet close together and your head down.
 - c. Stand directly under the biggest tree you can find.

2. **If you are driving when an earthquake hits, stop your car and get out.**
True or False

3. **Every household in Canada should have an emergency plan. What should your family discuss ahead of time?**
 - a. A floor plan of your home that shows all possible exits from each room.
 - b. Two safe places where everyone should meet.
 - c. An out-of-town contact person.
 - d. All of the above.

4. **You should be prepared to be self-sufficient for at least 72 hours during a severe storm.**
True or False

5. **What should you do before a severe storm hits?**
 - a. Secure everything that might be blown around or torn loose – indoors and outdoors.
 - b. Turn your generator on.
 - c. Trim dead branches and cut down dead trees.
 - d. All of the above.
 - e. Both A and C.

6. **You can use a cell phone or cordless telephone during a severe storm, if indoors, but it is not safe to use a corded telephone.**
True or False

1. **B.** - If you are caught in the open, do not lie flat. Crouch down with your feet close together and your head down (the "leap-frog" position). By minimizing your contact with the ground, you reduce the risk of being electrocuted by a ground charge. Do not ride bicycles, motorcycles, tractors, golf carts or use metal shovels or golf clubs because they may conduct electricity.

2. **False.** - During an earthquake, stop the car and stay in it, away from anything that could fall on you and your car. If you are indoors, the most important thing to remember during an earthquake is to DROP, COVER and HOLD ON. So remember to DROP to the floor and get under something for COVER and HOLD ON during the shaking. Face away from windows.

3. **D.** - Your family should write down and exercise your plan at least once a year. Your family may not all be together when a severe storm or emergency happens, but identifying a safe place where everyone should meet in case of an emergency will help. Make sure everybody has a copy of the emergency plan and keeps it close at hand. Other items to plan ahead of time include, what to do with pets, make a copy of emergency numbers to keep by the phone, and what to do if you live in an apartment.

4. **True.** - You may not have access to power and water in an emergency. Prepare an emergency kit to remain self-sufficient for 72 hours. Some basic supplies will be needed, such as water, non-perishable food, a radio, a flashlight, a first aid kit, etc. Make sure your kit is easy to carry and everyone in the household knows where it is. Keep your kit in a duffle bag, backpack or a suitcase with wheels.

5. **E.** - Securing down everything that might be blown away prevents flying objects such as garbage cans and lawn furniture from injuring people and damaging property. Trimming loose tree branches and dead trees reduces the danger from these falling onto your house during a storm.

6. **True.** - Lightning can travel through the metal wiring of a corded telephone line and can conduct electricity through the cord to your phone, possibly electrocuting the user. Cordless phone handsets and cell phones are safe to use, although the base station of the cordless phone is as vulnerable as a regular corded telephone.

Answers

Did you know?

- In the past 100 years, Canada has experienced at least 9 earthquakes that have registered between 7 and 8 on the Richter scale.
- It's a good idea to put your emergency kit in a backpack, duffel bag or suitcase with wheels. If you have to evacuate, you can easily bring it with you.
- More than half of all deaths from tornadoes happen in mobile homes.
- Hurricanes cause more widespread damage than tornadoes because they are bigger. Some hurricanes are as large as 1,000 kilometres across.
- Some hailstones are the size of peas while others can be as big as grapefruits.
- Automated bank machines and credit cards may not work during a blackout or other emergency. It's a good idea to put some cash in your emergency kit.
- Bolts of lightning hit the ground at about 40,000 kilometres per second!
- Two litres of water per person per day is the recommended amount to have on hand in case of emergency.



Source: Public Safety Canada

Safety Canada

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