



## Brain Injury Fact Sheet

- Damage to the brain and spinal cord can rarely be repaired. Life after a brain or spinal cord injury is never the same
- Injury is the leading killer of Canadian children and youth. 50 per cent of all deaths from injury are from brain injuries
- Thirty per cent of all traumatic brain injuries are sustained by children and youth, many of them while participating in sports and recreational activities
- Each severe brain injury costs our medical system over \$400,000 at the time of injury. Costs remain approximately the same each year following the incident due to indirect expenses and follow-up treatment
- Although catastrophic brain injuries in sports and recreation can affect anyone, boys/men are affected four times as frequently as girls/women

### The Good News:

- Researchers estimate that 90 per cent of all injuries are predictable and preventable
- Bike helmets can prevent up to 88 per cent of brain injuries in cyclists
- Skiers and snowboarders who wear helmets reduce their risk for head injuries by 60 per cent
- It is estimated that each dollar invested in a helmet saves \$30 in social costs

### What You Can Do

- Remember: Most crashes aren't accidents, but predictable, preventable events. Change the way you speak about these events to change social perception
- Encourage kids to be active, but ensure they get proper training, wear the gear, and are able to effectively navigate risks
- Be a role model: as parents, coaches and educators it is important to model safe, responsible behaviours like wearing a properly fitted helmet during appropriate activities, and buckling up in the car
- ThinkFirst has launched a number of new fact sheets for Brain Awareness Week. These outline simple but effective methods to prevent injury during sport and recreational activities. To download your free copy, please visit [www.thinkfirst.ca](http://www.thinkfirst.ca)
- Let decision-makers know that you support injury prevention – including helmet laws and strategic injury prevention investments.