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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

ThinkFirst Canada commends the Speech from the Throne

Thursday March 4, 2010, Toronto, ON - Dr. Charles Tator, founder of ThinkFirst Canada, commended the Harper Government on its commitment to a National Strategy on Childhood Injury Prevention. As stated in the speech from the throne by Governor General Michaëlle Jean: "To prevent accidents that harm our children and youth, our Government will also work in partnership with non-governmental organizations to launch a national strategy on childhood injury prevention."

Dr. Tator said: "The Government deserves a Gold Medal for its commitment to this important work to save Canada's children and youth from the ravages of death and disability due to preventable injury. As a brain surgeon, I have been involved in numerous tragedies due to injuries that could have been prevented. Our organization has done the research showing that injury prevention works when safety is emphasized in our schools and communities. For example, we have seen a decline in broken necks in hockey because leagues, parents and players have been educated about injury prevention and specific rules have been introduced and enforced. We need to do the same with all types of injuries. Unfortunately, unintentional injuries are still the number one cause of death among children and youth, and thus more needs to be done. With the Government of Canada as a partner for injury prevention we will be able to fight against what we recognize as the epidemic of injuries among children and youth. Also, injuries cost the country billions of dollars for medical costs and lost earnings, and so the Government's plan has the potential to dramatically reduce the country's medical bills."

ThinkFirst, Canada began in 1992, and is a national injury prevention charity concentrating on the reduction of catastrophic injuries such as brain and spinal cord injuries among Canada's children and youths. ThinkFirst has 19 chapters across the country, mainly staffed by volunteers and funded by private individuals, foundations and corporations. ThinkFirst supports Dr. Kellie Leitch's 2008 report "Reaching for the Top: a Report by the Advisor on Healthy Children and Youth," in which she recommended the establishment of a national injury prevention strategy for children and youth that combines non profit organizations such as ThinkFirst and the Government of Canada. ThinkFirst is eager to work with the Government and injury prevention stakeholders on this extremely worthwhile project to develop a national injury prevention strategy that will save our children and youth from catastrophic injuries.

ThinkFirst Canada is a national, charitable organization dedicated to preventing brain and spinal cord injury. Founded in 1992 by renowned neurosurgeon, Dr. Charles Tator, ThinkFirst Canada continues to be an injury prevention leader encouraging children and youth and those who care

about them to be active and safe. ThinkFirst advocates for proven injury prevention strategies including helmet use. At the heart of ThinkFirst Canada are 19 Chapters that stretch across the country. ThinkFirst's injury prevention message is promoted through sport programs, schools, community presentations, concussion education and with the help of VIPs (Voices for Injury Prevention), a dedicated group of injury survivors who share the message that prevention is the only cure.

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