THINKFIRST CANADA'S IN-LINE SKATING INJURY PREVENTION TIPS

The benefits of participation in in-line skating include aerobic fitness, independent transportation, athletic training, and fun! Here are ThinkFirst Canada's top tips for reducing your risk of sustaining a catastrophic injury while in-line skating. This information is taken from Chapter 29 "In-Line Skating" in the ThinkFirst book entitled *Catastrophic Injuries in Sports and Recreation: Causes and Prevention – A Canadian Study* edited by Charles H. Tator and published by the University of Toronto Press in 2008.

TOP TIPS:

- Recognize that injuries are particularly common in novice in-line skaters, roller hockey players, and those performing tricks.
- Wear full protective gear at all times, including a helmet, wristguards, elbow pads, and knee pads. Properly fit all equipment to the child or adult and ensure that it is certified by a recognized standards organization such as the Canadian Standards Association (CSA), Snell or the American National Standards Institute (ANSI). Skaters performing tricks need heavy duty protective wear.
- Use dead-end streets or cul-de-sacs, streets that are blocked off to traffic or bicycle lanes or paths. Novice in-line skaters should practice first in a protected area before heading out to the street.
- Do not attempt tricks if you are inexperienced.
- 'Truck-surfing' and or 'skitching' should be prohibited no matter what the level of experience.
- Carefully consider the type and fit of the in-line skates when they are purchased. Ensure they are appropriate for the child's size and ability.
- Have an experienced teacher provide instruction on appropriate reactions and proper stopping and falling techniques.
- Children with large-muscle motor skill or balance problems and those with any uncorrected hearing or vision deficit should skate only in a protected environment, such as a skating rink or outdoor skating area, where the in-line skater is either alone or away from motor vehicle or bicycle traffic, and where all skaters and pedestrians travel in the same direction.