

# *Annual Report*

## South Shore Safe Communities

*2009-2010*



<http://www.southshore.safecommunities.ca/>

## Table of Contents

|                                   |    |
|-----------------------------------|----|
| Executive Summary .....           | 3  |
| Leadership Table .....            | 4  |
| Workplace Injuries .....          | 5  |
| Falls In Children 0-4 Years ..... | 6  |
| Bullying Prevention .....         | 7  |
| Suicide Prevention .....          | 9  |
| Senior's Safety .....             | 11 |

### **Appendix A**

Treasurer's Report and Financial Statements

## *Annual General Meeting 2009-2010*

### *South Shore Safe Communities*

The National Safe Communities Foundation was launched in 1996, spearheaded by Paul Kells, a gentleman who lost his son Sean in 1994 when the highly flammable chemical Sean was working with exploded. It was Sean's third day on the job. He had not received any health and safety training and was not told that what he was doing was dangerous. He was 19 years old. Since then over 50 communities across Canada have become a "designated" Safe Community by the foundation, working towards making Canada the safest country in the world to live, learn, work, or play.

The South Shore of Nova Scotia was designated a Safe Community in 2003 from the National Safe Communities Foundation. We are very proud to be a part of this national organization. Together we share the same vision: To make Canada the safest country in the world to live, learn, work and play- one community at a time. Collectively, the South Shore Safe Communities consist of a very diverse group of individuals and organizations committed to improving the health and safety of our community. This is reflected in our mission, which is: **“To continuously improve the safety of individuals and communities on the South Shore by enhancing a culture of safety and wellness.”**

The South Shore Safe Communities Initiative has five main areas of focus. They are: **Bullying Prevention, 0-4 Falls Prevention, Workplace Safety, Suicide Prevention, and Senior's Safety.** Many positive things have been accomplished in each of these five focus areas over this year. In this report you will find information pertaining to each working group addressing the focus areas, such as their goals and objectives, as well as their work highlights. Information will also be provided on the Leadership Table for South Shore Safe Communities.

Other exciting things have happened over this past year which should be noted. Firstly, the completion of the evaluation for South Shore Safe Communities. This evaluation has provided to us some key recommendations that we can focus on over the next few years. Secondly, the recent addition of a new working group, Senior's Safety. We look forward to working with them in the future on this important focus area. Finally, the release of the newly renewed Injury Prevention Strategy for Nova Scotia. This strategy provides a framework for stakeholders, both within and outside the traditional boundaries of Injury Prevention, to guide their collective activities.

One more important item to mention is that at our last Annual General Meeting, Road Safety was identified as an important area of safety and injury prevention that needed addressing in our communities. Road Safety is one of the three priority issues identified in the renewed Injury Prevention Strategy. In the coming year we hope to work towards engaging champions in our community who are interested in moving this issue forward in a collaborative way.

A financial report of South Shore Safe Communities is also included which was gratefully prepared for us by Ken Smith, the treasurer for South Shore Safe Communities.

## *Leadership Table*

### **Committee Members:**

Paul Fynes, Paula Saile, Christina Williams, Barb Anderson, Dominique Kwan, Dale Saulnier, Beth George and Ken Smith

### **Our Goal:**

The South Shore Safe Communities Leadership Committee will lead the overall initiative from a broad community perspective and support and guide the work of the South Shore Safe Communities Working Groups.

**Our Objectives:** Presently under review

### **Update for Leadership Table 2009-2010:**

This year was a year of transitions for the Leadership Table. It has been a challenge in that there has been change in membership and members' ability to devote time to the initiative. At the same time it has been a year of opportunity as we have had time to reflect on where we have come over the past seven years and what our future direction should be.

### **The highlights of the last year are as follows:**

- We received a grant in the 2008-2009 year from Health Promotion and Protection to conduct an evaluation for our initiative which was completed in the spring of 2010. The evaluation highlighted some of our successes but also some key recommendations which we have started to address. The need for more leadership from the Leadership Table was identified and was the need for clearly defined roles and responsibilities.
- Several key documents are being revised to help enhance clarity around roles and responsibilities. These include the Leadership Table's Terms of Reference, Terms of Reference for Working Groups and the Coordinator's Job Description.
- The Co-Coordinators met with Julian Young, Coordinator, Injury Prevention and Control, Nova Scotia Department of Health Promotion and Protection to discuss Injury Prevention Provincially and brainstorm around how best to utilize the resources available locally to address injury prevention.
- The Leadership Table arranged for a gathering with Nova Scotia's other two Safe Community groups which took place in August at Oak Island Resort. The gathering was to share and update each other around our successes and challenges and to brainstorm how we can better link with each other. Julian Young also attended this gathering and shared provincial updates around the injury prevention renewal and the alcohol strategy.

### **Future Plans:**

- Complete revisions of key documents and create a work plan for the Leadership Table to help meet objectives.
- The Leadership Table also hopes to help address and move forward the issue of Road Safety in our Communities. In the coming year we hope to work towards engaging champions in our community who are interested in moving this issue forward in a collaborative way.

## *Workplace Safety Working Group*

### **Committee Members:**

Clare Fancy, Paul Fynes, Karen Brazill, Gail Sinclair, Peter Silver, Larry Rosbourough, Dan Oliver, Doug Eisenor and Christina Williams.

### **Our Goal:**

Improve the Safety of Youth in the workplace.

### **Our Objectives:**

1. Increase the communities' awareness of the importance of improving workplace safety for youth.
2. Involve the youth in meaningful ways in making their workplaces safer.
3. Increase employer, youth, parent and community awareness of and use of existing resources that are effective in reducing youth workplace injury.

### **Update for Workplace Safety working group for 2009-2010:**

This year we spent most of our time reflecting on what we hoped to accomplish and what was realistic given our resources. We came up with a work plan for which we can continue to use and implement in the coming year.

### **Highlights of the past year are as follows:**

- In March, we had three members from our group attend the Safety Services Nova Scotia "Annual Health and Safety Conference and Tradeshow" and two members attend their "Road Safety Conference". Members brought back and shared information with others.
- A few members meet with the Principal of the Lunenburg campus of the NSCC to discuss opportunities for collaboration and we presented on our group to their Joint Occupational Health and Safety committee.
- The group created a document "Ten Questions to ask before you start work" which can be circulated and shared to help raise awareness of youth's rights and responsibilities.
- The group continued to explore some web based tools to promote Workplace Safety to youth, such as Facebook, Twitter, etc

## *04 Falls Prevention Working Group*

### **Committee Members:**

Suzanne Baker, Traci Hatt, Sara Harding, Sarah Blades, Brenda Peters, Paula Saile, Carolyn Powers, Debbie Smith, and Lisa Linscott.

### **Our Goal:**

To reduce the number of falls in children from 0-4 years, in the Lunenburg/Queens County, that occurs in the home and at play.

**Our Objectives:** Presently under review

### **Update for 0-4 Falls working group 2009-2010:**

It was a very interesting year for this working group. We have increased the capacity within our group and are all having a part to play in the wonderful plans that we have for the future of this committee. This is a wonderful group to be a part of.

### **The highlights of the last year are as follows:**

- We continue to engage in activities that will positively impact upon our long term goal.
- We are very happy to say that we have had new members join our working group, which has generated enthusiasm for exciting new initiatives, all of whom share a passion for injury prevention, especially for children.
- Development of relationships is an ongoing priority for us. We have strengthened our own relationships within our working group and continue to build strong community partnerships with Child Safety Link, Canadian Red Cross, and the South Shore Family Resource Association.
- We have continued to partner with the Kiwanis Club of Queens County to increase community awareness regarding falls prevention.
- In partnership with the South Shore Family Resource Association we received financial support from the United Way of Lunenburg County to purchase baby gates for distribution to local families. This supports phase two of the “Baby Gates” program.
- Our working group was one of the partners noted in the application for an IWK Community Grant for funding for safety initiatives in Lunenburg and Queens Counties. This funding supports the following initiatives:
  - A curriculum for “Eye Spy” the Safety Fly- focusing on home safety- was developed and piloted in two child care centers in Queens County. The results from this endeavor have been very positive and we are presently working with community members and organizations to revise and expand its utilization.
  - The theme for this years “South Shore Family Resource Association’s Children’s Fair” was Safety. Support was provided from our working group for this initiative.
  - In collaboration with The Canadian Red Cross and South Shore Family Resource Association we are presently involved in the facilitation of an Emergency First Aid program for caregivers of young children.

## *Bullying Prevention Working Group*

### **Committee Members:**

Paula Saile, Dale Saulnier, Sara Harding, Laura Cormier, Mary Frier, Brenda Peters, Cst. Will Creamer, Jennifer Wentzell

**Vision:** To decrease the incidence of bullying within our communities

Goal 1: *To increase the awareness of bullying within our communities.*

#### Objectives:

- To develop a brochure for students, educators and community members regarding bullying and the Bullying Prevention working group.
- To supplement resources for the Respect Ed. tool kit.
- To hold a joint meeting with the Suicide Prevention Working group on a bi-annual basis.
- To continue to update the Leadership Table and Suicide Prevention working group on an ongoing basis regarding the work of the Bullying Prevention working group.
- To continue to work with the Suicide Prevention working group to facilitate the delivery of a play 'The Fit' to secondary schools within the South Shore Regional School Board.

Goal 2: *To increase the awareness of bullying prevention within our own working group.*

#### Objectives:

- Increase member capacity regarding best practice research related to bullying prevention.
- Determine the learning needs of working group members as it pertains to bullying prevention.
- Provide learning opportunities to group members as it relates to their individual/group needs.

Goal 3: *To support existing effective community initiatives that prevents bullying.*

#### Objectives

- Increase the awareness of working group members regarding existing community initiatives within Lunenburg and Queens County that effectively addresses bullying prevention.
- Identify gaps for bullying prevention resources within our communities.

Goal 4: *To partner with stakeholders to develop resources to address the gaps related to bullying prevention in our communities.*

#### Objectives

- Develop a list of potential partnerships.
- Identify the gaps in our membership
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## **Update for Bullying Prevention working group 2009-2010:**

### **The highlights of the past year are as follows:**

- We continue to reflect upon our work plan in all of the work that we do.
- We continue to update communication materials pertaining to our working group, such as our pamphlet and webpage for South Shore Safe Communities.
- We continue to hold bi-annual meetings with the Suicide Prevention working group, and work together on such initiatives as the promotion of “Mental Health Week”.
- We continue to update the Leadership Table and Suicide Prevention working group on an ongoing basis regarding the work of the Bullying Prevention working group.
- We have engaged in opportunities to increase the capacity of working group members surrounding best practice research related to bullying prevention.
- We have actively sought out potential new members for our working group based upon identified gap areas.

### **So, what are our future plans?**

- Presently our group is very keen at exploring the resources that currently exist in our community to address bullying prevention broadly. We are planning to host a symposium within the next year to bring community members together who work in this area with the hope of increasing collaboration and identifying gap areas.
- To continue to reflect on our work plan.
- To continue to pursue new membership based upon identified gap areas.
- To continue to update the communication materials pertaining to our working group.
- Continue to collaborate with the Suicide Prevention working group.

## *Suicide Prevention Working Group*

### **Committee Members:**

Dominique Kwan, Angela Davis, Melissa MacNeil, Linda Thompson, Shirley Burris, Rev. Lawton. Kathleen Naylor, Ron Seney, Shannon Hartlen and Christina Williams.

### **Our Goal:**

To work within a best practices framework to address suicide in our community by increasing protective factors, building on existing resources and linking with national and provincial initiatives

### **Our Objectives:**

1. Increase opportunities to influence the development of provincial media guidelines related to suicide.
2. Build protective factors in persons of all ages.
3. Link with mental health and addiction services.
4. Identify existing community resources and develop a mechanism to share this with the community.
5. Advocate and support provincial action around restricting the availability of lethal means.
6. Connect with Mental Health around building supports after hospitalization and out patient support for individuals who are suicidal.
7. Support ASIST and SAFETalk training to help ensure rapid access to services. (Support messages and increase awareness of training).
8. Identify what Primary Health Care Providers need to support them with their interventions with individuals who are suicidal.
9. Investigate partnerships to share messages to youth.
10. Investigate the provincial curriculum and support aspects that align with the committee's goal and objectives.

### **Update for Suicide Prevention working group 2009-2010:**

This year, we have had some new members join us, bringing new ideas and energy to the group.

### **Highlights of the past year are as follows:**

- Joining with the Bullying Prevention group, the local Canadian Mental Health Association branch and the Lunenburg Schizophrenia Society to support Mental Health week and to continue discussing other ways we can work together and support each other.
- We also had displays up for Police Week, Michelin Safety Day and the Youth Activity Day.
- Coming up in the near future we will be presenting at the upcoming Canadian Alliance for Suicide Prevention Conference in October. Our presentation centers

- around “The Fit”, for which the DVD of “The Fit” will be show and a workshop for discussion, will follow.
- We have also begun to work on some ideas around how to engage and educate the media about suicide and reporting on suicide.
  - We have gained membership from our local ASIST and SAFETalk trainers group. Many members now sit on our committee or stay connected via the sharing of our minutes and communications through emails.
  - We have created unique orientation binders for new members joining our Suicide Prevention Group
  - We continue to reflect on all of our objectives at each meeting.
  - We are continually reflecting on the best practices approaches when working on suicide prevention.
  - We are provided with regular updates from coalition members employed by mental health and addiction services.

**Some of the challenges we faced and hope to address include:**

- Finding that fine balance between “talking about suicide and decreasing the stigma around it” and the need to “do no harm”.
- How to raise the profile of this committee- how to inform the public and other professionals and committees about what we are doing.
- How to ensure that we engage all those people working in suicide prevention, so we can avoid duplication.
- How to ensure that all people working in suicide prevention are aware of the bigger picture of Nova Scotia’s suicide prevention strategy/ASIST training/Safetalk/other suicide prevention training available.
- Ongoing evaluation to determine the impact on the community.

## *Seniors Safety Working Group*

Through support from the Bridgewater Police Services and the Town of Bridgewater, the Seniors Safety Program was started in 2008. The Bridgewater Police Service believes that seniors are an integral part of our community, entitled to live in dignity and security, free of exploitation and abuse. While many seniors are active members of society, there are those that are vulnerable to crime and abuse because of poor health, low literacy, lack of independence, or age-related disabilities.

The government of Nova Scotia's Departments of Seniors and Justice have provided funding to numerous communities, including Bridgewater, for Seniors Safety programs. In March 2009, Beth George, the new Seniors Safety Coordinator, was hired to implement a program for our town.

The Seniors Safety Program just recently became a working group of the South Shore Safe Communities. We are very happy to have them as part of the South Shore Safe Communities team and look forward to working together. There will be a more formal update on this great group in next years Annual Report. In the meantime please feel free to look at their website [http://www.bridgewaterpolice.ca/seniors\\_safety\\_program.htm](http://www.bridgewaterpolice.ca/seniors_safety_program.htm) to learn more about their goals and programs in our community.