

*Annual Report for South Shore Safe Communities  
2007-2008*



*Annual General Meeting 2008*  
*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 40 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. Collectively, we 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, 0-4 Falls Prevention, Off-Highway Vehicles, Workplace Safety, and Suicide Prevention.** It is in this report that I will present to you information pertaining to each working group, such as their goals and objectives, as well as the highlights of the work each completed for the year 2007- 2008. A financial report of South Shore Safe Communities will be present in the appendix which was gratefully prepared for us by Ken Smith, the treasurer for South Shore Safe Communities.

## *Anti-Bullying Working Group*

### **Committee Members:**

Krishinda McBride, Paula Saile, Heather Cook, Dale Saulnier, Christine Bonnell, Sharon Brown, Grant Webber, Jennifer Wentzell, Jason Mailman, Sadie Watson, and Christina Williams.

### **Our Goals:**

1. To increase awareness about what bullying is and to decrease the incidence of bullying in our communities.
2. To support existing effective community initiatives that prevent bullying
3. To partner with stakeholders to advance strategies and programs to prevent bullying.

**Our Objectives:** Presently under review

### **Accomplishments for the 2007-2008 year:**

1. A thousand dollar grant from Lunenburg County Community Health Board was used to augment resources for the Respect Ed team tool kits.
2. Additional Resources for the Respect Education Tool Kits were researched, gathered and distributed to the schools which had established teams (Centre Consolidated, New Germany Rural High School, Chester Area Middle School, Hebbville, and South Queens General High) to address the specific topic of bullying prevention.
3. Worked with the Suicide Prevention group to facilitate the delivery of the play 'The Fit' to secondary schools within the South Shore Regional School Board. The play had many different components of addressing safety within our community. In regards to Bullying Prevention the play addressed the topic of the hidden language and actions that can lead to bullying behavior.
4. Worked with Second Story Women's Centre to promote the Bully Busters program with elementary students within the South Shore Regional School Board.
5. Developed a brochure for students, educators and community members to increase the awareness around bullying (see attached brochure).
6. Professional development opportunity was given to the Bullying Prevention group by RCMP's Internet Child Exploitation Unit on what cyber-bullying was and its impact on members of our community.

Upcoming events for the Bullying Prevention group are the development of a Bullying Prevention Education session for students, educators and community members. The Bullying Prevention Education session will be held on November 5, 2008 at the MARC in Dayspring. We will close our year with a Showcase on May 13, 2009. The Showcase will be a celebration of the accomplishments of students and schools in addressing the topic of bullying prevention.

## *0-4 Falls Prevention Working Group*

Falls are a major concern among the 0-4 year age group because their motor abilities develop quicker than their cognitive abilities which results in their inability to determine the risks in their environment. Falls do not usually have a single cause but rather result from a number of reasons that are often associated with the surrounding or environment.

### **Committee Members:**

Suzanne Baker, Brenda Peters, Norm Amirault, Traci Hatt, Denise Lowe-Whynot, Christina Williams, and Carolyn Powers.

### **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

### **Accomplishments for the 2007-2008 year:**

1. Utilizing the “**Be a Home Detective**” video as a template, the group worked with a local individual to develop a curriculum where children can work with their family and/or caregivers to identify hazards in their place of residence. This resource is called “**Eye Spy the Safety Fly**”. It will be piloted in Family Resource Centers and Daycares in Queens County. Information derived from the pilots will drive applicable changes to the curriculum. The target is to have all preschools and daycares in Lunenburg and Queens County have all of the supplies necessary to implement this curriculum within their own institution in the very near future.
2. The possibility of providing home safety gates continues to be investigated. The groups received a recommendation for a specific versatile baby gate and are presently pursuing ordering and supplying those to families in need as recommended by the local Family Resource Center.
3. Are presently looking into partnering with local businesses to provide other safety equipment, such as outlet plugs.
4. Lobbying efforts continue in trying to change policy with the hope of the Department of Community Services financially supporting the provision of home safety equipment.
5. Work is continuing in the development of an interactive display that would highlight potential dangers in the home. This could be used for educational purposes at safety days, fairs, and events attracting children and their families.

## *Workplace Safety Committee*

### **Committee Members:**

Karen Brazill, Tim Clahane, Jeannie Eisnor, Paul Fynes, Theresa Hawkesworth, Kevin Morrison, Gary Ramey, Larry Rosbrough, Peter Silver, 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.

### **Accomplishments for the 2007- 2008 year:**

1. One of the highlights of this particular year evolved from the work of a local teacher at Park View Education Center, Karen Brazill. She had been instrumental in promoting a culture of health and safety within her high school. For instance, her class the Skilled Trade Exploration Program, had completed a number of projects including a video and survey as well as making Passport to Safety mandatory for all students in the school. Results of the survey were quite interesting and something we strongly feel should be shared with local employers, as a way to raise awareness around the issues associated with youth in the workplace.  
We began to work with this teacher, her class and school on an education campaign intended to build on their leadership. Our goal was to extend this safety message to other schools and share the messages from the survey with local employers. Ultimately, we hope to generate interest in having more discussion and action on this issue in our community.
2. Karen Brazill was nominated by SSSC Workplace Safety group for her work, and received an award for her leadership around preventing workplace injuries for youth at the North American Occupational Safety and Health Week Conference.
3. The working group received a donation of \$1500.00 to support the above mentioned work from the Workers Compensation Board.

## *Suicide Prevention Working Group*

### **Committee Members:**

Barb Anderson, Christina Williams, Angela Davis, Clare Fancy, Paula Saile, Linda Thompson, Dominique Kwan, Christine Bonnell.

### **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.

### **Accomplishments for the 2007- 2008 year:**

1. Participation in the provincial CAST (communities addressing suicide together) Coalition Conference.
2. Participation in a joint meeting with the anti-bullying working group in 2008, to highlight the work that both groups are currently doing, and begin building on the linkages between the two.
3. We continue to support community leaders and volunteers to take the ASIST and Safetalk training, as funding from the working group provides financial support to those who would be challenged to participate otherwise.
4. We continue to work in a partnership with Mermaid Youtheatre group, South Shore Regional School, and other key members of our community to work toward

building protective factors in youth. A play called “The Fit”, written by Chris Heide and performed by local youth actors, was piloted at 5 secondary schools across Lunenburg and Queens County. The results of this pilot were very positive, and we are currently working towards the inclusion of the play, with its associated resources, being included within the provincial curriculum for all secondary students in Nova Scotia. Our working group nominated Chris Heide for a Safe Communities Ambassador award in recognition of his work towards such an effort and he was successful in obtaining this. He will be presented with this award in November at the National Safe Communities Conference.

6. We participated in the development of a Tool Kit to address the topic of Suicide Prevention within the community, developed through the Canadian Mental Health Association.

## *Off-Highway Vehicle Working Group*

**Committee Members:** Laura Barkhouse, Brian Hatt, Jody Bond, Debby Smith, Kevin Benjamin, Lewis Conrad, Vern Whynot, Wayne Rock

### **Our Goal:**

The goal of the Off-Highway Vehicle safety working group is to reduce the number of snowmobile/all terrain vehicle injuries in the counties of Lunenburg and Queens.

### **Accomplishments for the 2007- 2008 year:**

The Off-Highway Vehicle Safety Working Group did not meet as a formal committee within the last year. As mentioned in the previous 2007 annual report, since our working group was made up of members who were closely linked to new OHV safety initiatives at the provincial level, much of the work of the current committee became slightly redundant. It was felt that these provincial initiatives would accomplish all or more of the goals set by our committee to reduce the number of off-highway vehicle injuries – not just in Lunenburg and Queens Counties but across the whole province.

Our former committee members continue to incorporate the goals and objectives of the working group in our daily work and community activities and we regularly share information, discuss approaches and develop activities that build on the intent of the Safe Communities Foundation.

For example:

- Youth/adult training courses are continuing and will be increased in the next month as a new local training facility comes online. This will enable our trainers (most of them are former committee members) to offer more courses since having an available training location has always been an issue.
- A new OHV Riders Handbook has been produced by the province (with the assistance and input from many of our former committee members) and is available to the public.
- OHV injury data has proven to be sketchy and inconsistent. Work continues at the provincial level (supported by many of our former committee members) to capture this important data so we can see measurable results of our efforts.

There are many new and exciting initiatives taking place to help reduce the number of OHV injuries and there is certainly increased support for many of the established activities (such as training). This can only support and encourage the good work being accomplished by South Shore Safe Communities as a whole.