

ABI Trajectories Study Newsletter #3



Trajectories and Consequences: Long-term follow-up of children and youth and their families after Acquired Brain Injury (ABI)

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Great Job, Everyone!

Your hard work is paying off! We are almost there!
Our data collection phase will end by December 2008.
We know that you must be excited about this as well!
We hope that you know how much you are appreciated. THANK-YOU for every extraordinary of you who continue to put in time and effort in your busy life to be part of our ABI Trajectories Study!



ABI Trajectories Study is sponsored by:



HOW ARE WE DOING SO FAR

As we are wrapping up the data collection phase of the study, we thought that we should provide a report on how we are doing so far. As you are aware, each family is on a different schedule, depending on when the child's ABI occurred.

Thus far, 71 families have already completed ALL of the required annual assessments for the study. Among these families,

- 37 families have completed the 5th Year post injury/illness assessment
- 34 families have completed the 6th Year post injury/illness assessment

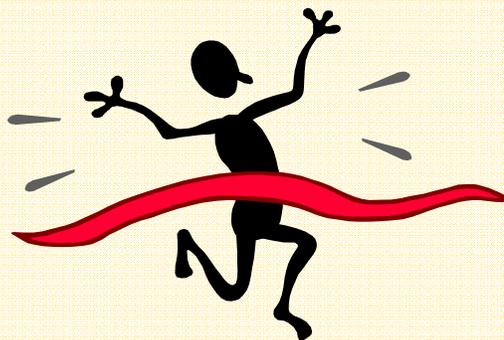
16 families still have one more assessment to go before the end of 2008. Among these families,

- 9 families will be finishing up the 6th Year post injury/illness assessment
- 7 families will be finishing up the 7th Year post injury/illness assessment

Among all 87 families, 24 families chose to complete the questionnaires online, whereas 63 families preferred the mail-in booklet format.

52 of you have done the neuropsychological testing session (or have already scheduled a testing session that will take place in the near future).

We've also received tremendous supports from the teachers who continually sent back the completed questionnaires and forwarded the school related information to us!



HOME is an appropriate living environment for children and youth with ABI if they have the necessary services and supports in place. This is the conclusion from a recently completed study funded by Ontario Neurotrauma Foundation (ONF). This study was led by (our very own) Carol DeMatteo and others. A brief summary about the study findings is available in the ONF's quarterly newsletter, NeuroMatters, Volume 1, Issue 4.



Sign up online for your copy of the NeuroMatters at www.onf.org/newsletter, or contact ONF at (416) 422-2228

Residential Streets Most Dangerous to Kids, Says Safe Kids Canada



According to a new review of child pedestrian research from Safe Kids Canada, our residential streets may be more dangerous for children than we think. More child pedestrian injuries take place on residential streets than anywhere else, and the danger is greatly increased as speed increases!

However, we know that these child pedestrian injuries are preventable. We strongly encourage all drivers to be aware of their speed and drive the posted speed limit. Together, we can make residential neighbourhoods safe for pedestrians.

Safe Kids Canada invites all drivers to be a *Neighbourhood Pace Car* driver. Please find the enclosed bumper sticker and window cling for your vehicles. Or, simply visit *Become a Neighbourhood Pace Car* website for more information (<http://www.whatstherush.ca/index.cfm?page=main.pacecar>).



Last but not least, we have some useful resources for the pedestrian as well. Please also find the enclosed Safe Roads brochure. It has great information and colourful illustrations on how to teach the child to cross the road safely!

Although the 2008 Safe Kids Week - *Safe Roads Safe Kids* - (May 26, 2008 to June 1, 2008) has officially ended by now, the commitment to ensure pedestrian safety requires everyone's continuous efforts and participation!

Note: the content of this section was partly extracted from the media materials from the website of the 2008 Safe Kids Week (<http://www.whatstherush.ca/index.cfm?page=main.newsroom>). The bumper sticker, window cling, and the educational brochure are kindly provided by Safe Kids Canada.

You still have **ONE LAST CHANCE** to WIN an IPOD®^{1,2}

We would like you to know how much we appreciate your time and effort. In 2006, we announced the launch of the iPod®^{1,2} lottery draw annual event. Of course, we kept our words. TWO lucky winners³ have already enjoyed their prizes, congratulations!

For the rest of you, there is still ONE LAST iPod®^{1,2} to be won⁴. Simply return your completed booklet or finish the online questionnaires, you will earn yourself a chance to WIN an iPod®^{1,2}!

So, don't let the booklet sit on your kitchen counter for too long, or if you choose the online version, logon to our website NOW!

You may be the next iPod®^{1,2} winner!



¹ Retail value and actual prize depends on the latest product from the iPod® family at the time of draw

² iPod® is a registered trademark of Apple Computer, Inc., registered in the U.S. and other countries. Apple is not a participant or sponsor of this promotion.

³ For privacy and confidentiality reasons, we cannot release the identification information of the winners.

⁴ One prize per winner throughout the course of the study



Wear Your Helmet Right!

Here's an easy way to put it on so it protects you:

The Helmet Salute Practice It!

- the edge of the helmet should be two fingers above the eyebrows to protect the forehead
- strap should meet in a V shape just below the ears
- one finger should fit between the chin and the chin strap

Tips on Buying a Helmet

Check for Fit Before You Buy

Always take a helmet out of the box and check to see if it fits before you buy it. It is better if the person who will be using the helmet is there to try the helmet on.

Price

Helmets range in price from \$10 to several hundred dollars. If they have an approved sticker from one of the testing agencies (Canadian Standards Association [CSA], American Society for Testing and Materials [ASTM], Snell Memorial Foundation [Snell], American National Standards Institute [ANSI], British Standards Institute [BSI], and Standards Association of Australia [SAA]), then they will protect your head. The more expensive helmets are lighter, cooler, and have easier straps. But all helmets will protect your head if they are worn properly.

Different Sizes

Helmets are made to fit different sized heads. There is a style for children under 5 that covers the ears, and has been approved by the Canadian Standards Association (CSA). As soon as children start riding on bike seats, in bike trailers, or on a tricycle they should be wearing a helmet. Children over 5 and adults have three basic sizes to choose from: small, medium and large. Some manufacturers also sell extra large sizes.

Remember the Pads

The key to good fit is in the pads that come with a helmet. The different width pads allow you to make the helmet fit your head so that it does not wobble around.

Check the Straps

On many helmets the straps will slide out of position, forcing you to readjust the straps regularly. Some helmets have buckles that clip the straps into place. These require less adjustment, but often cost more.

Don't Buy a Used Helmet

Do not buy a helmet second-hand, from a garage sale, for example. You do not know if the helmet has been used in a crash. Helmets are designed to work in one crash only and then should be replaced.

Only Bike Helmets for Cycling

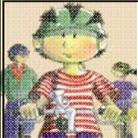
Hockey helmets cannot be used for cycling. They are not designed to absorb the kinds of impacts you receive from crashing and hitting your head.

The report is just in...

Canadian researchers have found that the number of deaths per year decreased 52 percent among children after the introduction of a law requiring young cyclists to wear a helmet. And, children were 9 times more likely to be wearing a helmet when cycling with adults who also wore their helmets.

For more information, please visit

<http://www.cbc.ca/canada/story/2008/08/29/bike-law.html?ref=rss>



The content on this page is from, Ministry of Transportation and Ontario Cycling Association (2000). *Young Cyclist's Guide*. Toronto, ON: Queen's Printer for Ontario. (Pub No. 008167).

The complete version of this document can be found at, <http://www.mto.gov.on.ca/english/pubs/pdf/youngcyclist.pdf>

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WHAT'S NEXT?

As you may know, the annual assessment date used in the ABI Trajectories Study is based on the injury/illness date. The year 2008 is our LAST data collection year. Therefore, some of you may have already finished the very last assessment for the study months ago, whereas some of you may still receive another phone call from our research coordinator in the next few months. By December 2008, EVERYONE in this study is expected to complete all of the assessments! Hooray! Also, if you have participated in the neuropsychological testing component of the study, you should receive the summary report from us no later than December 2008 as well! Give us a call if you do not receive your summary report by then...

We will be working on data analyses in year 2009. This means - we would use various statistical techniques to better understand the answers that all of you have kindly share with us during the past few years. We will then summarize the findings, and share them with you, and with as many individuals and organizations as possible, in hopes to educate people about the long-term effects of ABI. Of course, we will also be sharing the findings with Canadian Institutes of Health Research, the agency that funded the ABI Trajectories Study.



ANY CHANGES IN YOUR CONTACT INFORMATION?

If you have moved, changed your phone number, or plan to do so in the near future, please keep us posted! We would like to make sure we have your most current contact information so we can keep you and your family involved in the final phase of the study. That is, we would like to send you and your family the findings from the study when they are made available!

You can let us know about any changes in your contact information by sending an e-mail (linchia@mcmaster.ca), by calling Chia-Yu (905-525-9140, ext. 26842), or write to us by regular mail:

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RESOURCE



AboutKidsHealth is a resourceful website that aims to provide families with reliable, current information about all areas influencing child health and family quality of life in a format that is easy to understand. Its *Just for Kids* section has age-appropriate animations for kids on many different health topics...

<http://aboutkidshealth.ca/JustForKids/default.aspx>



D.O.O.R. 2 ADULTHOOD (Disability Ontario Online Resource for Transition to Adulthood) aims to improve the process of transition to adulthood for youth with disabilities and their families by providing information about services, resources and events related to transition, and the opportunity to network and share ideas...

<http://www.bloorview.ca/door2adulthood/default.htm>



Headline, the British Columbia's voice for the Brain Injury Community, is published quarterly. It has great information and stories about brain injury. To receive your copy, please contact Mary Lou by e-mail at mlr@telus.net



The Brain that Changes Itself by Dr. Norman Doidge (ISBN: 0143113100) is a book with a series of case studies that reveal the brain's remarkable ability to heal itself from seemingly catastrophic injuries. It provides an introduction to the science of neuroplasticity. It was published in December 2007, and you may find a copy in your local bookstore or library.