



# 'Injuries are not Accidents'

Unfortunately most people view and talk of injuries as accidents – “an unforeseen event or one without an apparent cause.” Yet, the leading cause of death and disability for ages 1-34 years is preventable injuries. More in this age-group die annually from injuries than from all other diseases combined. Injuries are also the leading cause of hospitalisation – causing immeasurable pain and suffering for those involved and their families.

## Did you know?

- ☑ Internationally and in NZ, injury is the leading cause of death for ages 1-34 years;
- ☑ Injury accounts for more potential years of life lost than cancer and heart disease combined;
- ☑ 80% of injury incidences have a cause leading up to the event, that if changed, the injury incident could have been prevented;
- ☑ Just thinking about risk is more likely to reduce the possibility of injury or death;
- ☑ Injuries are predictable (i.e., cycling and not wearing a helmet); and
- ☑ Injuries are preventable.



## Getting rid of the 'A' word



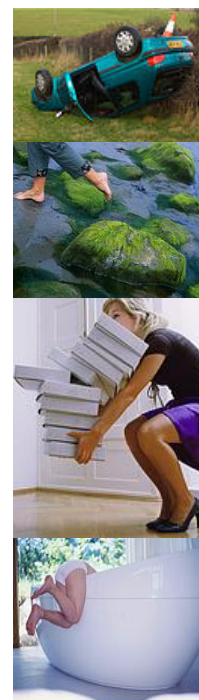
**Injuries are not ACCIDENTS.** When referring to an injury incident, use these words instead:

**TRANSPORT:** crash, collision, jack-knife, wreck, smash, head-on, side-swipe, chain reaction, rear-ender, tail-gater, mid-air collision, derailment, lost control of bus/farm bike.

**SPORT/RECREATION:** lost control of, fell from, went head over heels, crash, collision, tripped, thrown from a horse, equipment failed.

**WORKPLACE:** industrial death/injury, suffered serious injuries, fell from, was struck by, injured on the job, explosion, fire, electrocuted, electric shock, fatality inquiry, over-exertion, caught between, severed, became entangled.

**HOME:** fell, slipped, tripped, burned, tumbled, entrapped, drowned, strangled, choked, poisoned.



### Safe Communities Foundation New Zealand (SCFNZ)

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SCFNZ is a: Certifying Centre and

Affiliate Safe Community Support Centre of the WHO Collaborating Centre on Community Safety Promotion;  
Accrediting Centre for Safe School Community International Designation Programme.

- There are attitudes, values, beliefs and behaviours that minimise the potential for injury or death;
- Risk is part of life, but we can choose the level of risk we take;
- Environmental factors influence the outcomes of risk situations; and
- Even just thinking about risk is more likely to reduce the possibility of injury or death.

## Risks & Making SMART CHOICES!

- Choose to prevent an injury by using the power of **CHOICE**;
- **SMART CHOICE** is looking at your choices when faced with risk; and
- **SMART CHOICE** is identifying your risks and taking the necessary steps to decrease these risks.

**SMART CHOICE** strategies include, for example:

### Look First

Before beginning an activity, make a plan to understand and manage risks.

*Look First!*

### Wear the Gear

Protective gear (i.e. helmets, mouthguards) can reduce the risk of suffering an injury.

*Wear the Gear!*

### Get Trained

Skills take time to develop, however they help you to assess and manage your risks. Be prepared.

*Get Trained!*

### Buckle Up

No matter how old you are, the distance you travel, or the vehicle you are travelling in.

*Buckle up!*

### Drive Sober

Impairment can involve more than alcohol. Any distractions can affect driving.

*Drive Sober!*

Encourage your family/whanau and friends to participate in the activities they enjoy. Help to keep them safe by teaching them to **MANAGE THEIR RISKS** and make **SMART CHOICES!**



Injuries take lives, destroy families and ruin futures.

They can be traumatic, debilitating, expensive, UNDERSTOOD, PREDICTED; and **PREVENTED!**

**Remember!**

This factsheet was funded by NZIPS, ACC

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Factsheet Updated May, 2008