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News



43% of London Health Sciences Centre's (LHSC) severe infant injuries are intentional, many diagnosed as Shaken Baby Syndrome (SBS)¹. With this surprising statistic, it was time to take action.

Thanks to a grant from the [Children's Health Foundation](#), and support from leadership and staff, LHSC will be implementing a SBS prevention program in the near future. It is called **The Period of PURPLE Crying®** and LHSC will be the first in Ontario to implement this effective program.

So what does *PURPLE* stand for?

New Prevention Program to Educate Families on Shaken Baby Syndrome

- **P:** Peaks around two months.
- **U:** Unpredictable, often happening for no apparent reason.
- **R:** Resistant to soothing.
- **P:** Pain-like expression on the baby's face, even without any source of pain.
- **L:** Long bouts, lasting 30 to 40 minutes or more.
- **E:** Evening crying is common.

PURPLE approaches SBS prevention by helping parents and caregivers understand the features of crying in healthy infants that are frustrating and that can lead to shaking or abuse.

Similar programs have seen positive effects, with a significant decrease in the incidence of SBS. *PURPLE* was designed by pediatricians, public health nurses, child

experts and parents. It went through a three-year process to evaluate the effectiveness in changing knowledge and behaviors of parents through randomized controlled trials, the gold standard of research.

Nursing staff will be providing one on one education to new families that include an 11 page colour booklet and DVD that families get to take home, which focuses on a positive message on coping with crying. Parents are encouraged to share the message of the dangers of shaking with all who care for their infant or child. LHSC will be reaching over 5000 new families a year with this education.

For more information on our SBS program visit: <http://www.lhsc.on.ca/trauma/injury/sbs.htm>

¹ LHSC Trauma Registry 99-06

THE IMPACT EXPERIENCE

Scott Johnson – Paramedic, AEMC, Thames EMS

I have been part of the **IMPACT** program for close to 3 years. When I first started, it was a small public awareness project delivered by volunteers that focused around teaching young adults the life long consequences of making bad decisions. Since that time, the program has exploded in popularity. Although our message is still basically the same, we have incorporated many new ways of delivering it. The **IMPACT** program now involves many volunteers from various professions including Paramedics, RN's, Respiratory Therapists, Doctors, and many other allied health care professionals. The London Police Department has been a key partner in **IMPACT** since its early beginnings.

This project originally started by bringing a group of students into the hospital and talking to them about some of the everyday risks we face, and some ways of dealing with them. Since the "explosion" of popularity, we've found that the demand from the school system was overwhelming and we could not possibly arrange for every class to come to the Hospital, so we decided to go to them.

I am now part of a select few individuals that have been trained to go to the High Schools to deliver our message of injury prevention. We attempt to do this through a very graphic presentation where we show the students first hand – through pictures, videos, and real

stories from our experienced volunteers – exactly what can happen when we needlessly make bad decisions.

Being involved with the **IMPACT** program to me is more than just preaching safety; it is a way to achieve a very important goal that I otherwise could not have achieved. As a Paramedic, I am only called to help somebody after the fact. The people I see are already hurt, and they have already made that fateful bad decision, and all I can do at this point is attempt to prevent anything else from happening. With the **IMPACT** program, however, I am able to stop injury BEFORE it happens. This is our goal!

Together, with the assistance of the Injury Prevention Educator, Jane Harrington, the countless volunteers, and the London Police Department, the message is being heard. We are all working extremely hard to let everyone know that "there are no accidents" and it is no accident that the **IMPACT** program has become as popular as it is today.

The IMPACT program thanks Scott and all our volunteers for their dedication and effort. We couldn't do it without you!

NOMINATIONS FOR IMPACT VOLUNTEER AWARDS 2008

Is there someone you think deserves an **IMPACT** volunteer award? Do you know someone who has played an important and vital role in our program? If so, please consider nominating them for a Volunteer award for 2008. Each year **IMPACT** chooses a volunteer (locally and peripherally) to receive an award and a token of our appreciation. We appreciate every volunteer's help, but would like to recognize those extra – special people! If you would like to nominate someone please email Jane Harrington at jane.harrington@lhsc.on.ca before July 31st, 2008.