

## Communications Office

Peterborough County-City Health Unit  
10 Hospital Drive  
Peterborough, ON K9J 8M1  
(705) 743-1000, ext. 391  
[www.pcchu.ca](http://www.pcchu.ca)



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Friday, October 7, 2011, Peterborough

# Fire Prevention Week Kicks Off October 9

## *Local Elementary Students to Receive \$25,000 Worth of Free RiskWatch Resources*

The Peterborough RiskWatch group together with the Peterborough County-City Health Unit announced today that this year's Fire Prevention Week kicks off on October 9 and runs until October 15.

This year's theme is "Protect Your Family From Fire ©", and to mark this week the New Canadian edition of RiskWatch curriculum resources will be donated and distributed to area schools. These resources are valued over \$25,000 and have been recognized by the Fire Marshalls Safety Council.

"Fires and burns are one of the eight leading causes of injury among children," said Sarah Tanner, Health Promoter with the Injury Prevention Program at the Health Unit. "Locally there were over 1,000 injury-related hospitalizations among Peterborough youth between 2004 and 2008. That number is far too high, and we are working together with many organizations to raise awareness, educate and promote safety and injury prevention policies throughout the community."

According to Maureen Crowley, Peterborough RiskWatch Chairperson, preventable injuries are the leading cause of death and disability for Canadian children, and that more children die annually from injuries than from all other childhood diseases combined. "The majority of these injuries are predictable and preventable. By teaching children how to make safe choices when faced with risk, the number of childhood injuries can be reduced significantly," said Ms. Crowley.

Riskwatch teaches safe behaviour by affecting the way children think about and approach risk. The curriculum program consist of a variety of activities, resources and lesson ideas that teachers of Pre-Kindergarten to Grade 8 can easily incorporate into their daily lesson plans. The aim of the activities is to prevent childhood injuries by teaching students safe decision-making practices. Each module includes age-appropriate activities and resource materials on the eight leading causes of injury among children: motor vehicle injury; fire and burn injury; choking, suffocation and

NEWS RELEASE

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strangulation injury; poisoning injury; falls and playground injury; firearms injury; bike and pedestrian injury; and water and ice injury.

In Peterborough, the Riskwatch group is a partnership of Emergency Services, (Fire, Ambulance, Police), local schools, the Health Unit and other community groups and volunteers. This group works all year to promote safety and raise awareness of injury prevention initiatives.

### **QUICK FACTS:**

- On average, eight Canadians die from fire every week
- Approximately 1,300 fires are started by children playing with lighters and matches every year in Canada. These fires result in an average of 20 deaths, 150 burn injuries and \$14 million in property damage. Store matches and lighters out of sight and out of reach of children, in a locked cabinet.
- Scalds tend to be the most commonly treated type of burn injury. According to the CHIRPP\* database, 1999, spilled hot beverages accounted for 35% of scalds and 28% were due to hot food. Children less than 5 years of age suffered 72% of hot beverage scalds. Scalds related to cooking made up 16% of all scalds and were most often caused by pots of boiling water spilling on stove tops, or spilling in transit between the stove and the sink. Twenty-nine children less than 5 years old were scalded when they pulled either a pot or a kettle or boiling water onto themselves from a counter or stove top.

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### **For further information, please contact:**

Sarah Tanner  
Health Promoter, Injury Prevention Program  
(705) 743-1000, ext. 207