



B I S T B E A C O N

JANUARY 2012

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SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- **BIST Trillium Grant Celebration Party—Monday Jan 23, 2012**
- **Sign-up for BIST's Blog [here](#)**
- **Community Meetings**

February 27th

March 26th

GREETINGS FROM THE CHAIR

I hope that each of our members had a wonderful, safe and happy holiday season. While 2011 was BIST's best year ever, 2012 promises to be filled with further growth, opportunity, excitement and community.

BIST was awarded a significant Ontario Trillium Fund (OTF) Grant towards the end of 2011. This grant will allow us to develop many of our initiatives, including the hiring of a part time social worker to develop, implement and facilitate the expansion of our support groups. BIST is so pleased to welcome MSW Michelle Ratcliff in this new role.

We are looking forward to catapulting on 2011's very successful Mix and Mingle and Awareness Month events. Stay tuned for further details about these events that are scheduled to take place in June. Our second annual BIST Run/Walk/Roll event is scheduled for September 22, 2012 and we expect

another great turnout.

Other initiatives for 2012 include: the launch of our speaker series, an increased focus on awareness, an expansion of volunteering and enhancement of our support groups and community meetings.

The Board of Directors encourages all BIST members to attend our monthly community meetings. We have a terrific lineup scheduled for our next few meetings. Please join us on Monday, January 23, 2012 at our regular community meeting location for the Launch Event for the OTF Trillium Grant. Details are posted on our website at www.bist.ca.

On behalf of the BIST Board of Directors, I want to wish all of our members and potential members a very happy, healthy and successful New Year.

Jonathan M. Burton,
Chair of BIST Board



BIST BLOG

Make sure you check out and subscribe to BIST's blog at:

www.torontobraininjuryblog.wordpress.com

We will be posting articles on monthly themes.
January — Winter Safety
February — Relationships & Intimacy
March — Fitness and Nutrition.

Don't miss out on having these articles delivered directly to your inbox!

torontobraininjuryblog



Monthly preview: BIST takes on winter

Posted on January 11, 2012

Canadian winters.

Love them or hate them, there is no denying that winters and Canadians' struggle against the extreme conditions that they bring are part of what defines us. Look no further than a 2008 survey commissioned by Citizenship and Immigration Canada and the Dominion Institute. With icons such as the Maple Leaf, hockey and the Canadian flag topping the list of the 100 things that best define this country, those surveyed still had winter on their minds and ranked it 84th on the list.

Recent Posts

- Monthly preview: BIST takes on winter
- THE 100 THINGS
- JOIN THE LINC STUDY - Psychological Health
- Question and Answer: 17th Int'l Brain Injury
- BIST Celebrates Volunteer

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Enter your email address to subscribe to this blog and receive notifications of new posts by email.

WINTER SPORTS—PROTECT YOUR HEAD

By Melissa Myers, BIST Member

With Sidney Crosby’s long-standing troubles with concussions this season playing out across national media, Canadians have been made more aware of the importance of protecting their heads from injuries than in past years.

When the temperatures drop and people start participating in winter sports, most wouldn’t hesitate to put on a helmet before playing a game of hockey. But perhaps not every parent or child thinks to protect their head before sledding down a hill, an activity that also has its risk, experts point out.

“Head and brain injury can be the most devastating type of injuries,” said Paula Tymchyshyn, national program coordinator for [ThinkFirst Canada](#). “We’re really focused on trying to make sure that we’re preventing those [type of] injuries so that kids can stay healthy and active for their entire life.”

Thankfully, there are plenty of safety helmets available for all variety of sports. To help with selecting the right one and wearing it properly this winter, the BIST Beacon spoke to experts at ThinkFirst and the [Canadian Standards Association](#).

Choosing the right helmet for the right activity




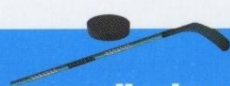

Helmets are engineered differently for different sports. Some

helmets are only made for one activity like skateboarding or baseball helmets, while many winter sports helmets are multi-use and can be used for skiing, snowboarding and tobogganing. Hockey helmets can be used for hockey, skating or tobogganing. Helmets can also be classified for either single or multiple impacts. Ski and snowboard helmets are only meant to sustain one impact, then should be replaced before returning to the hill. Hockey helmets can protect against multiple impacts before they need to be replaced.

Making the grade

The Canadian Standards Association gives safety certifications in order to tell consumers that the product/helmet meets Canadian quality standards. Anthony Toderian, manager of corporate affairs at CSA, said that Canadian standards are specific to Canadian winters and are designed to protect consumers from impact on snowy or icy terrain rather than from rocks and trees. He also said that American or European standard-helmets are safe and that “most major brands, such as CCM or Bauer, because of liability, will stand behind their products.”

The graphic below, courtesy of ThinkFirst Canada, shows the type of helmet you’ll want for different activities along with the CSA standard.

	WINTER SPORT				
	 Skiing	 Snowboarding	 Sledding/ Tobogganing	 Hockey	 Skating
Helmet	Ski/snowboard	Ski/snowboard	Ski/snowboard or hockey	Hockey with compatible face shield	Hockey
Standards	CSA Z263.1, ASTM F-2040, Snell RS-98, S-98	CSA Z263.1, ASTM F-2040, Snell RS-98, S-98	CSA Z262.1, Z263.1, ASTM F-2040, Snell RS-98, S-98	CSA Z262.1 – hockey; and Z262.2 – face protection	CSA Z262.1
Type of Impact	Mostly Single	Mostly Single	Single/Multiple	Multiple	Multiple

continued on page 3

WINTER SPORTS—PROTECT YOUR HEAD

Nicely fitted

Buying the right helmet is only the first step. ThinkFirst works to educate people to ensure that they fit their helmets correctly. It touts the “2V1 rule” to fit helmets, which dictates that there must be room for two fingers between your eyebrows and the helmet on your forehead. The straps of your helmet should form a “V” shape under your ears, then join to clip at the chin. You should also be able to fit one finger in between your helmet strap and your chin.



Although helmets do protect against brain injuries, people can still sustain concussions while wearing a helmet. Signs of a concussion can arise after experiencing a collision or fall while. Signs that someone may have sustained a concussion include dizziness, nausea, headache, confusion, increased irritability, amnesia and blurred vision. In the case that any of these signs are present it is best to stop play immediately and to speak with a doctor. There are strict guidelines to follow after sustaining a concussion before returning to play and medical supervision is necessary.

Can't protect you if you're not wearing it

Furthermore, having the proper helmet that fits perfectly won't protect you unless you're wearing it. Hockey Canada mandates that all players wear CSA certified helmets. The Canadian Ski Council also has a policy that recommends helmet use for both alpine skiers and snowboarders.

But skiing, snowboarding, and hockey are not the only winter sports that require helmet use.

“When you think about sliding down a hill at high speed on a GT racer,” said Tymchyshyn, “that’s a really dangerous thing.”

Both she and Toderian advocate wearing a helmet while sledding and tobogganing as well.

They also agreed that people need to get the necessary training to participate in winter sports safely. The dangers of injuring those around you can become a greater risk than injuring yourself if the proper precautions are not taken.

“It is very important that people take measures to protect themselves,” said Toderian.

FACEBOOK AND TWITTER



Check it out by searching for Brain Injury Society of Toronto



You can also follow BIST on Twitter at @BrainInjuryTO

Feel free to send submissions to info@bist.ca

BIST RECEIVES ONTARIO TRILLIUM GRANT

In July 2011, BIST submitted a proposal to the Ontario Trillium Foundation for financial support to assist in expanding and enhancing our programs and services. We are so thrilled our proposal was approved and our full budget was accepted.

What does this mean? This support will allow BIST to:

- 1) Enhance BIST's current programing to enable the organization to reach a larger audience through the expansion of our support groups, community meetings, and personal development workshops;
- 2) Hire a part-time Social Worker to facilitate the development and delivery of support groups, workshops, and the creation of on-line forums and resources.

We are pleased to announce that Michelle Ratcliff has joined the BIST team. Michelle, along with her

Masters of Social Work, brings with her experience in working with people of varying disabilities and a background in program development. A very warm welcome to BIST Michelle!

This funding will roll-out over two years, starting in January 2012.

By expanding the scope our programs and services, BIST will be well positioned to more effectively meet the variety of needs of all people affected by ABI in Toronto. We are in a good position to grow as an organization and are very enthusiastic about the potential that funding could bring to BIST.

Come help us celebrate!

BIST has received a grant from the Ontario Trillium Foundation to expand and enhance our programs and services. With this support, BIST will be well positioned to more effectively meet the variety of needs of all people affected by ABI in Toronto.

We would like to invite you to a very special launch party with MPP Kathleen Wynne and MPP Mike Colle.

Date: Monday January 23rd, 2012

Location: Northern District Library, 40 Orchard View Blvd, Room 200 (2nd Floor)

6:00 pm Meet and Mingle

6:15 pm Speeches

- Jonathan Burton, Chair of BIST Board of Directors
- Kathleen Wynne, MPP Don Valley West
- Mike Colle, MPP Eglinton-Lawrence
- Ontario Trillium Foundation Representative

6:45 pm Mingle

Ontario
Trillium Foundation



Fondation Trillium
de l'Ontario

QUESTION AND ANSWER WITH DR. PETER RUMNEY

By Matthew Chung

We can all probably remember feeling jitters the night before a new school year. What if Grade 10 math would be too difficult, or you'd forgotten everything you'd learnt in French the year before? And of course, there was the excitement and anxiety of seeing friends you hadn't seen all summer. Would Mike still want to trade snacks at lunch time? Would this be the year Bobby would notice you liked him?

For students returning to school with an acquired brain injury, beyond the excitement and anxiety of being back, there are a whole host of potential challenges that may affect their academic performance. Problems such as trouble staying focused, remembering or processing new information. Things that used to come easy may seem harder and changes in the student's behaviour may put a strain on old friendships.

While the education system provides support for a child with an acquired brain injury, there are only so many special education teachers and extra resources to go around. Your child will likely need a strong advocate to ensure they get the extra help they need.

To try and address some questions for parents and kids as they prepare for a return to the classroom, The Beacon sat down with Dr. Peter Rumney, Physician Director of the Brain Injury Rehabilitation Team at Holland Bloorview Kids Rehabilitation Hospital.

Q: What difficulties might a student returning to school face?

Dr. Rumney: We know the brain has the capacity to repair itself to some extent, we know we have the continued development of the child that will work in their favour. But we also know that a young child who has a brain injury is now disadvantaged when it comes to learning because of the brain injury. They have now a learning disability.

For example, a child who has been in a car crash, who has had a TBI, where they have been thrown and knocked

unconscious, often have problems with attention and distractibility. A kid who used to be able to listen to iTunes, check Facebook and read their book at the same time and maybe text somebody on the phone, cannot do that. Multi-tasking just isn't possible.

Thankfully, individuals who have less severe TBIs can often learn to compensate for whatever learning disability they have and do quite well.

Q: There does seem to be a good system in place to help students returning to school.

Dr. Rumney: Yes. We have this very formal meeting, all these assessments, we are communicating with the teacher and often that transition goes very well. Often (we) have (the student) go and visit the school to get re-acclimatized, or if they have to choose a new school, to see the school.

The next year is when there are problems because now, say the person is going from Grade 9 to Grade 10, it's a new set of teachers who have never taught the student before and most of the time the student looks unaffected — they are not limping, there are no scars. So we're always trying to ensure that the families understand they have to be strong advocates for their children to ensure that they let the school and the teachers know what has happened.

Q: What other steps can parents take to ensure there are supports in place for their child?

Dr. Rumney: If the student has a learning disability that meets the specific criteria the Ministry of Education demands, we also recommend the parents go through an Identification, Placement and Review Committee (IPRC) meeting... to identify the student as an exceptional student. Once that has been formalized, it means the student must have an annual review in the school and an individual education program must be put in place for them.

If they don't meet that criteria, and a lot of people don't, you can still have an Individual Education Plan (IEP) created to recommend certain accommodations



Dr. Rumney—Physician Director of the Brain Injury Rehabilitation Team at Holland Bloorview.

that can be put in place to help your child learn. What is a challenge is... those with an IPRC must be served while those with an IED only could be served. Most schools try their best but when there are a large number of students with special needs, the one who doesn't have the mandated exceptionality may get on the lower end of the list.

Q: I suppose parents might also run into difficulties with getting their child to accept and make use of the extra help?

Dr. Rumney: No kid, ever, in my experience, wants to be identified as being different. So, fairly regularly if a child does well one year with the extra support, you can understand why the teachers and school principals are saying 'you are doing well, we don't want to single you out as being different.' Often schools will say 'they have to learn to advocate for themselves, so if they don't understand, they have to tell the teacher.'

But as a student you don't want to say 'Hey, I don't understand,' especially if you think everyone else does.

Many times we try to make sure the special education teachers know who the students are and set up situations where they can meet with the student, check in with them on a regular basis, but it doesn't have to be done in front of the rest of the class.

TORONTO MARLIES BRAIN INJURY AWARENESS DAY

The Toronto Marlies are proud to announce an event in conjunction with World Head Injury Awareness Day (March 20th) and Brain Awareness Week (March 12th – 18th). They are inviting partnered health organizations along with supporters to join them for The Toronto Marlies Brain Injury Awareness Day.

Please note: There are a limited number of subsidized tickets available. They are on a first come, first served basis to current BIST members. Once these tickets are sold out, the cost of a ticket will be \$25.

Brain Injury Awareness Day

March 18th, 2012
Event Start 1:30pm
Game Start 3:00pm

Ticket Prices:
\$12 (Subsidize Ticket Price)
Subsidy only applies to BIST Members
\$25.00 (non-BIST members)

Please contact Kat Powell at 647-990-1485 or connections@bist.ca to reserve your tickets.

Final day to order tickets through BIST is **Monday February 27th, 2012.**



BIST BOWLING

If you're looking for a fun afternoon with friends from BIST, this is a good opportunity.

BIST will be holding another bowling afternoon at Thorncliffe Bowlerama.

Tuesday March 13th, 2012 12:30–3:00 pm

Thorncliffe Bowlerama

East York Town Centre

45 Overlea Blvd.

Tel: 416-421-2211

Note: Thorncliffe Bowlerama is wheelchair accessible

Price: \$8.50 (for two games)

If you have any questions or are interested in participating, please contact:

Kat Powell, Programs and Services Coordinator at 647-990-1485 or connections@bist.ca



digitalart / FreeDigitalPhotos.net

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

Name:

Julie Osbelt

How long have you been a member of BIST? 2004

What is your volunteer role with BIST?

I am a committee member of the BIST Awareness Committee. And some of my past responsibilities have included serving as the committee chair and organizing the June Awareness event (for example the Survivor Art Display, planning the entertainment for the event and assisting with the Survivor Speakers series.)

What motivated you to become a volunteer with BIST?

It is an important aspect of the work I do at Holland Bloorview Kids Rehabilitation Hospital to provide and encourage youth who have an ABI to connect with their community. I want to practice what I preach. So being a volunteer with BIST provides a great opportunity to share first hand the benefits of being a BIST member. It is also satisfying to know that BIST is making a difference for youth and adults who have acquired brain injuries.

What is the best part of being a BIST volunteer? The opportunity to always learn something new, and expand community connections while at the same time meeting the most fantastic people!

Why do you think it is important to volunteer? Volunteers are essential to building a strong community.

What would you say to potential volunteers? Giving back in any capacity is one of the most rewarding experiences possible.



How do you balance work, life and volunteering? It is definitely a challenge but I make a conscious effort to stay closely connected to my family and friends while also making time to work out at the gym, play golf and work on my photography projects.

What is your favourite book? I have a hard time picking just one book. The authors I enjoy to read include Jodi Picoult and Stieg Larsson.

What is your favourite movie? Shawshank Redemption, Forrest Gump

What other activities are of interest to you?

I love creating photo books and short videos featuring family and friends. I love to camp, hike, play golf and work out.

What is the most important thing you have learned through volunteering with BIST?

A greater understanding of others.

UPCOMING COMMUNITY MEETINGS

Trillium Launch Party

Monday January 23rd, 2012

Northern District Library
40 Orchard View Blvd, Rm 200

6:00 pm—8:00 pm

Relationships

Monday February 27th, 2012

Northern District Library
40 Orchard View Blvd, Rm 200

6:00 pm—8:00 pm

Personal Budget Management

Monday March 26th, 2012

Northern District Library
40 Orchard View Blvd, Rm 200

6:00 pm—8:00 pm

ART THERAPY AT BIST

By Melissa Myers, BIST Member

The art of BIST members, their families and supporters provided an outlet for discussion surrounding the events leading to and the disabilities associated with an acquired brain injury.

Art therapist Valerie Jacob spoke at the BIST Community Meeting on Nov. 28 about the benefits of art therapy before members were given the chance to take part in their own therapy session.

“Art therapy helps people blossom,” Jacob said. She said that 24 per cent of people don’t respond to verbal therapy and that by drawing their feelings first, people can avoid the frustration of trying to articulate our emotions.

Art therapy intends to first explore feelings of hurt and then create goals for survivors that will help to alleviate the pain of living with a disability or the traumatic memories surrounding being injured.

“You sometimes forget that you are more

that what your injury is.” Jacob said. “You are more than the person that you were before the injury.”

Jacob asked everyone to draw an animal that represented either their head injury or the event that caused it. Members were also asked to list a personal wish, hope and dream on the back of their paper.

BIST member Greg Silvaggio was one of the attendees to take part in the exercise.

Silvaggio said his picture depicts a moose walking through the forest breaking down all the trees around him. Silvaggio said he felt very destructive in his life after his accident, and that it was him who, like his moose drawing, walked through life knocking down everything, finding himself unable to rebuild.

Art therapy is not a new thing. In fact, Jacob said it has been practiced in Europe since the 1950’s and today it is rare to find a hospital in Europe that doesn’t



Drawing by Greg Silvaggio

have an art therapy program. This type of therapy caught on in North America around two decades later, she said.

The Canadian Art Therapy Association (CATA) was founded in 1977 and a non-profit organization to promote the profession of art therapy in Canada.

WHAT'S HAPPENING IN TORONTO

CIBC LunarFest

Date: January 20, 2012 – January 24, 2012

Time: 12:00 pm – 11:00 pm

Cost: FREE

Harbourfront Centre
235 Queens Quay West
Lower Simcoe Street and Queens Quay West

Harbourfront Centre is celebrating the Lunar New Year with CIBC LunarFest! This year’s festival, celebrating the dawn of the Year of the Dragon, will be centred on the theme of “Treasures of the Sea.” The festival’s centrepiece will be a giant Lantern Aquarium. CIBC LunarFest offers a range

of activities for the whole family: games, crafts, theatre, skating, holiday culinary options and much more!

www.harbourfrontcentre.com/whatson/seasonalfestivals/index.cfm?festival_id=100

The Royal Ontario Museum (ROM)

It now costs much less to visit the Royal Ontario Museum. The ROM has significantly reduced admission prices to ensure that everyone can visit the museum.

Check out the new pricing at www.rom.on.ca/visit/ or call

416.586.8000 and take advantage of the Friday Night discounts.

Black History Month

February is Black History Month and the Toronto Public Library celebrates this month with great programs for everyone at branches across the city. For more information these great FREE events, please visit www.torontopubliclibrary.ca/black-history-month

BIST HOLIDAY PARTY 2011

As usual, BIST members, staff, volunteers and board members came together to celebrate the holidays.

On Monday December 19th, BIST held its annual holiday party and we had a great turnout. Games were played, cookies were decorated and carols were sang, accompanied by Stewart Wallace on guitar and Laurie Bowers on vocals

A very special thank you to the Special Events Committee for another great event!.

Special Events Committee:

Kat Powell, Kevin Browne, Sarah Briggs, Frank Bruno, Michael Cluthier, Colleen Worsely and Bill Gilkinson.



Winter

Find and circle all of the Winter related words that are hidden.
The remaining letters spell a Japanese proverb.

L S O S E K A L F W O N S E L C I C I N
 L E Y C E K R A I M N D D R A Z Z I L B
 A S C A W V K A I O E C I K C A L B R D
 B W A R D R O T E S N O W S H O V E L C
 W E R F A I T L C W A F I R E P L A C E
 O A N P I E L I G E R N H E A D B A N D
 N T I S N C P O L S Y E S E T A K S S W
 S S V S N M E T H K E A D N D F R N E M
 T H A M Y O S F S C K T N N O L O H A R
 Y I L L R A W E I O C W O E U W O G S W
 E R O S C O R S W S O I I B B G M C O I
 S T E W A I T S H L H V T O O S N A N N
 N K O P T M O S P O G I A S T G O O N D
 D N I W P L T W T O E R N C O E G U L C
 S E O I S I O S N W D S R G A R E A P H
 E N L T N N L G I F R E E Z E T F L N I
 S R I S S G G S M R O N B O O D I K S L
 T C F I R E W O O D H A I L S T O O B L
 E H S S T N A P I K S C H P A C T I N K

BLACK ICE
 BLIZZARD
 BOOTS
 CARNIVAL
 CHRISTMAS
 COLD
 EGG NOG
 FIREPLACE
 FIREWOOD
 FOG
 FREEZE
 FROST
 GLOVES

HAIL
 HEADBAND
 HIBERNATION
 HOCKEY
 HOLIDAYS
 ICE FISHING
 ICICLES
 KNIT CAP
 LONG UNDERWEAR
 MITTENS
 OLYMPICS
 PARKA
 SCARF

SEASON
 SKATES
 SKI DOO
 SKI PANTS
 SKIING
 SLED
 SLEET
 SLIPPERY
 SNOW CASTLE
 SNOW PLOW
 SNOW SHOVEL
 SNOW TIRES
 SNOWBALL

SNOWBOARD
 SNOWFLAKE
 SNOWMAN
 SNOWSHOES
 SOLSTICE
 SOUP
 STEW
 STORM
 SWEATSHIRT
 TOBOGGAN
 VACATION
 WIND CHILL
 WOOL SOCKS

The mission of the Brain Injury Society of Toronto is to enhance the quality of life for people in the City of Toronto, living with the effects of acquired brain injury through education, awareness, support and advocacy.

Our services include:

- Monthly Community Meetings
- Support Groups
- Personal Development Workshops
- Peer Mentor Program
- Special Events



Brain Injury Society of Toronto

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