

Helmet rule described as a foolhardy move

"It's a foolhardy move," says Hal Lewis, Canadian Amateur Hockey Association's Director of Bylaws and Regulations, describing the recent decision by the National Hockey League to make the wearing of helmets optional. "It's difficult to understand an intelligent businessman putting at risk his greatest assets—his players."

Lewis is also a member of the Canadian Standards Association's Technical Committee on Protective Hockey Equipment. With the Amateur Hockey season at hand, and the NHL's exhibition games in progress, CSA is concerned about the example the new helmet rule sets for young amateur players.

"A lot of time and effort of many volunteers has gone into the development of standards for helmets and face protectors since 1969," says Jim McCarthy, CSA's Vice-President of Standards. "These efforts were directed at reducing injuries which inevitably occur in a robust physical sport. We know these products work."

A recent new release by the Ontario Medical Association sharply criticized the NHL for making the wearing of helmets optional.

"After so much success in building awareness of the

importance of wearing protective equipment when playing sports, this move by the NHL is very regressive and is a blow to the promotion of public health," says Dr. Rocco Gerace, chairperson of the OMA's Committee on Accidental Injuries.

"Young people will be greatly influenced by seeing professional hockey players discontinue wearing helmets and want to emulate them. This can only lead to more head and eye injuries.

"We certainly hope the NHL reverses its decision on wearing helmets, and again sets an important positive example for young players."

This view is also supported by the Sports Medicine Council of Canada, which "denounced" the NHL rule change on helmets.

"It doesn't make sense," said Dr. Tom Pashby, a Toronto Ophthalmologist, who works with several national and international groups, including the CSA, which regulates protective hockey equipment. "Hockey, the amateur game, is for

fun and participation, and all means of preventing injuries must be employed, including the wearing of helmets."

Pashby also heads up the Dr. Tom Pashby Sports Safety Fund, which was started in 1990 to conduct research and education in all types of sports and recreational activities. The Fund has provided several research grants with the purpose of providing safer hockey equipment.

Dr. Charles Taylor, who heads the Neurosurgery Department at the University of Toronto, said not wearing a helmet would be stupid.

"Since the introduction of CSA-certified helmets, there have been very few brain injuries," says Tator, who is the director of SportsSmart Canada, which records serious injuries in all sports.



OPP looking for owner of vehicle

The Ontario Provincial Police are searching for a Kingston native after his vehicle was found approximately eight kilometres east of Nipigon on Highway 17.

John Allen Bowes was last seen Aug. 15 in Regina, Saskatchewan, on his way home from a trip to Nelson, B.C., said his aunt, Frances Graham, also of Kingston.

"We know that he gassed up in Nipigon on Sept. 16," said Sgt. Gerry Tryon of the Nipigon Detachment of the OPP. "We know from a credit card."

Bowes' vehicle, a red and white, 1977 International Scout, was recovered on Aug. 22 said Tryon. The vehicle was facing west.

Tryon described Bowes as five feet, eight inches tall, weighing approximately 171 pounds. Bowes, or "Bowsie" has long black hair and is balding on the top. If anyone has information they should contact the OPP.

October is Women's history month

The Honourable Mary Collins, federal minister Responsible for the Status of woman, has declared October as Women's History Month in Canada to recognize the contributions of women, past and present, in all walks of life.

The idea was suggested to Collins by women's organizations and by women in the academic community.

October was chosen because it marks the anniversary of a legal battle which led to Canadian women officially being recognized as "persons", an event which took place on Oct. 18, 1929.

Nellie McClung, one of the major players in the case, said "people must know the past to understand the present and face the future."

Women have had an equally valuable role in shaping our communities in countless ways—in the home, workplace, schools and hospitals.

Event are being planned across the country in October to recognize the event.

Help your children to handle stress

by Dr. Richard Earle

Stress is a symptom of life in the 1990s. Every day, in some form or another, stress is the one thing we all encounter—and we all try to cope with.

But what about our kids? Are they under as much stress as their parents? After all,

compared to such adult concerns as paying the bills or dealing with an unreasonable boss, how stressful can it be, fretting about doing well in math or making the basketball team?

Children, whether they're three year old or 13, can be the greatest victims of stress because they haven't yet learned how to handle it. In fact, I firmly believe that the early teen years can be more stressful than the infamous mid-life crisis!

A child's worries about such things as "why won't she ever play with me?" or "why can't I play basketball?" or "why can't I go—everyone else is?" can result in high stress levels. Remember your own childhood concerns?

A child's training ground is the family. A family life rich in communication and understanding acts as a shock absorber for stress, helping kids and parents alike bounce back from the ups and downs the rest of the world sends their way.

As adults, we have learned to deal with, or simply ignore, many of the little doubts, worries and uncertainties we have. We need to teach our children how to take the sting out of their self-doubts and worries. Helping your children manage stress will provide them with skills they can use all their lives.

Ways to help diffuse your child's stress

1. Cut "over-generalization" down to size. For example, ask your child why they think that Susan "never" plays with them anymore. It may well turn out that it was really only twice in the last a month that Susan couldn't play because she recently began after-school swimming lessons. Children readily over-generalize disappointment into an unyielding fact of life in general.

2. Children often see things as being "all or nothing." For instance, if your child, upset about not making the school team, concludes that he or she "can't play" basketball, talk about it. Just because they didn't make the team doesn't mean that they can't play basketball—or some other sport.

Discuss with your child some of the possible reasons for not being chosen—lots of kids tried out and only a small number actually made the team. Present your child with reasonable alternatives, such as joining a community league or taking lessons, or encourage your child to try some other activity. We all have something we're good at. Help your child discover his or her special skills.

HAPPY 15TH BIRTHDAY PATSY!
Lots of Love From,
Mom, Dad & Marilyn

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