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## PUBLIC SAFETY BULLETIN

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BC Coroners Service

### **STATS AND STUDIES SHOW TOO MANY KIDS VICTIMS OF FATAL PEDESTRIAN ACCIDENTS**

VICTORIA – From 2005 to 2007, 18 children under the age of 19 were killed in pedestrian incidents in B.C., reports the head of the Child Death Review unit of the BC Coroners Service in acknowledging the importance of national Safe Kids Week 2008 (May 26-June 1).

“The safety of our children is a shared responsibility,” said Kellie Kilpatrick, executive director of the CDRU. “Parents and caregivers need to know where their kids are. Drivers need to slow down and remember that children’s behaviour is often unpredictable.”

Preliminary review by the CDRU of the 18 deaths shows 72 per cent of the children were male and in many of these fatalities one or more of the driver behaviours were found to be contributory: driver error, inattention, impairment and excessive speed.

A new review of child pedestrian research by Safe Kids Canada, the injury prevention program of Toronto’s Hospital for Sick Children, has also found child pedestrian incidents are a leading cause of injury-related death for Canadian children under the age of 14.

The CDRU suggests the follow tips for keeping kids street-safe:

- Start talking to your children about being street safe as early as possible;
- Role-model safe street behaviour – don’t jay walk – children will mimic your behaviour;
- Chime your doors to alert you if and when doors are opened;
- Use self-locking gates on your property, creating a barrier between your child and the street;
- Practise the ‘walk around rule’ – walk around your vehicle before starting the engine to ensure your child has not followed you to the vehicle;
- Use reflective material on children’s clothing, shoes, backpacks, and helmets; and
- When driving, slow down, obey speed limits, pay attention and be ready to react.

The CDRU and BC Coroners Service commends Safe Kids Canada for its continued success in educating parents and promoting strategies that keep children safe and communities injury-free.

The BC Coroners Service is responsible for the investigation and comprehensive review of all child deaths in B.C. It makes recommendations to improve public safety and prevent death in similar circumstances.

For more information on Safe Kids Canada, visit [www.safekidscanada.ca](http://www.safekidscanada.ca).

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Contact: Terry Foster  
BC Coroners Service  
604 660-7752