

Brain Injury Association of Canada  
Association canadienne des lésés cérébraux

# THE BRAIN TRAIN

*Get on board with BIAC*

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## Opportunities Fund for Persons with Disabilities

Human Resources and Social Development Canada created an 'Opportunities Fund for Persons with Disabilities' by promoting the following objectives:

- To assist persons with disabilities to prepare for and obtain employment or self-employment as well as to develop the skills necessary to maintain that new employment.
- To support effective and innovative activities such as, but not limited to, the following: encouraging employers to provide individuals with work opportunities and experience, assist individuals to increase their employment skill level and helping individuals to start their own business; and
- To work in partnership with organizations for persons with disabilities, including the private sector, to support innovative approaches to integrate individuals with disabilities into employment or self-employment and address barriers to an individual's labour market participation.

For more information please contact 1-800 O'Canada or view the HRSDC website [www.hrsdc.gc.ca/en/disability\\_issues/funding\\_programs/opportunities\\_fund/index.shtml](http://www.hrsdc.gc.ca/en/disability_issues/funding_programs/opportunities_fund/index.shtml)

## BRAIN FACTS

### Did you know that:

- The adult brain contains about 100 billion neurons;
- The brain uses 20% of the oxygen we breathe, although it accounts for only 2% of the body's total weight;
- Neurons multiply at a rate of 250,000 neurons/minute during early pregnancy;
- Your brain generates 25 watts of power while you're awake – enough to illuminate a light bulb.

(source: Montreal Neurological Institute and hospital, McGill University)



## Word from the President

As we approach the holiday season I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone for their efforts on behalf of the Brain Injury Association of Canada during the past year. This support comes in many forms – from the significant corporate sponsorships to the many volunteers who make our existence possible.

During the upcoming weeks, I encourage you to take the opportunity to enjoy time with your family and friends. I would also encourage us all to take time to remember those who, because of the complications of their injuries, are not able to spend the holidays with their loved ones.

As one involved in finances, I am also aware that this time of year many people are making decisions around giving donations to causes they believe in. You will find in this newsletter information on making a tax-deductible donation to the Brain Injury Association of Canada. All donations received before December 31st will receive a receipt for 2007 Income Tax purposes. We ask that you consider supporting us in achieving our goals by making a contribution. It will be gratefully received.

My personal wishes to everyone for a safe holiday season and a healthy, prosperous 2008.

**Shirley Johnson**  
President

# The Brain Injury Association of Canada launches *Most is Not Enough* campaign

**Toronto, ONTARIO** – On Monday, November 12, at 11am, The Brain Injury Association of Canada (BIAC), in partnership with Smart-Risk, launched its ‘Most is Not Enough’ campaign, aimed at drumming up support for Bill C-412, from a news conference at Toronto’s Canadian Injury Prevention Conference. The bill, authored by Dr. Hedy Fry MP for Vancouver Centre—proposes prohibiting “the advertising, sale or import into Canada of recreational snow sport helmets that do not meet the requirements of the applicable Canadian Standards Association standard.” For more information and to support the campaign, please visit [www.mostisnotenough.ca](http://www.mostisnotenough.ca)

**Toronto, ONTARIO** – Lundi, le 12 novembre à 11h00, l’Association canadienne des lésés cérébraux (ACLC), en partenariat avec Sauve-qui-pense, a lancé sa campagne « Presque ce n’est pas assez » qui veut obtenir l’appui pour le projet de loi C-412 lors d’une conférence de presse durant la Conférence sur la prévention des blessures. Le projet de loi, sous la direction du Dr. Hedy Fry – députée pour Vancouver-Centre, propose d’empêcher la « publicité, vente ou importation au Canada de casques protecteurs pour les sports récréatifs qui ne rencontrent pas les normes applicables de l’Association canadienne de normalisation. Pour plus d’information et pour appuyer la campagne, visitez le [www.plusieurscenespasassez.ca](http://www.plusieurscenespasassez.ca)

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## Government Delivers on Budget 2007 Commitment to Fund Seven Centres of Excellence

**TORONTO, Ontario, October 15, 2007** — The Honourable Jim Prentice, Minister of Industry, and the Honourable Jim Flaherty, Minister of Finance, today announced \$105 million to seven centres of excellence focused on priority areas in research and commercialization for Canada.

“Our government is committed to building on our important science and technology strengths by taking advantage of the excellent research capacity of facilities such as the Li Ka Shing Knowledge Institute,” said Minister Prentice. “Through this funding, and working with our provincial and private partners, the new Centres of Excellence will help Canada achieve world-class success in the strategic areas of scientific opportunity and competitive advantage.”

“In Budget 2007, we committed to improving the quality of life of Canadians by strengthening our support for science and technology,” said Minister Flaherty. “We live in a highly competitive global economy, and it is imperative that we lead change in areas such as the environment, energy and health care by being more innovative and forward-looking.”

The seven centres of excellence focusing on research and commercialization are as follows:

- the Li Ka Shing Knowledge Institute at St. Michael’s Hospital, affiliated with the University of Toronto
- the Brain Research Centre at the University of British Columbia
- the Canada School of Energy and the Environment at the University of Alberta, the University of Calgary and the University of Lethbridge
- the Heart and Stroke Foundation Centre for Stroke Recovery, affiliated with the University of Toronto and the University of Ottawa
- the Montreal Neurological Institute at McGill University
- the National Optics Institute in Québec
- the Life Sciences Research Institute in Halifax, affiliated with Dalhousie University

The end result of a new and more strategic government focus on science and technology is a better life for Canadians, our families and our communities, with cleaner and safer streets, better medicines and health care, and improved education that will lead to better jobs and better futures for our children.

Through Budget 2007, Canada’s New Government committed to providing \$105 million in 2007–08 to support the operation of these centres.

For more details, please contact: Deirdra McCracken, Press Secretary  
Office of the Honourable Jim Prentice  
Minister of Industry  
613-995-9001  
Media Relations  
Industry Canada  
613-943-2502



# Synapse

A synapse is a junction between two nerve cells, where the club-shaped tip of a nerve fiber almost touches another cell in order to transmit signals. This column can be seen as a link between us all and will let you know what is happening in other parts of Canada.

MindWorks is pleased to announce an upcoming course. Maria Huijbregts will present two, one-day training workshops for Occupational Therapists and Physiotherapists on the Chedoke McMaster Stroke Assessment.

In 2008, we are pleased to present, Mary Warren and her course "Evaluation and Treatment of Visual Perceptual Dysfunction in Adult Brain Injury (Part 1)". This course will be held on Friday and Saturday, September 5 and 6, 2008 at the Holiday Inn Waterfront in Peterborough, Ontario. Mary Warren has not presented this course in Ontario since 2001 and we are very excited to be hosting this course next year. We have enclosed the registration form for this course and it will soon be available on our website. If you have any questions regarding any of these courses, please contact Carrie Porter at, (705) 741-3412 ext. 28 or email, [info@mindworksgroup.ca](mailto:info@mindworksgroup.ca)

» **Evaluation and Treatment of Visual Perceptual Dysfunction in Adult Brain Injury (Part 1)**

Mary Warren MS, OTR/L, SCLV, FAOTA  
September 5 and 6, 2008  
Holiday Inn Waterfront, Peterborough Ontario  
To Register visit: [www.mindworksgroup.ca](http://www.mindworksgroup.ca)  
or phone (705) 741-3412 for more information

» **U.N. International Day of Disabled Persons**

The Government of Canada has announced the U.N. International Day of Disabled Persons is to be recognized on December 3. For more information see <http://www.hrsdc.gc.ca/en/cs/comm/sd/news/2004/041203.shtml>

» **Upcoming Hawaiian Oyster Odysseys**

**Toronto**  
4th annual  
Monday, January 21, 2008  
Drake Hotel, 1150 Queen St. West

**Gatineau**  
2nd Annual  
Wednesday, February 20, 2008  
Le French Quarter Restaurant  
80 Promenade du Portage



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## Cridge program aims to help most vulnerable

# Basics of life are not available to brain injury survivors

— Geoff Sing and Janelle Breese Biagioni, Special to Times Colonist



The single most important strategy to get survivors of brain injury off the street is to provide safe and supportive housing. That helps them enormously and saves government money. The Times Colonist reports that the emergency shelter, health-care and other costs involved in supporting a homeless person are three times greater than it would be to provide subsidized housing.

The Cridge believes that for the government to pay \$25 per night for supportive housing or \$38 per day to place a survivor in a self-contained apartment with some support is a significant saving over the estimated \$60 to \$85 per night for an emergency short-term bed. Victoria should implement a program like the successful supportive housing model used by Cheshire Homes Society in the lower mainland. Cheshire offers numerous semi-independent and satellite apartments designed to meet the physical, social, psychological, spiritual and emotional needs of survivors of brain injury. The society's programs address quality of life issues for survivors and ensures they have the necessary supports to live as independently and safely as possible.

*(continued on page 4)*



Dedicated with love to my wife, Marion, on the 10th anniversary of her auto accident, May, 2000. I am forever with you in your valiant struggle.

## Marion's Song

— By Steve Anderson

The doctor saves the patient  
Says this woman's going to live  
But her brain is badly damaged  
She has nothing left to give  
To her society, to her society  
Nothing left to give to her society

Social worker says you must take her  
From this institution of repair  
This place has nothing more for her  
And you certainly can't leave her here  
In the wrong society, the wrong society  
This hospital is the wrong society

The nursing home accepts the resident  
And drugs her on the second floor  
The locks all have codes on them  
So she can't get through the door  
She is trapped in this society  
Yes, trapped in this society

We plead with the government  
To give her what she might need  
But government has given the money  
To their friends that are filled with greed  
In the right society, the right society  
Their friends are in the right society

Where are the people who love me?"  
Asks the woman in anguish and in fear  
And all we can lovingly tell her  
Is simply, "They're not here"  
they're in society, they're in society  
And they don't want you there.



## In A Nutshell

— by Barb Butler, Editor

Hello once again, welcome back to our newsletter, please read, enjoy and learn. If you like what you see or have any suggestions please feel free to contact me at [barbbutler@biac-aclc.ca](mailto:barbbutler@biac-aclc.ca). This edition will no doubt find you preparing for winter and all types of celebrations in December. May the spirit of the season keep you safe.



## Basics of life are not available to brain injury survivors

(continued from page 3)

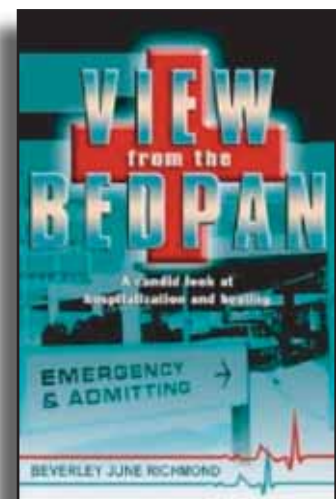
While the solution is not easy, nor without a cost, it is attainable.

Most important, it will move marginalized survivors of brain injury off the street and help them to become contributing, valued members of our community. Geoff Sing is manager of community and residential services and Janelle Breese Biagioni is a brain injury network mentor with the Cridge Centre for the Family.

© Times Colonist (Victoria) 2007

**View from the Bedpan** is a book by Beverley June Richmand, a survivor. For more information and to purchase a copy please follow this link to [amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com):

[http://www.amazon.com/View-Bedpan-Beverly-June-Richmond/dp/1553063619/ref=sr\\_1\\_1/002-5333452-3574412?ie=UTF8&s=books&qid=1189193624&sr=1-1](http://www.amazon.com/View-Bedpan-Beverly-June-Richmond/dp/1553063619/ref=sr_1_1/002-5333452-3574412?ie=UTF8&s=books&qid=1189193624&sr=1-1)





# TEAM TERRIFIC!

PREVENTING BRAIN INJURIES

Look First  
Get Trained  
Buckle Up  
Drive Sober  
Wear the Gear

An interactive and dynamic presentation, TEAM TERRIFIC focuses on preventing brain injuries. This 90 minute presentation has 4 components. The first provides basic information about the brain. The second involves a brain injury simulation. The third focuses on SMARTRISK strategies that assist teens in making wise decisions. The fourth and most powerful component makes use of stories told by brain injury survivors. Overall, the presentation increases knowledge, affects attitudes about risk, and empowers teens to take safe risks.

## Best Practices and Successes

Over the past two years, the program's successes were tracked using a rigorous pre and post testing schedule. Our statistics are as follows:

- 27% increase in knowledge about the brain's lobes and their basic responsibilities,
- 24% increase in SMART RISK knowledge, and
- 22% increase in self reported helmet use.



Other successes include the development of new skills amongst survivor presenters, particularly in the areas of communication, self esteem and work-readiness. Additionally, the TEAM TERRIFIC Program raises community awareness and acceptance in regards to brain injury and teaches student participants to consider career options that may not be readily obvious to them – careers in brain injury.

## BIAC

TEAM TERRIFIC had the pleasure of presenting to the participants of the Brain Injury Association of Canada this summer at the national conference. Discussions started on translating the program into French and possibly Nunavut so everyone could experience this powerful program. At the conference, Richard Kinar suggested we be a part of the Knowledge Network documentary on brain injury. A very public thank you goes out to Richard for believing that our program is worthy of this honour. We were delighted to film the first week in October.

In September the TEAM TERRIFIC program was showcased in San Antonio, Texas at the North American Brain Injury Conference. We are looking forward to developing partnerships with our American counterparts as a result of this conference.

## In your Community

If you would like to have TEAM TERRIFIC presented in your community please contact Karae (pronounced car-A), the program facilitator, at 250-334-9225 or email her at [teamterrific@cvheadinjury.com](mailto:teamterrific@cvheadinjury.com) for more information.

Web site: [http://secure.cihi.ca/cihiweb/dispPage.jsp?cw\\_page=media\\_04oct2007\\_e](http://secure.cihi.ca/cihiweb/dispPage.jsp?cw_page=media_04oct2007_e)



# How Good is your Balance

**T**hey say that falling in love is wonderful...but falls of any other kind can be perilous: They're the top cause of injury-related deaths in Americans over age 65. The best way slash your risk of falls is to address the medical ills that often underlie them.

- **Muscle weakness:** The ankles and thigh muscles of frequent fallers were much weaker than those of similar non-fallers in a recent study of nursing home residents. The remedy: exercises that improve strength and balance. They also lower your risk of fractures if you do topple.
- **Medications:** Many drugs pack enough sedative power to throw you off balance. Taking four or more prescription drugs is especially risky. And a change of regime or dosage can increase your fall risk for several days. The top culprits: anticonvulsants, antidepressants, certain over-the-counter antihistamines, drugs for cardiac arrhythmias, diuretics, and sleeping pills.
- **Vision problems:** Cataracts, which impair depth perception, can trigger tumbles-and so, paradoxically, can having cataract surgery or updating your eyeglass prescription. Be extra cautious after undergoing any eye treatment. Wearing reading glasses only while sitting or standing still.
- **Low blood pressure:** The head-swimming sensation that results from rising quickly from sitting or

lying down reflects a temporary blood-pressure dip (orthostatic hypotension). If severe, it can make you fall. Older people are particularly vulnerable due to cardiovascular disorders or naturally low blood pressure. To assess your risk, ask your doctor for a standing blood pressure reading.

## CHECK YOUR BALANCE

It's a good idea to occasionally test your balance. Do this simple two-part exercise with someone standing by to observe you – and to catch you if necessary. See your doctor if you have trouble doing either of these:

1. **Romberg's test:** Stand in front of a perpendicular reference point, such as a window frame or room corner. Stand on both feet, heels together and eyes open, for 1 minute. Repeat for 1 minute with eyes closed. Your spotter, standing in front of you, can see if you sway in relation to the reference point.
2. **Timed up-and-go,** using an armchair and a stopwatch: Mark a spot 10 feet ahead of a chair. Then sit down with your back touching the backrest. On 'go', stand up, walk to the spot at a normal pace, turn around, walk to the chair, and sit. A time of 8 to 10 seconds is normal; 11 to 19 seconds indicates moderate risk of falling; 20 or more signals high risk.

## DON'T TRIP YOURSELF

Eliminate such hazards as rugs, tangled electrical cords, and clutter on walkways. Install nightlights, handrails, and grab bars in key places. And wear thin-soled, low-heeled shoes with traction.



# YES! I Would Like to Assist With My Donation

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Gatineau, Qc  
J8Y 1Y7  
Tel: 819-777-2492 or toll free: 866-977-2492

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