



**CHILDSAFETYLINK**  
Here for you.

## ANNUAL REPORT

2023/2024

Child Safety Link (CSL) is an injury prevention program at IWK Health dedicated to reducing the incidence and severity of unintentional injury to children and youth in Atlantic Canada.



[www.childsafetylink.ca](http://www.childsafetylink.ca)

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# Manager Message



My team is key to the success of CSL. I am excited about how they have all operationalized our strategic plan to work towards our long-term outcomes. This report highlights our accomplishments by each portfolio: AT Home, At Play, At School, and On the Road.

## SANDRA NEWTON

Manager, Child Safety Link

We are a small team with a large mandate, and we are constantly working on how to support our partners and diverse families across Atlantic Canada.

This year we were excited that one of our videos, “Is your child in the right seat?” won a national award of commendation from Canadian Institutes of Health Research video competition (IHDCYH Talks Video Competition). We appreciated this national recognition.

We continue to build on our portfolios and are thankful to our many colleagues including the Atlantic Canada Poison Centre, Atlantic Canada Children’s Fall Prevention Working group, Atlantic Collaborative on Injury Prevention (ACIP), child passenger safety technicians, Family Resource Centres, and so on. To ensure we have an efficient method to network and connect with our partners and supports, we also continued to grow our virtual Community of Practice.

I have many people and organizations to thank including our financial contributors and our Advisory Council. Without everyone’s support, CSL would not be able to continue our programming. I look forward to another year of growth!



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## Thank you

### Financial Contributors

CSL receives contributions from several agencies and we would like to thank the following for their generous support: Nova Scotia and Newfoundland & Labrador governments, the Insurance Bureau of Canada and CTV (in-kind support).



# About Child Safety Link

Child Safety Link (CSL) is an injury prevention program at IWK Health dedicated to reducing the incidence and severity of unintentional injury to children and youth in the Maritimes (Atlantic when appropriate).

## Our Priority Areas

### Keeping kids safe...



**At Home**  
Falls Prevention  
Poisoning Prevention



**At School**  
TBD



**At Play**  
ATV Safety  
Active Transportation



**On the Road**  
Child Passenger  
Safety

## Strategic Goals

CSL has four long-term strategic goals and each goal has a series of outcomes:

- Improving the resilience and sustainability of our program.
- Expanding child and youth injury prevention research and knowledge.  
Note: Specific to external audiences
- Providing leadership in our priority areas to drive system change.
- Advancing equity and inclusivity in the context of child and youth injury prevention.  
Note: focus on equity groups: e.g., Newcomer, Indigenous, & African NS/Descent families





# Safety At Home



## Fall Prevention



### Fall Prevention Month (November 2023)

Theme: Falls around the home.

The Atlantic Canada Children's Fall Prevention Working Group collaborated to create a Fall Prevention infographic (French, Arabic, and Mi'kmaq) that was shared via Instagram, Facebook, LinkedIn, and Loop Junior.

The infographic was converted into a poster and distributed across Atlantic Canada (100 distributed).

CSL appeared on CTV Moring Live to promote Fall Prevention Month.

A social media campaign was launched and a series of posts were promoted throughout November. There was 2298 engagements through CSL social media platforms.

**11 Facebook posts**                      **2298**  
**11 Instagram posts**                  **engagements**

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### Preventing Falls in Children at Home

Children love to walk, climb and explore. Many children have no sense of danger. This can lead to serious falls.

**Did you know?**

Falls are the **#1** reason kids in Atlantic Canada are taken to the hospital for injuries.

In 2018, in kids 0-4 years old, falls caused \*  
**6864** Emergency Department visits  
**135** Hospitalizations  
**36** Disabilities  
\*Coal of Hope in Atlantic Canada 2022

#### Tips to prevent serious falls at home

**Tip #1:** Get down on the floor to check for tripping hazards (like mats or cords) around your home. This will help you see things from your child's level.

**Tip #2:** Use a child safety gate that screws into the wall at the top of stairs. A pressure-mounted gate (no screws) can only be used at the bottom of the stairs. Make sure to keep stairs free of clutter.

**Tip #3:** Always place car seats, infant seats and swings on the floor. Never place these items on a table or countertop.

**Tip #4:** Use window stops or guards on windows, and keep balcony doors locked. Do not put furniture that your child can climb on in front of windows. A window screen will not stop your child from falling out.

**Tip #5:** Change your baby's diaper on the floor. If you change your baby on a change table or bed, always keep one hand on them or use the strap provided.  
If your child has tried to climb out of their crib, move them into a toddler bed or mattress on the floor.

**For more information**

If you live in an apartment, confirm with building management that you are able to use screw-mounted baby gates without it affecting your damage deposit.

Child Safety Link's Falls Prevention page:  
<https://www.childsafetylink.ca/falls-prevention>

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# Safety At Home



## Poisoning Prevention



### Poison Prevention Week (PPW)

(March 17-23, 2024)

Theme: Kids Act Fast, So Do Poisons

Goal: To educate parents and caregivers about practices that can make their homes safer from unintentional childhood poisonings.

Activities included a social media survey, social media posts, media and promotion of the Atlantic Canada Poison Centre.

**9 Facebook posts / 9 Instagram posts**

**8 TV interviews (CSL and Atlantic Canada Poison Centre staff)**

**3 articles**



It's very important to keep adult purses and bags away from little hands, because they also often contain medications, cosmetics and smoking/vaping products that could be very dangerous to a small child. Dr. Nancy Murphy, Medical Director of the Atlantic Canada Poison Centre.



### Proclamation in the House

The Premier of Nova Scotia, the Honourable Tim Houston, made a proclamation officially recognizing PPW in the province of Nova Scotia.



### New resources

Poison number stickers, magnets, lock bags and cabinet locks were made available to order by service providers.

# Safety at Play & School



## Active Transportation /Helmet Promotion



Active transportation: CSL conducted two helmet fittings at two Halifax elementary schools providing 21 helmets to children ages 5 - 8 years old. CSL also provided education around proper helmet fit/use and a helmet information sheet to each student.

## Supporting Advocacy/Research



Off-Highway vehicles: Staff supported an NS Off Highway Vehicle Advocacy Strategy being led by Injury Free Nova Scotia (IFNS).



CSL continued to participate in Walk 'n Roll collective action planning for Active and Safe Transportation (Halifax, NS).



CSL continued to work on concussion data project with a researcher in Nova Scotia.

## Helmet educational resources

CSL worked with a literacy expert and graphic designer to create: Why should you wear a helmet (English, French).





# Safety on the Road (CPS)



## Child Passenger Safety Week (Sept 17-23)

Theme: Is your child's car seat safe to use?

Activities included: a social media guide to those who support families, and a series of 6 short educational videos on social media promoting how to determine if your seat is safe.

**6 videos created and shared during social media campaign.**



## Advocacy



There has been an alarming trend of unsafe contraptions marketed as car seats popping up online. These counterfeit seats have appeared on the sites of large, online retailers that we all know and trust," Katherine Hutka, Child Passenger Safety Specialist

## Safe Kids Week (May 29 - June 4)

Theme: Child Passenger Safety

CSL and Parachute Canada partnered on Safe Kids Week. Several CSL resources were co-branded with Parachute to support nation-wide distribution/ promotion. Parachute adapted CSL's Right Seat resources, fact sheets and videos (8 languages) as well as the Getting Started: Is your car seat safe to use? (English\French).

The goal of the national partnership with Parachute was to promote stronger CPS legislation across the country. CSL co-signed letters to each Atlantic Canada provincial government with legislative recommendations and met with the NB and NL governments to discuss these recommendations.



# Safety on the Road (CPS)



## Child Passenger Safety Capacity Building

CSL trains and assists service providers to support child passenger safety in communities and health centres.

| Projects   | # of sessions (participants)   | Audience  |
|--|--|---|
| Child Passenger Safety Technician Training   | 4 courses<br>(39 new technicians)<br>2 recertified technicians                 | 3 Nova Scotia<br>1 New Brunswick<br>(1 NS/1 NB)               |
| Instructor support   | Mentorship and training to support 3 current Instructors.<br>2 new instructors | 1 NL<br>1 NS<br>1 NB<br>(1 NS/1 NB)                           |
| Nurse Orientation  | Virtual: 85 nurses<br>In-person: 45 nurses                                     | 54 IWK Health<br>20 Truro (NS)<br>56 NS-wide                  |
| CPS Basics for Drivers (virtual)   | 567 logins access codes requested<br>(121% increase from 22-23)                | NS (124: 22%)<br>NB (28: 5%)<br>PEI (41: 7%)<br>NL (373: 66%) |
| Safe Travel for All Children (STAC) training<br>(Adaptive transportation for children with special healthcare needs) | 2 courses<br>21 participants   | 1 NS (14 partici)<br>1 NB (7 participants)                    |
| STAC patient consults  | 10 consults<br>(4 virtual/6 in person)   | IWK Health  |

# Safety on the Road (CPS)



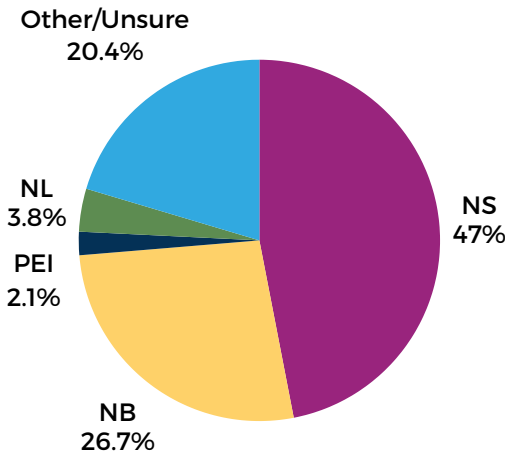
## Child Passenger Safety

CSL answers inquiries from both families and service providers (e.g. nurses, Family Resource Centres staff, occupational therapists, etc.) and provides consultation services (e.g. policy development) to organizations across Atlantic Canada and beyond.

**1197 Inquiries**    **99.75 Inquiries/month**

25% decrease from 2022/2023

### Inquiries by Province



300 (25%)



493 (41%)



404 (33%)



Caregivers

448 (37%)



Service Providers

749 (63%)



CPST Training Halifax March 2024

# Child Passenger Safety



## Presentations



CSL presented to a variety of audiences to educate about child passenger safety.

Audiences included Alberta Health Services, NS Community College, NL Health Promotion consultants, NS Practical Nurses.

K. Hutka also presented at two conferences including:

- Kidz in Motion international conference held Oklahoma (Topic: Lost in Translation: Lessons Learned creating resources for newcomer families)
- Cybex Safety Summit, a nation-wide event for retailers and technicians in Ontario (Topic: Meeting caregivers where they are). This also involved participation on a panel that included Transport Canada and New Brunswick advocate Eran Jones.



### Child Passenger Safety Association of Canada (CPSAC)

CSL continues to support the work of CPSAC. Katherine Hutka, CSL Child Passenger Safety Specialist is the current President.



# Child Passenger Safety



With the generous financial support of the Insurance Bureau of Canada (IBC), CSL provided an Atlantic-wide car seat grant program. There were three main groups who received \$1000 car seat grants: Family Resource Centers (FRC), Newcomer and Refugee organizations and Community Health Nurses.

The testimonials provided emphasized the impact of the Car Seat Grant Program in addressing the needs of families, particularly amidst financial constraints and high demand for essential safety equipment.



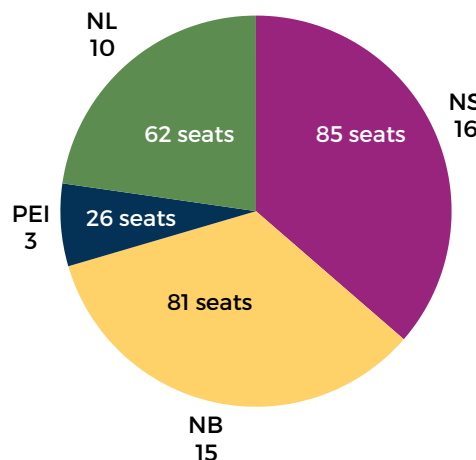
**44 grants**



**237 families supported**



**254 seats**





# Overarching

## Child Safety Link Webinar Series



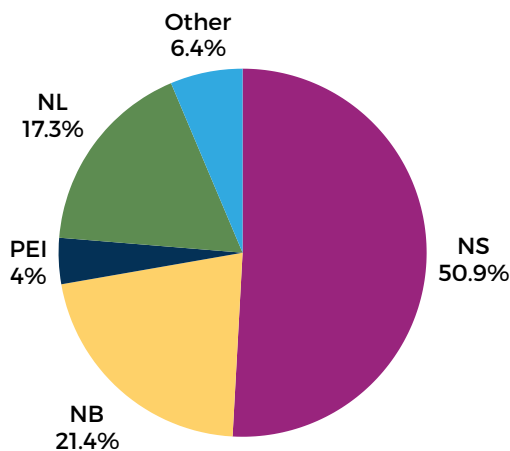
**3 Webinars**

**100% increase from 2022/2023**

**172 Participants**

**Average 59 participants/webinar**

### Attendees by province



### Webinar topics

**Car Seat Misuse: Common Errors and the Risks They Pose**

- 72 participants

**Safe Sleep: Reducing the Risk of Sleep-Related Injury**

- 62 participants

**Poisoning Prevention: Lookalikes and Unintentional Poisonings Injuries**

- 44 participants

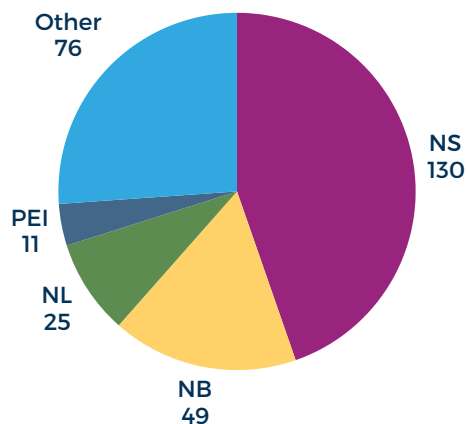
## The Community of Practice



**291 members**

**111% increase from April 1, 2023 (Goal was 75%)**

### Membership by province



To celebrate the COP's 1st anniversary - CSL conducted a survey with members (34 respondents).

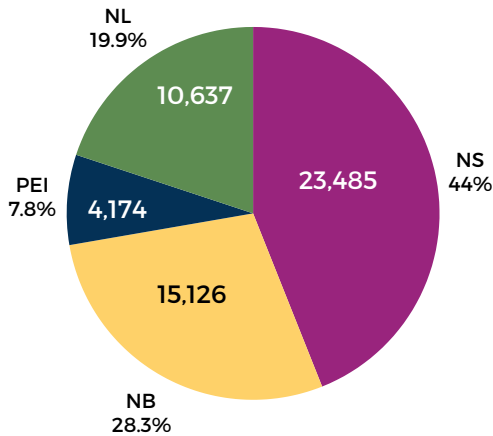
- 73% of respondents work at Family Resource Centres.
- 52% found it very useful and 48% moderately useful.

The survey also indicated a strong interest in educational resources (77%) and relevant training opportunities.

# Overarching

## Educational Resources

### Distribution by province/ # of resources



**53,422 CSL resources distributed.**

**25% increase from 22-23**

**CSL also made available lockbags and cabinet locks**

### New educational resources

Is Your Child in the Right Seat video and print resources  
(new: Dari, Farsi, Russian, Ukrainian).

After the Storm infographic  
(English, French, Arabic)

Safety At a Glance Fact sheet series  
(English, French, Arabic, Farsi, Tigrinya, Somali)

Preventing Serious Childhood Falls in the Home  
(English, French, Arabic, Mi'kmaq)

Why should you wear a helmet  
(English, French)

Preventing Childhood Poisonings  
(English, French, Arabic)

Poisoning in Children 5 years and under  
(English, French, Arabic)

### Child Safety Link receives special commendation in the national IHDCYH Talks video competition



The Institute of Human Development, Child and Youth Health offers this annual contest for short videos that present a clear, evidence-based message to a lay audience that is designed to have an impact on the health of children, youth and families in Canada.

# Media

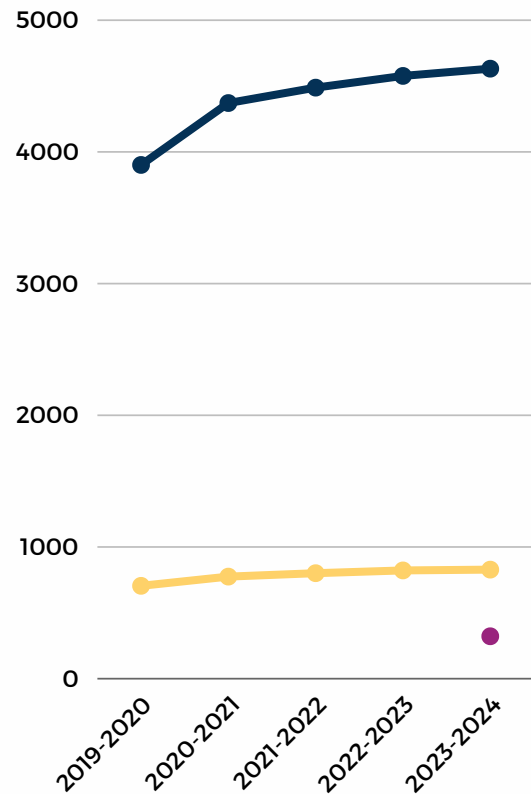
**Followers**  
4632  
227 posts

**Instagram**  
322  
130 posts since June

**Website**  
3806/mth

## Followers

● Facebook ● Twitter/X ● Instagram



### Increases Every Year

Facebook: Since 2019 CSL has seen a 19% increase in Followers.

Instagram: CSL established an account in June of 2023.

Website: a 52% increase in visitors from 2022-2023.

**CTV Atlantic:** CSL appeared on CTV Atlantic 11/12 months. Staff spoke about various topics such as ATV safety, pedestrian safety, carbon monoxide dangers, child passenger safety, etc. Thank you to CTV for these opportunities.

# CSL Team

Thank you for all of the staff and students of Child Safety Link



(L-R): Backrow: Ana Ojeda, Samantha Noseworthy, Katherine Hutka  
Front row: Dhruv Patel, Sabrienne Penner, Sandra Newton, Julie Harrington, Ashley Holden

## **SANDRA NEWTON**

Manager

## **MALLORIE CORNELIUS**

Health Promotion Specialist  
(missing from photo)

## **JULIE HARRINGTON**

PR Coordinator

## **ASHLEY HOLDEN**

Child Passenger Safety Assistant

## **KATHERINE HUTKA**

Health Promotion Specialist

## **SAMANTHA NOSEWORTHY**

Health Promotion Specialist

## **ANA OJEDA**

Administrative Assistant

## **DHRUV PATEL**

Junior Health Promotion Specialist



# CSL Advisory Council

CSL has an Advisory Council who support the work by providing guidance and advice.

**Suzanne Baker**

Fall and Injury Prevention Coordinator  
Nova Scotia Health

**Natalie Bakody**

Health Education & Physical Education Consultant  
Dept of Education & Early Childhood Development

**Dr. Emma Burns**

Assistant Professor, Department of Emergency  
Medicine, Dalhousie University  
IWK Health

**Melanie Doyle**

IWK Trauma Coordinator  
IWK Health

**Jill Duncan**

Team Leader  
Atlantic Canada Poison Centre

**Tessa Firth**

Executive Director  
Atlantic Collaborative on Injury Prevention

**Janine Gallant**

Senior Program Officer  
Public Health Agency of Canada / Government of  
Canada

**Shannon Gallant**

Senior Program Advisor  
Indigenous Services, First Nations and Inuit Health,  
Health Promotion and Disease Prevention  
Directorate

**Joanna LaTulippe-Rochon**

Executive Director  
Cape Breton Family Place Resource Centre

**Jessica Ling**

Family Program Coordinator  
CHANCES Family Centre

**Dr. Richard Louis**

Injury Prevention Specialist  
NB Trauma Program

**Katherine MacIntyre**

Directrice Exécutive/ Executive Director  
Family Resource Centre - Moncton

**Flora Murphy**

Manager, Early Years Provincial Zone  
Science and System Performance  
Public Health, Nova Scotia Health

**Stephanie O'Brien**

Health Promotion Consultant  
Public Health Division, Department of Health and  
Community Services, Government of NL

**Michelle Proctor-Simms**

Health Promotion Coordinator  
Public Health Branch, NS Department of Health &  
Wellness

**Stéphanie Richard**

Directrice  
Centre de Ressources Chaleur pour parents

**Kelly Warren (Ad hoc)**

Child Life Specialist  
IWK Health

**Dr. Kirstin Weerdenburg**

Director of Pediatric Emergency Ultrasound,  
Research and Quality Assurance, IWK Health  
Assistant Professor, Dalhousie University

**Anne Yuill**

Director  
Healthy Populations & Provincial Initiatives  
IWK Health

# Acknowledgements

This year we said farewell to some Advisory Council members and welcomed new members. Thank you to our Advisory Council and staff for their support, commitment and passion.

## CSL Staff/Student interns

### Welcome:

Dhruv Patel

Junior Health Promotion Specialist

Sabrianne Penner

Health Promotion Specialist

### Farewell:

Health Promotion Student Doreen Danso

## Advisory Council member farewells:

Marnie Ells

Volunteer Patient Family Partner

Pamela Fonseca

Health Promotion Coordinator

Public Health Branch, NS Department of Health & Wellness

Jessica MacKay

Child Life Specialist

IWK Health

Isabelle Verret

Directrice Exécutive/ Executive Director

Family Resource Centre - Moncton

## Welcome new Advisory Council members.

Tessa Firth

Executive Director

Atlantic Collaborative on Injury Prevention

Jessica Ling

Family Program Coordinator

CHANCES Family Centre

Katherine MacIntyre

Directrice Exécutive/ Executive Director

Family Resource Centre - Moncton

Stephanie O'Brien

Health Promotion Consultant

Public Health Division, Department of Health and Community Services, Government of NL

Michelle Proctor-Simms

Health Promotion Coordinator

Public Health Branch, NS Department of Health & Wellness

Kelly Warren (Ad hoc)

Child Life Specialist

IWK Health



## CHILD SAFETY LINK

### MORE INFORMATION

**Phone :**

902 240 6336 / 1-866-288-1388

**Website :**

[www.childsafetylink.ca](http://www.childsafetylink.ca)

**Email :**

[childsafetylink@iwk.nshealth.ca](mailto:childsafetylink@iwk.nshealth.ca)

**Facebook**

[www.facebook.com/ChildSafetyLinkIWK](http://www.facebook.com/ChildSafetyLinkIWK)

**YouTube**

<https://www.youtube.com/c/childsafetylink>

**Instagram**

<https://www.instagram.com/childsafetylink>

