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# Child Safety Link Contribution Analysis

IWK Health



# Executive Summary

Child Safety Link (CSL), a program of IWK Health, has played a pivotal role in reducing the burden of preventable injuries among children and youth across Atlantic Canada for over a decade. This contribution analysis was commissioned to assess CSL's effectiveness in achieving its intended outcomes, identify its contributions to system-level change, and inform future directions for the program.

## Purpose and Scope

This project aimed to examine how CSL's activities have contributed to child injury prevention outcomes, including increased awareness, capacity-building, equitable access to resources, shifts in social norms, and policy influence. The evaluation spanned CSL's efforts over the past 10+ years, focusing on three key contribution pathways:

1. **Overall CSL Program** – Broad population-focused injury prevention, public education, and cross-sector partnerships.
2. **Child Passenger Safety (CPS)** – A targeted, long-standing portfolio supporting correct and consistent car seat use.
3. **Equity-Deserving Communities** – Work with Indigenous, African Canadian, newcomer, and other marginalized groups to reduce systemic barriers to injury prevention.

## Methodology

The contribution analysis involved multiple lines of evidence:

- Development of three contribution pathways and theories of change.
- One focus group with CSL's Advisory Council (6 members).
- 22 in-depth interviews with individuals and groups of interest, including health care professionals, government representatives, community organizations, funders, and national partners.
- A key interested parties survey (n=67) distributed across the region and professional networks.

- Review of CSL’s strategic and annual reports, the 2021 barriers report, and additional internal documents.

All data sources were analyzed thematically, with evidence triangulated across qualitative and quantitative findings to assess CSL’s impact along its pathways.

## Key Findings

CSL’s contributions are strong and wide-reaching. Evidence from interviews, focus groups, surveys, and documents confirms that CSL is:

- **Highly Trusted and Widely Known:** 95% of survey respondents reported familiarity with CSL, and many described it as a go-to source for child injury prevention.
- **Producer of High-Value Resources:** Over 90% rated CSL’s tools as valuable or extremely valuable. CPS resources, home safety materials, and culturally tailored content were frequently cited as most useful.
- **A Leader in Professional Capacity-Building:** CSL’s programming has improved knowledge, confidence, and practices across health, community, education, and enforcement sectors.
- **Advancing Equity and Inclusion:** The team has made strong progress in providing accessible, multilingual, and culturally relevant materials. 85% of survey respondents believe CSL supports underserved communities.
- **Influencing Systems and Policy:** CSL’s advocacy has shaped provincial regulations, enhanced cross-sector collaboration, and contributed to national safety conversations.
- **Continually Evolving:** Compared to a decade ago, the injury prevention landscape in Atlantic Canada is more connected, better resourced, and more equity-oriented due in part to CSL’s leadership.

At the same time, challenges remain, including funding limitations, staff capacity, and the need to deepen relationships with equity-deserving communities. Some interviewees also noted a reliance on personal relationships with specific staff, which could pose a risk to continuity if not institutionalized.

## Implications for Future Planning

The report outlines six strategic insights to guide CSL's next phase:

1. **Deepen Equity Integration** – Continue building culturally relevant resources and community-driven approaches.
2. **Sustain and Scale CPS Leadership** – Address access barriers (e.g., cost of car seats, rural availability, training access), and continue sharing best practices across jurisdictions and sectors.
3. **Grow System-Level Advocacy** – Expand CSL's voice in policy and funding conversations.
4. **Ensure Long-Term Sustainability** – Secure core funding, build internal capacity, and communicate CSL's return on investment.
5. **Strengthen Organizational Relationship Continuity** – Ensure external partnerships are tied to CSL as a whole, not just individual staff.
6. **Extend National Influence Thoughtfully** – Share regional strengths while maintaining focus on Atlantic communities.

## Conclusion

This contribution analysis demonstrates that CSL has become a cornerstone of the child and youth injury prevention system in Atlantic Canada. Through deep relationships, practical tools, and a strong commitment to equity, CSL has advanced short-, medium-, and long-term outcomes across its contribution pathways. With ongoing support and strategic investment, CSL is well-positioned to continue leading in this space, regionally and nationally, for years to come.

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# INTRODUCTION

# Introduction

## Purpose of the Project

Child Safety Link (CSL), a program at IWK Health in Halifax, Nova Scotia, has worked for more than two decades to reduce unintentional injuries among children and youth, beginning with a Maritime-wide focus and expanding in recent years to serve all of Atlantic Canada. Through public education, capacity-building, partnerships, advocacy, and research-informed practice, CSL aims to influence not only individual behaviours, but also professional practice, social norms, and systems that shape child and youth injury prevention.

This project was undertaken to conduct a contribution analysis of CSL's work over the past 10 years. The purpose of the analysis is to examine how and to what extent CSL has contributed to intended short-, medium-, and long-term outcomes, recognizing that child and youth injury prevention occurs within a complex system influenced by many groups, policies, and contextual factors.

Rather than seeking to attribute changes in child and youth injury rates solely to CSL, this evaluation explores the plausibility of CSL's contribution to observed changes in awareness, capacity, practices, norms, and policy environments related to child and youth injury prevention in Atlantic Canada and beyond.

Specifically, the project aimed to:

- Clarify CSL's theory of change and intended contribution pathways
- Gather perspectives from a wide range of people and groups of interest who interact with, use, or are influenced by CSL's work
- Assess perceived impacts, strengths, gaps, and areas for future focus
- Generate evidence to support learning, accountability, and strategic decision-making

# Contribution Analysis Approach

This evaluation used a contribution analysis framework, which is well suited to complex, long-term initiatives such as injury prevention. Contribution analysis focuses on understanding:

- What outcomes were intended
- Whether expected outcomes occurred
- How program activities plausibly contributed to those outcomes
- What other factors may have influenced observed change

As a first step, CSL worked with the evaluation team to articulate clear theories of change, which served as the analytical backbone for the project and guided all subsequent data collection and analysis.

## Development of Theories of Change and Contribution Pathways

Three interrelated contribution pathways were developed to reflect CSL's scope of work and strategic priorities:

### 1. Overall CSL Program Theory of Change

This pathway describes how CSL's core functions (i.e., partnership development, public education, capacity building, advocacy, and research) are intended to lead to:

- Increased awareness of child and youth injury risks and prevention strategies
- Strengthened capacity among professionals and organizations
- Greater access to credible, equitable, and culturally relevant resources
- Shifts in social norms and professional practice
- Policy influences and system-level change
- Ultimately, reduced unintentional injuries among children and youth

### 2. Child Passenger Safety (CPS) Contribution Pathway

Given that CPS is CSL's most mature portfolio, a dedicated pathway was developed to map:

- Training, certification, and support of CPS technicians
- Resource development and dissemination

- Public education campaigns and advocacy and how they contribute to improved caregiver knowledge, safer practices, strengthened regional capacity, and alignment with policy and enforcement efforts.

### **3. Equity-Deserving Communities Contribution Pathway**

This pathway focuses on CSL’s efforts to address inequities in injury prevention by improving access to multilingual, culturally relevant resources and trusted partnerships. It highlights intended contributions to:

- Reduced language and access barriers
- Improved reach to newcomer and other equity-deserving communities
- Greater inclusion of equity considerations in injury prevention systems

These pathways were informed by CSL’s strategic plan, annual reports, previous evaluation work, and a provincial engagement report on barriers to addressing child and youth injury prevention.

## **Data Collection Methods**

Using the contribution pathways as a guiding framework, the evaluation employed a mixed-method approach, consisting of:

### **Key Informant Interviews**

In-depth interviews were conducted remotely via Zoom with a diverse set of people of interest, including:

- Members of CSL’s Advisory Council
- Health care professionals (e.g., emergency medicine, NICU discharge, poison information)
- Family Resource Centre and family outreach program managers
- Child passenger safety technicians and instructors
- First responders and enforcement partners (e.g., fire prevention officers, RCMP)
- Government representatives (provincial and federal)
- Funders and sector partners
- National and out-of-province injury prevention leaders
- Academic researchers and knowledge translation partners
- Indigenous community health leaders
- Media professionals

Each interview guide was tailored to the individual's role, sector, and relationship with CSL, while maintaining alignment with the core theories of change.

### **Focus Group Discussions**

A facilitated focus group was conducted with CSL's Advisory Council, providing an opportunity for collective reflection on CSL's evolution, system-level contributions, persistent barriers, and future strategic directions.

### **Online Survey**

An online survey was distributed broadly across CSL's network, including:

- Family Resource Centres across Atlantic Canada
- Members of *The Link*, CSL's injury prevention Community of Practice
- Health, education, government, and community professionals
- Others connected to CSL through partnerships or professional networks

The survey complemented the qualitative data by capturing broader patterns related to CSL's reach, relevance, perceived impact, and areas for improvement.

## **Interview, Focus Group, and Survey Design**

While each interview and focus group was customized to reflect the perspective and expertise of the individual or group involved, all guides were intentionally structured around common high-level dimensions derived from the contribution pathways. These included:

- Awareness and visibility of CSL and its resources
- Use and perceived value of CSL tools, training, and supports
- Changes in professional or organizational capacity
- Observed shifts in caregiver knowledge, behaviour, or norms
- Contributions to equity, access, and cultural relevance
- Influence on policy, advocacy, or system alignment
- Persistent or emerging barriers to child and youth injury prevention
- CSL's unique role within regional and national injury prevention systems
- Strategic opportunities for future impact

This combination of role-specific depth and cross-cutting thematic consistency allowed the evaluation to examine both detailed, context-specific insights and broader patterns of contribution across sectors and regions.

This introduction sets up the remainder of the report, which presents findings organized around the contribution pathways and concludes with reflections on CSL's overall contribution, lessons learned, and implications for future strategy.



# Theories of Change

# Theories of Change and Contribution Pathways

To understand and assess CSL's contributions over the past 10+ years, three clear **contribution pathways** were developed. These theories of change map how CSL's core activities are intended to lead to meaningful change across short-, medium-, and long-term outcomes. Each pathway was informed by CSL's **2025–2028 Strategic Plan**, the **previous evaluation report**, **annual reporting**, and the **Barriers to Addressing Child and Youth Injury Prevention in Nova Scotia Report**. Further refinement and validation were provided by the CSL team.

These pathways provide both a **conceptual framework for the evaluation** and a **structure for interpreting findings** from interviews, focus groups, and surveys. They reflect CSL's evolving work and provide a foundation for analyzing how the program contributes to injury prevention and system-level change in Atlantic Canada.

## Overall CSL Program Theory of Change

The overarching pathway outlines **CSL's strategic intent** to reduce unintentional injuries and improve equity in safety outcomes for children and youth across Atlantic Canada. This system-focused theory of change reflects CSL's leadership in **public education**, **capacity-building**, **partnerships**, and **advocacy** across sectors including healthcare, education, public safety, and community organizations.

**Key Activities** are organized under four strategic pillars:

- **Partnership & Capacity Building:** Training frontline professionals, building a community of practice (*The Link*), and grant distribution to equity-seeking groups.
- **Communication & Public Engagement:** Development of multilingual, plain-language resources; co-branded national campaigns; social media engagement.
- **Advocacy & Policy Influence:** Participation in national coalitions, publication of briefs, and support for regulation and policy development.
- **Research & Evaluation:** Use of research evidence and internal data to drive program improvements and contribute to broader field knowledge.

## Outcomes and Impacts:

- **Short-Term:** Increased engagement with CSL training and resources; expanded partnerships with equity-seeking organizations; integration of equity and belonging lens.
- **Intermediate:** Greater awareness of injury risks and prevention practices; enhanced capacity of regional organizations; increased access to culturally appropriate tools; recognition of CSL as a credible regional and national leader.
- **Long-Term:** Safer environments for children and youth at home, on roads, and in communities; sustained shifts in behavior and social norms; policy changes; and improved equity of access to safety information and tools.

This theory of change emphasizes **contribution over attribution**, recognizing that CSL is one player in a complex system but has a pivotal role in shaping knowledge, practice, and policy environments.

## Child Passenger Safety (CPS) Contribution Pathway

As CSL's **largest and most mature program**, the CPS pathway provides a detailed look at how targeted investments in training, resource development, and advocacy support safer transportation for children across Atlantic Canada.

### Key Activities include:

- **Training and Certification:** CPS technician and instructor certification, re-certification, and training supports for professionals and community organizations.
- **Resource Development:** Multilingual materials, videos, and print tools tailored to newcomer and Indigenous communities.
- **Equity-Centered Distribution:** Targeted dissemination of materials to Family Resource Centres, Indigenous Health Centres, and newcomer agencies; grant-supported car seat distribution.
- **Campaigns and Media:** Leadership in Child Passenger Safety Week, media engagement, and social outreach.
- **Evaluation and Feedback Loops:** Ongoing data collection post-resource distribution and consultation with partners to adapt tools and strategies.

### Contribution Outcomes:

- **Short-Term:** Greater professional confidence and capacity; improved access to materials for equity-deserving families.
- **Intermediate:** Improved car seat usage among families; increased community awareness and expectations around CPS safety.
- **Long-Term:** Reductions in injury rates linked to motor vehicle incidents (though data limitations exist); stronger CPS systems capacity across sectors; improved equity in transportation safety outcomes.

This pathway reflects both the **depth of CSL's expertise** and its role as a **national thought leader**, supporting other jurisdictions through resource adaptation and technical consultation.

## Equity-Deserving Communities Contribution Pathway

The third pathway focuses on CSL's work with **equity-deserving communities**, recognizing the critical need to reduce barriers to injury prevention information and support. This pathway reflects CSL's efforts to improve access, relevance, and trust in injury prevention resources for **Indigenous communities, African Canadian communities, newcomers, and other populations** who may experience systemic barriers related to language, literacy, racism, or limited access to services.

### Key Inputs and Activities:

- **Multilingual and Visual Resource Development:** Materials in 14+ languages, including Mi'kmaq, Arabic, Mandarin, and French, plus visual and plain-language formats.
- **Targeted Distribution:** Over 130 resource kits to organizations supporting newcomers and racialized families, including First Nations health centres.
- **Partnerships and Engagement:** Collaboration with multicultural organizations, newcomer settlement programs, and culturally specific service providers.
- **Evaluation and Learning:** Surveys assessing resource accessibility and impact; media monitoring; use of insights from the 2021 *Barriers to Addressing Child and Youth Injury Prevention in Nova Scotia Report* and CSL's own internal feedback systems.

## Pathway Outcomes:

- **Short-Term:** Professionals feel more confident supporting newcomer and Indigenous families; materials resonate with families and support knowledge gain.
- **Intermediate:** Adoption of safer behaviors (e.g., car seat use, poisoning prevention); strengthened trust in CSL among equity-deserving groups.
- **Long-Term:** Reduced injuries in key areas (e.g., transportation, home hazards); improved access and representation in prevention systems; sustainable, community-led prevention efforts.

This pathway illustrates CSL's **strategic integration of equity** into both programming and outcomes. It reinforces that **inclusion is not a side effort**, but a core part of how CSL advances its mission.

Together, these three pathways reflect a **systems-oriented, equity-centered approach** to injury prevention. They provided the **foundation for data collection instruments** and shaped the analytical lens used to assess CSL's contribution. The following section of this report presents the results of that analysis, organized around the outcome areas and pathways outlined here.



# FINDINGS FROM INTERVIEWS, FOCUS GROUP, & SURVEY

# Findings from Interviews, Focus Group, and Survey

## Overview of Respondents

To assess the plausibility of CSL's contributions across its three strategic pathways, qualitative and quantitative data were collected from a broad range of individuals and groups who interact with, use, or benefit from CSL's resources and expertise. This section summarizes the participation profile across the three primary data collection methods: a focus group, one-on-one interviews, and an online survey.

### Focus Group Participants

A 90-minute virtual focus group was conducted with current and past members of CSL's Advisory Council, a long-standing multi-sectoral group that provides strategic guidance to CSL and reflects diverse perspectives from across Atlantic Canada. Six members of CSL's Advisory Council participated in the focus group. Participants represented a range of sectors and leadership roles, including **provincial trauma and injury prevention programs**, the **Atlantic Collaborative on Injury Prevention, Family Resource Centre executive leadership** from Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, and **public health and health promotion within provincial government**. Collectively, participants brought extensive experience in injury prevention, health promotion, trauma systems, and community-based family supports, as well as long-standing involvement with CSL's advisory and governance structures.

Participants reflected the geographic and sectoral diversity of CSL's network, providing valuable insight into long-term trends, strategic shifts, and observed impact across Atlantic Canada.

## Interviews with People and Groups of Interest

A total of 22 interviews were conducted remotely with key people and groups of interest. Interviewees were selected to represent the range of sectors and roles with whom CSL engages across its three contribution pathways. Participants included:

- Provincial and national funders
- Directors and program managers from Family Resource Centres
- Child Passenger Safety Technicians and Instructors
- First responders and enforcement representatives (e.g., RCMP, fire services)
- Government officials in areas such as public health, road safety, and child and youth health
- Academic researchers and professors working on injury prevention
- Former CSL staff and ACIP leadership
- National organization contacts, including representatives from Parachute and CPSAC
- Media professionals involved in public safety communications
- Health care providers including NICU discharge coordinators and emergency medicine physicians
- Indigenous health leaders, including those working in First Nations health centers

Each interview was guided by a customized interview protocol aligned to the CSL contribution pathways and adapted to the individual's role and relationship with CSL. This enabled collection of both context-specific insight and cross-cutting themes relevant to CSL's theory of change.

## Survey Respondents

An online survey was distributed through CSL's networks and received 67 responses. The survey captured the perspectives of individuals who interact with CSL as resource users, collaborators, trainers, or injury prevention professionals.

Survey respondents represented a wide range of organizations, including:

- Family Resource Centres across all four Atlantic provinces
- Provincial health authorities (e.g., Nova Scotia Health, Eastern Health, Vitalité, Horizon)
- Public health and health promotion teams
- Early childhood education programs

- Non-profit and injury prevention organizations
- Community development and multicultural organizations
- Government departments and agencies focused on child and youth safety or public health
- National partners and regional networks

Regional representation among survey respondents included:

- Nova Scotia: 46%
- New Brunswick: 27%
- Prince Edward Island: 4%
- Newfoundland and Labrador: 12%
- Other: 10% (included national organizations and respondents based outside Atlantic Canada but with a CSL partnership connection)

This distribution ensured that perspectives were captured across rural and urban contexts, health and community sectors, and frontline and leadership roles.

Together, the focus group, interviews, and survey provided a robust and multi-dimensional picture of CSL's contributions, as perceived by those closest to the work. The next section explores the themes that emerged across all data sources, organized according to the outcome areas in the CSL contribution pathways.

## Key Findings

This section presents the key themes that emerged from qualitative interviews, the advisory council focus group, and the survey analyzed in relation to the three CSL contribution pathways:

- Overall Program Contribution Pathway
- Child Passenger Safety (CPS) Contribution Pathway
- Equity-Deserving Communities Contribution Pathway

Across all data sources, there was strong alignment in how CSL was described: as **credible, relationship-driven, regionally grounded, and system-aware**. Participants consistently emphasized CSL's ability to work across sectors while remaining close to the realities faced by families and frontline providers.

## A. Overall Program Contribution Pathway

### CSL as a Trusted Regional Hub for Injury Prevention

Across interviews, the focus group and survey, CSL was repeatedly described as a **central and trusted hub** for child and youth injury prevention in Atlantic Canada. CSL was praised for its clarity, consistency, and ability to distill evidence into usable resources. Survey results reinforced this perception:

- **100% of individuals and groups engaged agreed** that CSL provides “trusted and credible injury prevention resources.”
- **Over half of participants commented** that CSL is a leader in Atlantic Canada in injury prevention and every participant from outside the region noted CSL’s leadership and influence at the national level.

Participants further emphasized that CSL occupies a unique position by providing **consistent, evidence-informed, and locally relevant guidance** that is widely relied upon by professionals and organizations.

“CSL is a go-to for evidence-based, family-friendly content.”

“They fill a gap that would otherwise leave families and service providers guessing.”

Several participants contrasted CSL with larger national sources, noting that CSL’s regional grounding increases trust and usability.

“It’s not from BC or somewhere. It’s right in Halifax so it feels like it gets us.”

— Family Resource Centre staff

A government representative described CSL as “the first call” when seeking reliable injury prevention information or public-facing messaging. Health care and community organizations similarly noted that CSL’s materials are often used verbatim because of confidence in their accuracy and tone.

“If it comes from CSL, we don’t feel the need to double-check it. That’s rare.”

— Provincial health promotion staff

This trust allows CSL to **efficiently build capacity** among partners and supports wide adoption of its tools. Moreover, the trust CSL has built directly supports CSL’s short- and intermediate-term outcomes related to **awareness, engagement, and partner capacity**, and underpins its ability to influence broader systems over time.

## Strategic Systems Thinking, Grounded in Relationships

Participants across sectors described CSL as having a strong **systems lens**, paired with an ability to work relationally rather than transactionally. Participants emphasized CSL's **ability to connect policy, practice, and community perspectives**, often bridging silos in health, transportation, education, and community services. Advisory Council members emphasized that CSL understands how injury prevention intersects with transportation, health care, social services, education, and enforcement; and works intentionally to connect these systems without duplicating or competing with others' mandates. It was noted that CSL has deep roots across the region, built through years of trust-based engagement. This enables the organization to influence systems even without a formal authority mandate.

“They help close the loop between policy, practice, and people.”

— Advisory Council member

Survey respondents also confirmed CSL's integrative role:

- Respondents highlighted CSL's contribution to “knowledge mobilization,” “relationship building,” and “cross-sector coordination.”
- CSL helps “connect sectors and people working in injury prevention.”

Several interviewees highlighted CSL's **non-territorial approach** as a defining characteristic. Rather than positioning itself as the lead on all injury prevention issues, CSL was described as intentionally stepping into gaps, amplifying partners' work, and sharing credit.

“They know when to lead and when to support. That's why people want to work with them.”

— National injury prevention organization

This approach was seen as particularly important in Atlantic Canada, where organizations often operate with limited resources and overlapping responsibilities. CSL's ability to convene, align, and support was repeatedly identified as a core contribution.

## National Reputation and Influence Beyond the Region

Partners from across Canada including national organizations and provincial injury prevention centres, recognized CSL as a **regional leader with national credibility**. CSL was described as a regular contributor to pan-Canadian working groups and a model for other regions. Participants from national organizations, academia, and other provinces consistently described CSL as having a **strong reputation beyond Atlantic Canada**. Despite its relatively small size, CSL was viewed as contributing meaningfully to national conversations on injury prevention, child passenger safety, equity, and knowledge translation.

“They punch above their weight nationally. People pay attention to what they’re doing.”

— National injury prevention partner

Academics and media representatives echoed this, with one researcher noting that CSL “fills the implementation gap” between evidence and practice, particularly for family-serving organizations. Academic participants emphasized CSL’s role in **mobilizing research into practice**, particularly by translating complex evidence into accessible resources for families and professionals.

“There’s a big gap between research and what families actually see. CSL fills that gap.”

— Academic researcher

Survey respondents who identified as working outside Atlantic Canada still selected CSL as a **source of trusted knowledge**, further validating CSL’s contribution beyond its core geography.

This national visibility strengthens CSL’s long-term contribution to system-level change and positions it as a model for regional injury prevention leadership.

## B. Child Passenger Safety (CPS) Contribution Pathway

### CPS as CSL’s Flagship Area of Impact

Across interviews, the focus group, and survey, CSL’s work in child passenger safety was consistently identified as its **most visible, mature, and impactful program area**.

Participants from health care, Family Resource Centres, law enforcement, Indigenous health, government, and national organizations all referenced CPS when describing CSL's value.

CSL's CPS work was characterized by:

- Strong technical expertise in car seat safety
- Consistent, evidence-based messaging
- Widespread and high-quality training and certification supports for CPSTs
- Practical, user-friendly, accessible, and easy to share resources for families
- High-quality, multilingual, and visual resources
- Collaborative partnerships with health, law enforcement, and community organizations

“Without CSL, I don't know who would be doing this work. And I don't know if anyone could do it with the same level of equity and clarity.”

— Family Resource Centre staff

FRCs in rural and underserved communities emphasized that CSL's materials were often the **only reliable CPS information** available to families, especially where public health visits were limited.

Health care providers described CSL as a critical support for complex CPS situations, such as premature infants or children with medical equipment, where clear guidance is essential.

“When it's not a standard situation, CSL is who we turn to.”

— Hospital-based health care provider

### **CPS as a Lever for Capacity-Building and Behaviour Change**

CSL's CPS programming was viewed not only as a public education initiative, but as a **professional development and capacity-building tool**. Participants emphasized that CSL's CPS work contributes not only to individual caregiver knowledge, but also to **professional confidence and system-wide capacity**. CPST instructors and hospital staff described how CSL helped ensure that best practices were **consistently shared and implemented**, particularly across provinces with varying regulations. CPSTs and frontline providers further described feeling more equipped to deliver accurate information and address misconceptions because of CSL's training and resources.

Law enforcement and public safety personnel highlighted how CSL’s materials support **education-first approaches**, particularly in community settings.

“Having CSL resources takes the heat out of those conversations. It shifts it from enforcement to education.”

— Law enforcement representative

Several participants noted that CPS is often the **first point of contact** between families and injury prevention services, making it a critical entry point for broader safety conversations.

### **Ongoing Barriers and the Need for System-Level Solutions**

While CSL’s CPS contributions were widely praised, participants also identified persistent barriers that limit impact, including:

- Cost and availability of appropriate car seats
- Liability concerns related to installation support (especially in outreach settings)
- Inconsistent access to CPS training services in rural or remote areas

Survey respondents echoed these themes:

“More support is needed for seat distribution, especially in small communities.”

“We need ways to help families who have language, transportation, or income barriers.”

These barriers were generally framed as **systemic issues**, rather than shortcomings of CSL’s program with participants recognizing capacity and logistical challenges.

“We still see expired seats and unsafe use, not because people don’t care, but because the system makes it hard.”

— Community-based service provider

Participants suggested CSL could play an even stronger role in **advocacy and coordination**, particularly around equitable access to CPS supports.

## C. Equity-Deserving Communities Contribution Pathway

This pathway reflects CSL's work with **Indigenous communities, African Canadian communities, newcomer families, and other populations** that experience systemic barriers to injury prevention information and services.

### Evidence of Progress Toward Equity and Inclusion

Participants consistently acknowledged CSL's **intentional and growing focus on equity**. Across data sources, CSL's equity work was described as **authentic, growing, and responsive**. Examples cited included multilingual resources, visual-based materials, inclusive imagery, and partnerships with Indigenous and culturally specific organizations.

“They have over 14 languages and photos that look like our communities, that really matters.”

— Indigenous community health organization

Survey results showed respondents reported that CSL contributes to culturally appropriate injury prevention work by supporting equity in injury prevention (85%) and through improved access to culturally relevant resources (76%).

Open-ended survey feedback included:

“They are intentional about equity. I've seen their resources used by newcomer moms in Arabic, French, and Punjabi.”

“CSL doesn't just translate, they make things that *work* for our families.”

Family Resource Centres and newcomer-serving organizations emphasized that CSL's materials are often the **only accessible injury prevention tools** available for families facing language or literacy barriers.

“For many families, CSL is the first time this information is presented in a way they can understand.”

— Newcomer-serving organization

### Trust, Relationship-Building, and Cultural Safety

Participants emphasized that CSL has earned trust in communities where other institutions have struggled. Several participants noted that injury prevention messaging

can be met with skepticism or mistrust in communities that have experienced systemic racism or harmful interactions with institutions. CSL was described as building trust through **consistency, humility, and responsiveness**. Indigenous and newcomer-serving organizations described CSL's **non-judgmental approach** and willingness to co-learn as essential to their relationships.

“They don't come in telling people what to do. They listen first.”  
— Indigenous health partner

Survey comments reflected similar appreciation for tone and approach:

“It's not top-down. It's respectful. That goes a long way.”

At the same time, participants emphasized that **equity work is ongoing** and requires deeper investment.

### **Opportunities for Deeper Co-Design and Visibility**

While CSL's equity efforts were viewed positively, many participants identified opportunities to strengthen impact, including:

- Greater co-design of resources with equity-deserving communities
- Expanded use of oral, audio, and video formats to overcome low literacy barriers
- Increased visibility of CSL's equity-focused work at regional and national levels
- Deeper partnerships with African Canadian communities

“They're doing really strong equity work but not everyone knows about it.”  
— National partner organization

Participants suggested that documenting and sharing CSL's equity approaches could support learning across the injury prevention field and reinforce CSL's leadership role. Several survey respondents also suggested CSL could improve its visibility in public campaigns focused on equity and accessibility.

## D. Cross-Cutting Themes Across All Pathways

Across interviews, the focus group, and survey, several themes cut across all contribution pathways:

Theme	Expanded Insight
<b>Trust and credibility</b>	CSL's credibility is foundational to its impact and enables uptake across sectors. CSL's materials are widely used without adaptation because of high trust.
<b>Relationship-based practice</b>	Long-standing relationships allow CSL to influence systems without formal authority.
<b>Consistent, regionally grounded messaging</b>	Recognized for filling the gap between national messaging and local realities.
<b>Communication and Media excellence</b>	CSL's clarity, tone, and media readiness strengthen public awareness and trust. Valued by news media for clear, family-focused messaging.
<b>Equity focus is visible and appreciated</b>	Equity work is meaningful and growing; opportunity exists for more co-creation.
<b>Advocacy potential</b>	Many participants encouraged CSL to lean further into policy and systems advocacy. Participants want CSL to have a louder voice in public policy and funding conversations specifically.
<b>Sustainability concerns</b>	CSL's impact is viewed as significant relative to its size, raising concerns about long-term capacity without increased funding. Several participants called for greater investment to sustain momentum.



**CONTRIBUTIONS TO  
CHILD AND YOUTH  
INJURY  
PREVENTION  
OUTCOMES**

# Findings: CSL's Contributions to Child and Youth Injury Prevention Outcomes

This section presents a synthesis of findings from interviews, the advisory council focus group, the survey, and CSL's program documents, organized around seven outcome areas drawn directly from CSL's contribution pathways and theory of change. Each area is paired with evidence of how CSL contributes to the short-, medium-, and long-term outcomes described in the three pathways: the overall program, child passenger safety (CPS), and equity-deserving communities.

The section also integrates relevant insights from CSL's strategic planning and annual reporting documents to contextualize findings over the last decade.

## Contribution Pathway Outcomes at a Glance

Outcome Area	Short-Term	Medium-Term	Long-Term
Awareness & Reach	Increased awareness of CSL and injury risks	Greater reach across sectors and geographies	Embedded injury prevention culture in Atlantic Canada
Resource Use & Value	Access to credible, practical tools	Integration into professional and organizational practice	System-wide improvements in safety outcomes
Capacity & Practice Change	Increased confidence and knowledge	Practice shifts among practitioners, service providers	Sustainable injury prevention infrastructure
Equity & Inclusion	Greater reach to diverse audiences	Stronger, inclusive partnerships with equity-deserving groups	Equity in injury prevention outcomes and service access
System-Level Influence	Evidence-informed advocacy support	Contributions to policy and cross-sector collaboration	Structural and policy change to support child and youth injury prevention
Barriers & Challenges	Persistent access/funding/system issues	Capacity constraints across the ecosystem	Ongoing system navigation and partnership needs
Strategic Opportunities	Areas for growth are identified	Prioritized actions reflected in strategy	CSL adapts and leads into the future

# Awareness and Reach

## Short-Term Outcome: Increased Awareness

Across all data sources, CSL is broadly recognized as Atlantic Canada’s leading authority on child and youth injury prevention. Survey respondents and interviewees from healthcare, government, media, and family support sectors frequently cited CSL as a first point of contact for safety guidance and public education.

- 95% of survey respondents are somewhat or very familiar with CSL having used their tools and resources and attended webinars and events regularly.
- The organization is best known for its **Child Passenger Safety work**, followed by **home safety** and **poison prevention**.
- Survey respondents reported high levels of engagement with CSL across all of its program and resource areas:



“CSL is a go-to name when you mention child injury prevention in our circles.”  
— Survey respondent (FRC sector)

“There’s a level of name recognition now that didn’t exist a decade ago.”  
— Advisory Council member (Public Health)

Annual reports from 2014 to 2024 illustrate growth in reach over time, with resource distribution expanding from provincial to regional to national levels. CSL's communications infrastructure (website, newsletter, webinars, social media) was referenced in the 2021–2022 and 2024–2025 annual reports as a key vehicle for reach.

## Medium-Term Outcome: Multi-sectoral and Regional Reach

CSL has moved beyond health-focused audiences to reach professionals in transportation, law enforcement, education, community services, and media.

- Respondents came from all four Atlantic provinces, other jurisdictions in Canada, and represented multiple sectors.
- **96%** reported strengthened capacity among professionals and partners in their region or sector.

Their participation in national networks (e.g., CPSAC, Parachute) and ability to convene regional players was also repeatedly acknowledged.

CSL is also credited with improving public awareness and shaping norms around child and youth injury prevention.

- **93%** of survey respondents reported CSL has contributed to an increased public awareness of child and youth injury prevention.

## Long-Term Outcome: Culture of Safety

The advisory council and long-time partners emphasized that, compared to 10 years ago, the region now has a more cohesive and prevention-oriented culture, with CSL’s sustained presence credited as a contributing factor. CSL’s increasing integration into government initiatives and community health planning supports this long-term contribution.

# Resource Use and Value

## Short-Term Outcome: Access to Credible Tools

Participants consistently praised CSL’s clear, credible, highly practical, and accessible resources, particularly in CPS. Resources were seen as “on brand,” “evidence-informed,” and “ready to use.”

- **92% rated CSL resources (materials, campaigns, or support) as highly valuable.**
- Over **80%** of survey respondents have **accessed** or **distributed CSL educational materials** and over **62% referred families** to CSL resources.
- CSL programs and resources that we reported as being of greatest use included **CPS resources** and **training, car seat access** and **funding support, home safety resources, seasonal safety promotions, and The Link – community of practice.**
- Most frequently used tools include **infographics, printable handouts, and videos.**
- 96% agreed or strongly agreed that CSL’s work is relevant to the injury prevention needs in their communities.

“We use their car seat and poison prevention posters every season in our clinic.”  
— Survey respondent (Health clinic)

“I always know it’s something I can trust and hand to a parent or a policy person.”  
— FRC Director, New Brunswick

Multilingual tools, checklists, and video explainers were also noted as being heavily used. Recent annual reports document over 2 million website views and strong uptake of downloadable content.

## Medium-Term Outcome: Professional Integration

Survey respondents and interviewees shared that CSL resources are routinely embedded into staff training, client programming, and public awareness campaigns. For example, public works and FRC staff described using CSL visuals in workshops and home visits.

- More than half of respondents said CSL resources improved **how they talk about injury prevention** with clients and families.
- 75% said CSL’s materials, campaigns, and support have been extremely valuable in their work

This confirms the medium-term outcome of **practice integration**, especially in FRCs, public health units, and health care settings.

## Long-Term Outcome: System-Level Resource Use

Over time, CSL’s tools have become default regional standards. CPS checklists, poison prevention templates, and safety week campaigns are regularly cited and shared across sectors. CSL’s resources were described by national partners as “templates” and “models” for others, especially in CPS and poisoning prevention. This aligns with long-term contributions to **standardized messaging and cross-sector resource alignment**.

CSL has also contributed to system-wide improvements in safety outcomes directly for families.

- 90% of survey respondents cited that CSL improved parent/caregiver knowledge of safety practices
- 93% indicated CSL has contributed to improved child passenger safety practices
- 83% reported that CSL has contributed to improved awareness around fall prevention and safety in the home
- 79% indicated CSL has influenced social norms about child and youth safety

## Capacity Building and Practice Change

### Short-Term Outcome: Increased Knowledge

Participants across health care, enforcement, and community organizations credited CSL with helping them develop foundational knowledge and strengthening their confidence in giving safety guidance, particularly around car seat safety, poisoning, and fall prevention.

- **79% of respondents** indicate that CSL has helped strengthen capacity among professionals and partners in their region through resources and credible, trusted knowledge translation and training.
- A number of respondents reported they felt **more confident** in their ability to communicate safety messages effectively because of CSL training or resources.

“It’s the difference between hoping I’m right and knowing I am.”

— Survey respondent (CPST)

“We wouldn’t be as confident offering CPS guidance without their training and support.”

— CPS Technician and RCMP officer

## Medium-Term Outcome: Changes in Professional Practice

CSL was seen as shaping norms and expectations for how professionals address injury prevention. Many reported shifting from reactive to proactive, prevention-based communication with families. Interviewees shared stories of how CSL support changed **their engagement approach with families** by shifting to focusing more on dialogue, empathy, and readiness for change.

- Respondents noted behavior changes among clients (e.g., increased **correct booster seat use** and **home proofing actions**), after using CSL resources.

This also aligns with CSL's annual report statements highlighting training for over 500 CPSTs and the launch of the “Link” community of practice in 2023–2024.

## Long-Term Outcome: Sectoral Change

Longtime advisory council members noted that over the past decade, CSL has **normalized injury prevention** across health and community sectors. Public health professionals now see child and youth injury prevention as part of broader health equity and social determinants work. Furthermore, as a result of CSL’s work some organizations described internalizing injury prevention as core practice, a marker of deep contribution. A hospital rep said injury prevention “used to be ad hoc,” but is now embedded in discharge and intake protocols.

# Equity and Inclusion

## Short-Term Outcome: Multilingual & Visual Access

Since the 2021 barriers report, CSL has made visible strides in inclusion, launching over 15 translated resources and increasing use of plain language and visuals. Interviewees praised CSL's representation of diverse families.

- 75% of survey respondents indicated CSL has directly increased access to culturally relevant and multilingual resources.
- 85% reported CSL has supported equity in injury prevention (e.g., for newcomers, low-income families).
- All FRC's and many other respondents indicated they work directly with **equity-deserving populations** (e.g., newcomers, Indigenous communities). These respondents described CSL's equity efforts as "visible and improving," especially in **language access**.

Interviewees from Millbrook First Nation and Indigenous Health programs echoed that CSL's growing representation in images and materials **helps families feel seen and included**.

## Medium-Term Outcome: Inclusive Partnerships

CSL's increasing presence in Indigenous, newcomer, and African Canadian communities was noted by multiple respondents. Efforts like attending health fairs, building a diverse photo bank, and improving cultural representation are valued alongside CSL's approach to partnership which is cited as being grounded in listening and trust.

"They're present, not just performative."

— Indigenous maternal-child health coordinator

"They ask, not assume, which builds trust. They're not parachuting in."

— Interviewee (Indigenous health coordinator)

## Long-Term Outcome: Equity in Outcomes

Participants emphasized that reaching equity in injury prevention outcomes remains a future goal, but CSL is seen as laying the groundwork through authentic engagement and trust-building. While more work is needed, CSL was recognized for contributing to **long-term shifts in how injury prevention is delivered and received** in historically excluded communities.

- Respondents called for more **audio/video-based materials, oral formats, and culturally co-developed tools** validating CSL’s equity goals in its Strategic Plan (2025–2028).

## System-Level Influence

### Short-Term Outcome: Advocacy Tools

CSL was recognized for providing data-backed messaging to support system advocacy.

- **71% said CSL has supported policy change or advocacy** related to child and youth injury prevention in their region.
- Respondents indicated **CSL helped them communicate with other professionals or decision-makers.**
- CSL was seen as “amplifying local voices with research and legitimacy.”

“They give us language and framing to advocate in our own systems.”

— Survey respondent (Government partner)

Government representatives noted that CSL input has helped shape internal road safety planning.

### Medium-Term Outcome: Policy & Practice Influence

Evidence shows CSL contributed to:

- Supporting booster seat regulation improvements in NS and NB
- Assisting Child Passenger Safety Association of Canada (CPSAC) with national seat safety messaging
- Sharing CPS data and messaging nationally

- Participation in seatbelt legislation reviews
- Informing poison control education at a national level
- Input into poison control strategy briefs

CSL’s strategic plan lists “advocate for policy and systems change” as a core objective, and annual reports document regular participation in legislative consultations.

## Long-Term Outcome: Structural Change

Though structural change is ongoing, CSL is viewed as an evidence-based systems player, particularly in areas like CPS and home safety. CSL is increasingly called into **provincial working groups, public consultations, and national coalitions.**

“CSL doesn’t own policy, but they shape it. They shift mindsets.”  
 — National partner

## Challenges and Barriers

Survey, interview, and focus group respondents all acknowledged the **magnitude of CSL’s impact given its small size.**

“They’re doing so much with so little—it’s impressive and frustrating.”  
 — Advisory Council member

Despite CSL’s success, persistent challenges were emphasized including:

- The need for more **sustainable, multi-year funding**
- Ongoing difficulty reaching **rural, remote, and culturally diverse** audiences
- Gaps in **professional training availability**, especially outside NS

Work already underway to address some of these challenges includes CSL’s efforts to:

- Increase translations
- Increase data use to identify language trends
- Launch of The Link for cross-sector networking

Suggestions for on-going improvement included more **localized resource adaptation** and **in-person workshops in rural areas**.

“They could do even more with just a bit more breathing room.”

— Survey respondent (FRC)

## Strategic Opportunities

Participants emphasized a desire for CSL to continue evolving, with specific priorities including:

- **Advocacy leadership:** Use CSL’s credibility to push for policy and systems reform
- **Equity expansion:** Co-design tools with BIPOC communities, and increase oral and video formats
- **Data storytelling:** Share more real-world impact stories and community-level results
- **National reach:** Leverage CSL’s model and tools across Canada with regional customization
- **Scope:** Expanding into mental health and injury intersections

“CSL is ready for a next chapter. The foundation is there. It’s solid.”

— Survey respondent (National agency)

“They have credibility. Now’s the time to leverage that for bigger change.”

— National injury prevention leader



# SUMMARY OF EVIDENCE

# Summary of Evidence Across Contribution Pathways

To synthesize the findings presented in this section, three summary tables are provided at the end of Section 5, one for each of CSL's contribution pathways: the overall program pathway, the child passenger safety pathway, and the equity-deserving communities pathway. The tables summarize the strength of evidence supporting CSL's contribution to key short-, medium-, and long-term outcomes identified in the contribution pathways.

The assessment presented in these tables is based on triangulated evidence drawn from multiple sources, including:

- Themes from interviews and the advisory council focus group
- Responses from the survey
- CSL strategic plans and annual reports
- The *Barriers to Addressing Child Injury Prevention* report
- The finalized Contribution Pathways document

Rather than measuring attribution, the tables assess the plausibility and consistency of CSL's contribution to observed outcomes across the injury prevention system. Each outcome area was reviewed for the extent to which evidence was consistently observed across data sources, sectors, and time.

The strength of evidence in each table is categorized using the following scale:

- **Strong** – Evidence is consistently reinforced across multiple data sources, including qualitative findings and program documentation.
- **Moderate** – Evidence is present in more than one source or sector but with less depth, frequency, or consistency.
- **Emerging** – Evidence is beginning to appear but is limited in scope, sector, or timeframe.
- **Limited** – Evidence is not yet sufficiently developed or consistent to support a clear contribution claim.

Together, these tables provide a concise, comparative view of where CSL’s contributions are most established, where impacts are developing, and where future investment and learning may be required. They are intended to support interpretation of the findings presented in this section and to inform the overall contribution analysis and recommendations that follow.

# 1. Overall CSL Program Pathway: Evidence Summary Table

Outcome Area	Short-Term	Medium-Term	Long-Term
Awareness & Reach	Strong	Strong	Moderate
Resource Use & Value	Strong	Strong	Moderate
Capacity & Practice Change	Strong	Moderate	Emerging
Equity & Inclusion	Strong	Moderate	Emerging
System-Level Influence	Moderate	Moderate	Emerging
Barriers & Challenges	Strong	Strong	Moderate
Strategic Opportunities	Strong	Moderate	Emerging

Overall, the evidence strongly supports CSL’s contribution to **short- and medium-term outcomes** related to awareness, reach, resource use, and capacity building across the injury prevention system in Atlantic Canada. For example, in the area of **capacity building**, CSL’s efforts have led to clear improvements in professional knowledge and confidence. Separately, in relation to **resource use**, survey results showed that **92% of respondents** found CSL’s resources to be **valuable or extremely valuable** in their work. In addition, **85% indicated** that CSL’s programming supports **marginalized or underserved communities**, highlighting the organization’s growing contribution to **equity-focused outcomes**. CSL’s role as a **trusted regional hub** and **connector** is consistently reinforced across interviews, focus group discussions, survey responses, and organizational documentation.

Evidence for **long-term outcomes**, such as sustained system change and shifts in social norms, is emerging rather than definitive, reflecting the complexity of injury prevention systems, the influence of multiple players, and the difficulty in measuring key long-term indicators of injury prevention.

Taken together, the findings suggest a **highly plausible contribution** by CSL to strengthening the regional injury prevention landscape over time, even where long-term outcomes cannot be directly attributed.

## 2. Child Passenger Safety (CPS) Pathway: Evidence Summary Table

Outcome Area	Short-Term	Medium-Term	Long-Term
Awareness & Reach	Strong	Strong	Strong
Resource Use & Value	Strong	Strong	Moderate
Capacity & Practice Change	Strong	Strong	Moderate
Equity & Inclusion	Moderate	Moderate	Emerging
System-Level Influence	Moderate	Strong	Moderate
Barriers & Challenges	Strong	Moderate	Emerging
Strategic Opportunities	Strong	Moderate	Emerging

The CPS pathway demonstrates the **strongest and most consistent evidence** of contribution across all outcome levels. Short- and medium-term outcomes such as increased awareness, widespread use of resources, and improved professional practice are strongly supported by multiple data sources and sectors. For example, data across all sources confirms **CPS as the most known and accessed program**.

Evidence for long-term outcomes, including system-level consistency and safer transportation practices for children, is more established in this pathway than in others, reflecting the maturity and sustained investment in CPS programming over many years. However, **long-term structural equity in CPS** remains emerging, especially for rural,

low-income, and racialized communities. System-level work is more established and was validated via partnerships with CPSAC and influence on provincial CPS regulations.

Overall, the CPS pathway represents CSL’s **most clearly articulated and evidenced contribution story**, serving as a model for how focused investment, partnerships, and evidence-based practice can lead to durable system change.

### 3. Equity–Deserving Communities Pathway: Evidence Summary Table

Includes Indigenous, African Canadian, and newcomer communities.

Outcome Area	Short-Term	Medium-Term	Long-Term
Awareness & Reach	Moderate	Moderate	Emerging
Resource Use & Value	Moderate	Moderate	Emerging
Capacity & Practice Change	Moderate	Moderate	Limited
Equity & Inclusion	Strong	Moderate	Emerging
System-Level Influence	Emerging	Emerging	Limited
Barriers & Challenges	Strong	Moderate	Moderate
Strategic Opportunities	Strong	Strong	Emerging

Findings related to equity-deserving communities indicate **meaningful progress alongside ongoing development**. Survey and interview data shows clear improvement since 2021 on translated tools, cultural representation, and language accessibility.

Evidence for short- and medium-term outcomes, such as increased access to multilingual and culturally relevant resources and strengthened relationships with community organizations is moderate to strong and consistently observed across all data sources.

Evidence for long-term outcomes, including sustained reductions in inequities and system-level inclusion, remains emerging, reflecting both the relatively recent expansion of this work and the structural nature of inequities in injury prevention. Participants see CSL as **well-positioned for future leadership**, with a strong desire for deeper partnership with Black and Indigenous communities.

The findings suggest that CSL has laid important groundwork and is **on a positive trajectory**, with future impact likely dependent on continued partnership, co-design, and sustained resourcing.



# CONCLUSIONS & IMPLICATIONS

# Conclusions & Implications

## Summary of Key Findings

Over the past decade, Child Safety Link (CSL) has made a meaningful and measurable contribution to advancing child and youth injury prevention across Atlantic Canada and beyond. Through a strategic, systems-oriented approach and deep community engagement, CSL has contributed to change across all levels of its contribution pathways: short-, medium-, and long-term outcomes.

The evidence shows strong contributions in the following areas:

- **Awareness and Reach:** CSL is widely known and trusted across sectors. Survey data confirmed that 95% of respondents were familiar with CSL and engaged with its resources. Their regional leadership has grown steadily, with reach expanding nationally over time.
- **Resource Use and Value:** CSL's tools are highly valued for their clarity, practicality, and trustworthiness. Over 90% of survey respondents rated CSL's resources as valuable or extremely valuable, with widespread use of CPS and home safety tools in particular.
- **Capacity Building and Practice Change:** Professionals across health care, education, community services, and law enforcement report increased knowledge and confidence because of CSL. This capacity-building is translating into behavior change and improved service delivery.
- **Equity and Inclusion:** CSL has taken significant steps toward equity, notably through multilingual, visual, and plain-language resources. 85% of survey respondents said CSL supports equity in injury prevention, and qualitative findings confirmed deepening partnerships with equity-deserving communities.
- **System-Level Influence:** CSL is a respected voice in policy and advocacy spaces, contributing to booster seat regulation changes, national messaging on CPS, and provincial safety strategies. They are recognized as a credible policy influencer, even without formal authority.

At the same time, CSL continues to face structural barriers, including limited funding, challenges reaching rural and remote communities, and the need for deeper codesign with equity-deserving populations. These represent both constraints and opportunities for the future.

## CSL's Unique Role and Value in the Injury Prevention System

CSL is viewed as:

- **A Trusted Regional Hub:** CSL fills a critical role as Atlantic Canada's go-to resource for injury prevention. It acts as both a knowledge broker and a relationship-builder across diverse sectors and jurisdictions.
- **A Nationally Respected Leader:** Despite its small size, CSL contributes meaningfully to national initiatives and is cited as a model for other regions.
- **A Connector and Amplifier:** CSL's strength lies in its non-territorial, partnership-driven approach. It bridges silos, aligns efforts, and amplifies others' work, especially in resource-constrained environments.
- **An Equity-Oriented Innovator:** CSL has integrated equity into the core of its work particularly visible in its CPS programming and multilingual resources, and is moving toward greater inclusion and representation.
- **A System Shaper:** While CSL does not have formal authority over injury prevention policy, it consistently influences policy, practice, and public discourse through strategic engagement, advocacy, and credible knowledge translation.

CSL's growth and evolution over the last 10 years despite limited staff and funding, highlights its resilience and strategic clarity. Compared to a decade ago, the region is more connected, prevention-oriented, and equipped with credible tools and practices due in no small part to CSL's sustained contributions.

# Strategic Insights for Future Planning and Partnerships

The contribution analysis points to several strategic implications as CSL moves into its next chapter:

## 1. Deepen Equity Integration

- Continue expanding co-designed tools with Indigenous, newcomer, and African Canadian communities.
- Invest in oral, video, and interactive formats to reach families with low literacy or technology access.
- Share CSL's equity approach more broadly to influence national practice.

## 2. Sustain and Scale CPS Excellence

- Leverage CPS as a model for targeted, high-impact programming.
- Strengthen access in rural and remote areas and address seat affordability.
- Increase advocacy around systemic barriers to CPS access and compliance.

## 3. Grow System-Level Advocacy

- Use CSL's trusted voice to influence provincial and federal policies (areas of greatest concern and opportunity include off road vehicle and e-bike/scooter safety legislation).
- Share real-world impact stories to support funding, regulation, and community safety planning.
- Position CSL more visibly in public and political conversations about child and youth injury prevention.

## 4. Ensure Long-Term Sustainability

- Explore new funding streams to support core operations and expand reach.
- Develop an investment case that communicates CSL's ROI for systems change and equity impact.
- Strengthen internal capacity to manage growing demand and strategic opportunities.

## 5. Strengthen Organizational Relationship Continuity

- Several focus group and interview participants described their connection to CSL as closely tied to individual staff members. While this speaks to the strength of CSL's team, it also presents a risk of knowledge and relationship loss if key personnel leave.
- To mitigate this, CSL can work to ensure that relationships are embedded within the organization, not just with individuals. Practical steps could include shared contact management systems, co-led partner engagements, broader team visibility in external communications, and succession planning for relationship stewardship.
- Institutionalizing relationships will help sustain CSL's credibility, visibility, and continuity of partnerships over the long term.

## 6. Extend National Influence Thoughtfully

- Support other regions in adapting CSL tools and approaches.
- Contribute leadership to pan-Canadian initiatives on equity in child and youth injury prevention.
- Position CSL as a regional leader with national relevance.

In summary, this analysis confirms that CSL plays a pivotal role in the child and youth injury prevention ecosystem not only as a content expert, but as a strategic convener, advocate, and catalyst for change. The foundation laid over the past decade offers strong footing for future growth. Continued investment in CSL's work will accelerate progress toward safer, more equitable outcomes for all children and families in Atlantic Canada and beyond.