

Preventing Head Injuries in Eeyou Istchee

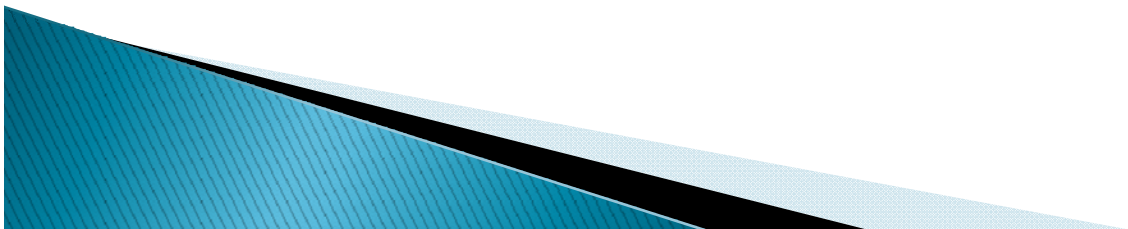
Ideas for community organisations

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About Head Injuries

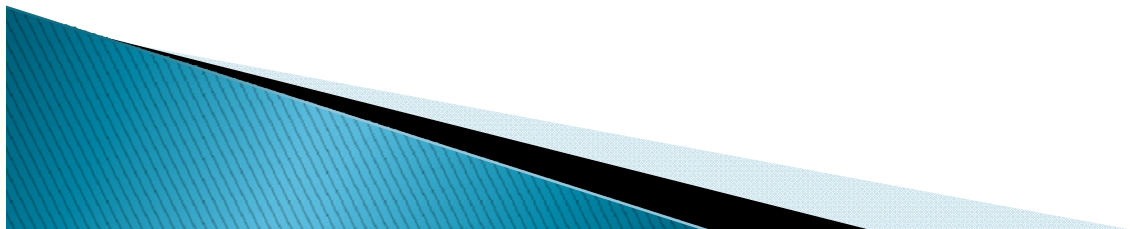
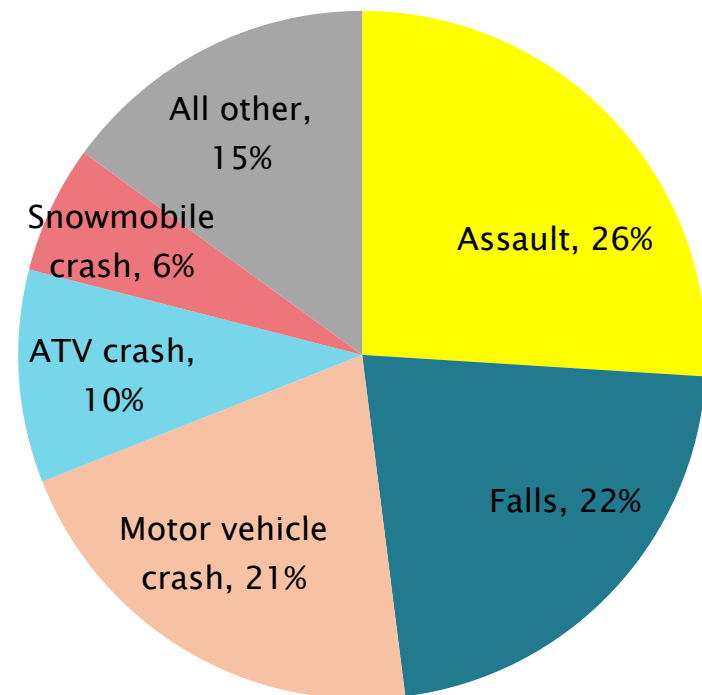
- ▶ Like many northern regions, Eeyou Istchee has high rates of head injury
- ▶ Each year, about 17 Eeyouch have head injuries serious enough to put them in hospital
- ▶ What are these injuries? Things like
 - Concussions
 - Skull fractures
 - Haemorrhage (bleeding inside the brain) caused by a blow to the head



What causes these injuries?

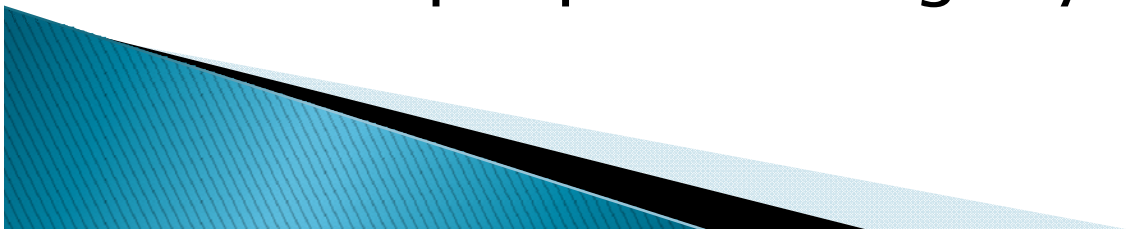
- ▶ In Eeyou Istchee, most of these injuries are caused by assaults, falls, and crashes with cars, snowmobiles or ATVs
- ▶ This is very different from the rest of Quebec, where over half the head injuries are due to falls

Causes of serious head injury
Eeyou Istchee, 2000–2012



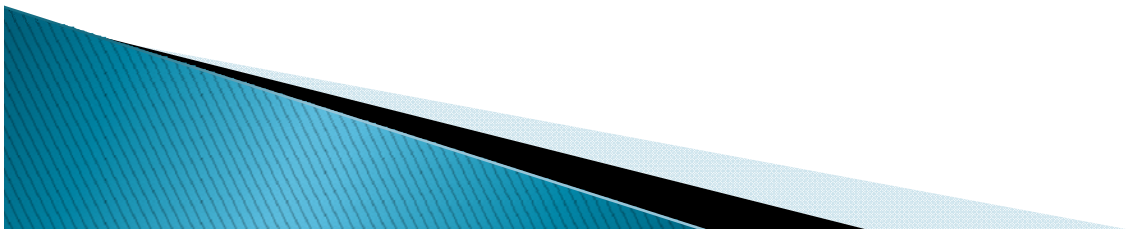
Who gets injured?

- ▶ Most of the serious head injuries happen to teenagers and younger adults (15–44 yrs)
- ▶ At this age, the main causes are assault and vehicle crashes
- ▶ Almost half the adult patients were drunk at the time of the incident
- ▶ Only $\frac{1}{4}$ of the people who could have been wearing seatbelts or helmets were doing so. These people had slightly less severe injuries



Preventing head injuries is a team effort!

Many organisations can play a part in lowering the injury rate



Some ways to reduce head injuries from violence (1)

Schools

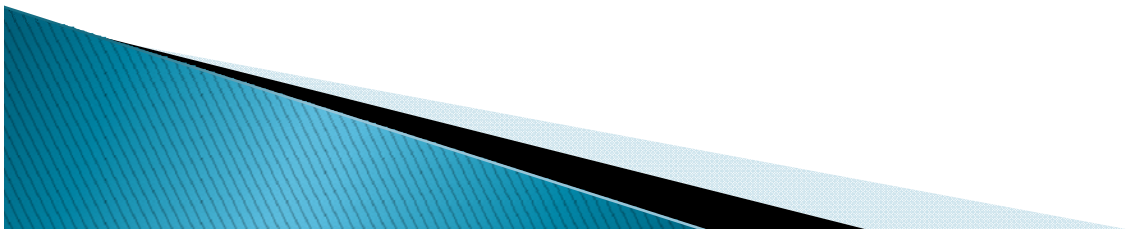
- ▶ Offer mentoring and other incentives to stay in school
- ▶ Incorporate prevention of head trauma into school safety programs
- ▶ Offer bullying-prevention programs

Chief & Council

- ▶ Reduce availability of alcohol
- ▶ Offer recreation programs for youth & adults
- ▶ Provide immediate shelters for victims of violence
- ▶ Job creation

NNADAP and Mental Health Services

- ▶ Address substance abuse in victims and perpetrators of violence



Some ways to reduce head injuries from violence (2)

Police and the justice system

- ▶ Encourage people to report violence at each time
- ▶ Assist in developing prevention programs
- ▶ Assist in developing programs to identify victims of violence
- ▶ Land-based programs for perpetrators and persons with violent behaviours, with assistance from Health Services

Health services

- ▶ Improve access to rehab, and make sure it is offered based on need
- ▶ Provide psychological support for victims of violence



Some ways to reduce head injuries from crashes (1)



Parents / Grandparents:

- ▶ Need to learn to say “NO” about lending ATVs, snowmobiles, etc to children
- ▶ Need to obey and support local by-laws

Local Safety Department:

- ▶ Initiate driving and safety courses for ATVs, snowmobiles, boating, etc.

Some ways to reduce head injuries from crashes (2)



Road Maintenance depts

- ▶ Develop trails for snowmobiles and ATVs
- ▶ Install guard rails near ditches and ravines

Recreation depts and event organizers

- ▶ Promote use of safety equipment (ensure helmets and other safety equipment and wear for snowmobile races)

Police

- ▶ Enforce laws on speeding, seatbelts, impaired driving, and helmet use



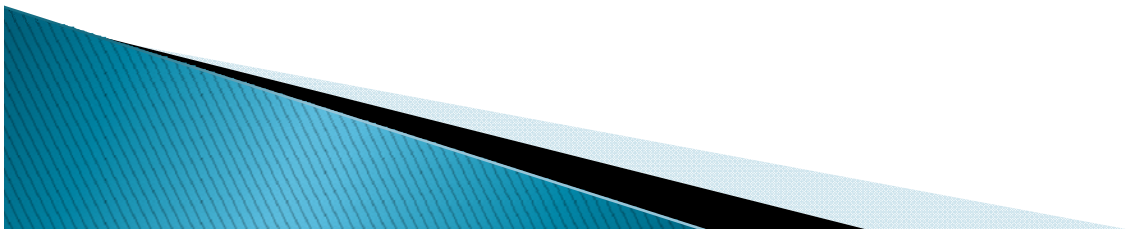
Some ways to reduce head injuries from crashes (3)

Health services

- ▶ Ensure rehab is available, and make sure it is offered based on need (not just SAAQ funding)
- ▶ Develop partnerships with specialized trauma centres

Ambulance/First Responders

- ▶ Make sure the community has equipment to extract crash victims from vehicles, and staff know how to use it



Thank you

