

Canada's convener for injury prevention

Parachute's Strategic Plan
2024 - 2028





Message

Pamela Fuselli, President and CEO

Parachute and the injury prevention field in Canada are entering a new phase of maturity. And it's about time, given the high burden that injuries place on our health-care system resources and the heavy burden injuries exact in the lives they impact.

We developed the Parachute 2024 to 2028 Strategic Plan in consultation with key stakeholders and partners, the team at Parachute and our Board of Directors. It focuses on what our organization brings to the national efforts to change the understanding of the predictability and preventability of serious injuries and death. The plan also lays out a course to address the fact that injury prevention remains a low priority in Canada with little attention and action directed at it, even though it touches every person in our country to some degree.

When I tell someone between the ages of 1 to 44 years that they are more likely to die from a preventable injury – such as a crash, a fall or a poisoning – than anything else, they are shocked. These incidents happen every day, in ones, twos and threes, often unnoticed except by the family and friends who mourn. We rarely urgently address the cause of injury death, unless hundreds die at one time, such as in a plane crash. But these mass events

are rare, and account for a tiny portion of those whose lives are cut short by injury.

Parachute's actions over the next five years will bring attention to the issue and preventability of these serious and fatal injuries through advocacy efforts that inform and influence priorities and that hold policy makers accountable to take lifesaving actions that are known to eliminate death and serious injury. We will focus on raising awareness to empower and galvanize the public to understand the preventability of injuries. Parachute will create formal training opportunities for those working in the field of injury prevention and build a national association to support and foster their efforts towards people in Canada living a long life to the fullest. We will continue to be a convenor and facilitator of national collective discussions, publish on best practices and implement evidence-informed initiatives. All of this work is only possible with a strong and knowledgeable team of experts, with collaborative, positive, long-term partner relationships, and with support and engagement from our funding partners.

The next five years will be challenging, but we are inspired by the fact our work saves people from tragic events that end or alter lives, one injury at a time.



Message from

Zoe Robinson, Board Chair

As the Chair of Parachute's Board of Directors, I'm honoured to introduce Canada's convenor for injury prevention: Parachute's Strategic Plan, 2024 to 2028.

Canada is at a crucial juncture in the realm of injury prevention, and Parachute is in position to catalyze change and elevate the importance of preventing unintentional injuries across this country.

Our new strategic plan reflects the collective efforts of Parachute, key stakeholders and partners. We want to raise the profile of injury prevention as a public healthcare issue. Despite the overwhelming impact of injuries on our healthcare system and our lives, injury prevention remains a low priority in Canada. This plan charts a course to address this disparity and propel us toward a safer, healthier future.

I first learned about Parachute and its work in concussion recognition and management through my work in sport. I came to know breadth of Parachute's work to prevent injuries at home, at play, and on the move and I felt the impact of such injuries personally when my 92-year-old father fell and broke his hip in spring 2022. Parachute focuses on the most-prevalent causes of unintentional injuries causing serious harm and deaths: In Canada, that's falls, poisonings and motor-vehicle collisions.

Over the next five years, Parachute will spearhead initiatives to inform and influence priorities, holding policymakers accountable for lifesaving actions. Our plan includes empowering individuals to grasp the preventability of injuries through public awareness. We will bring together the injury prevention professionals from across Canada to form a national association and deliver more training that will bolster those working tirelessly in injury prevention.

Join us on this transformative journey.

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Canada's convenor for injury prevention

In *The Cost of Injury in Canada 2021*, Parachute reported that more than 17,000 people die annually in this country from injury. Yet preventing injury, the No. 1 killer of Canadians ages 1 to 44, is a frustratingly invisible cause. “Why don’t we talk about it?” says author Jessie Singer, whose book, *There Are No Accidents*, was released in 2022. “And what can we do to stem the rising tide of death and life-altering injury?”

As Singer points out, we don’t talk about it because, when we die from injury – from the traffic crashes, the house fires, the falls and drownings – it rarely registers as a point of public concern. On those rare occasions when an airplane crashes and hundreds die, that gets our attention and spurs immediate investigation to discover and correct the cause. But most of the time, when we die from an injury, we “die in ones and twos. Those deaths do not make the nightly news. [These] are quick and lonely deaths, not reported beyond the police blotter, if at all ... More than a synonym for a traffic crash, ‘accident’ is a euphemism for ‘nothing to see here.’”

At Parachute, we know there is plenty to see here and proven, effective ways we can reduce life-altering injuries and deaths. As Singer puts it, “The solution is simple. Stop punishing mistakes and pretending that people are perfectible. Trade in the bootstraps parable for an acceptance that people need tools and resources to survive, and an insistence that society

should provide them. Apply a harm reduction model to every corner of the built environment. Construct workplaces, roads and homes, but also laws and policies, with a focus on reducing [injury]-related damage, cushioning the blow of everything, and protecting life, health, and dignity at any and all cost.”

We also must remember, she adds, that the people who die most often by injury “are often the most vulnerable – the youngest and the oldest, the most discriminated against and least wealthy – and start there.”

Injury prevention will continue to be about educating people on how they can live, move and play in ways that will avoid harm. But the real, long-lasting change happens when we alter our systems and structures so that it becomes difficult for anyone to get seriously hurt or killed in them. To do that, we must influence, persuade and hold accountable those who have the power to make those system changes a reality.

This is bringing a public health mindset to injury prevention. When we think of “public health”, we may think of disease control. But a transportation engineer designing a road, a construction firm building new housing and a politician supporting changes to product regulations and building codes affect public health as much as an epidemiologist or public health clinic.

Parachute commits to our role as Canada’s convenor for injury prevention effort, bringing together people and organizations from a wide range of disciplines and concerns to create healthier, safer communities.

Parachute was involved with an important charge over the past decade that saw a recent to change the Canadian Press Style guide to warn against using the word “accident” when it comes to reporting on motor-vehicle crashes. Saying there are no accidents – that these incidents causing injury and death can be predicted and prevented – is at the heart of our strategic plan for 2024 to 2028, which recommits to focusing on systemic solutions and supporting their implementation to prevent injuries. This will inform and drive everything we will do in the next five years to prevent injuries and save lives.

Our Mission

Creating a safer Canada by preventing serious and fatal injuries through evidence-informed solutions that advocate and educate.

Our Vision

A Canada free of serious injuries, with people in Canada living long lives to the fullest.

Our Values

Evidence-informed
Implementation-focused
Policy-driven
Collaborative and
complementary
Innovative

Our priorities for injury prevention in Canada

Parachute has deep, far-reaching roots in Canada. Our longstanding collaborative relationships with colleagues and stakeholders are a key component to the successes we have achieved and the credibility we hold. We are the organization that can convene individuals and organizations from every province and territory to move forward national injury prevention goals. Those connections and reach have allowed us to create key injury prevention studies, policy papers and resources.

Parachute strengthens the cause of injury prevention and sets the national agenda by bringing together leading practices from Canada and around the world. We work with federal, provincial and territorial governments on injury prevention initiatives, as well as corporations and foundations, to create, augment and accelerate efforts, avoid duplication and share leading practices.

Our networks and connections amplify our reach when it comes to sharing these injury prevention messaging and strategy with public audiences.

We strive to change the public dialogue, creating meaningful system-level policy changes and provide injury prevention solutions that are evidence-based, accessible and widely available through diverse channels.

We collaborate and connect with partners across the country to activate community engagement and create injury prevention awareness at key points in the year,

from National Poison Prevention Week in March to Fall Prevention Month in November and share seasonally relevant injury-prevention messaging, from winter driving tips to drowning prevention.

Throughout the year, we create and support programs that activate within communities, from classrooms to sports teams. Our broad networks of volunteers and stakeholders in the health, education and sports sectors allow us to respond to identified community needs for injury prevention education and interventions.



We also pivot to emerging needs as identified by evidence and our partners in the community, government and corporate sector, whether that is addressing safe storage of edible cannabis, proper recognition and management of concussions or driver training with a focus on preventing injury. We bring our expertise in course development, research, community activation, social media engagement, media relations and partnering to connect with Canadian residents in timely and relevant ways

Priority Areas: In the home, at play, on the move

Priority Topics: While these may shift over the course of the strategic plan, our priorities will focus on those injuries with greatest prevalence and negative impact in Canada. In 2024, those are falls, poisonings, motor vehicle collisions, and incidents in sport and recreation, with a focus on concussion.

2024 to 2028 Strategic Priorities


Lead, advocate and convene nationally

- **Lead** – Be the driving force to establish and grow a national injury prevention association with and for injury prevention professionals 
- **Advocate** – Be the lead advocate federally, and collaborate with national organizations and partner organizations in provinces, territories and municipalities, to raise the profile of injury prevention at all levels of government, both as a public health issue and as an effective economic solution to health-care challenges 
- **Convene** – Facilitate, engage and empower national collective discussions, plans and actions to address key injury prevention issues in Canada

Elevate public awareness to drive support for injury prevention policies

- **Educate, elevate and empower** – Employ strategies and tactics (e.g., large-scale media campaigns and interviews, storytelling, podcasts, conferences) based in evidence (e.g., audience research), and use approaches that will maximize sustainability of messaging to educate, empower and galvanize the public to understand the preventability of injuries.
- **Raise awareness of the importance and effectiveness of primary and secondary prevention with the public and stakeholders** and support them to influence, inform and hold accountable policy makers to take life-saving actions that are known to eliminate death and serious injury.

Be Canada's national resource for injury prevention information and education

- **Create and translate knowledge** – Develop and publish foundational reports, evidence summaries and presentations to share knowledge and connect thought leaders. Support knowledge generation by collaborating with researchers.
- **Develop evidence-informed programming** – Develop, evaluate and sustain programs focused on preventing leading causes of death and serious injury, addressing inequities in injury impact among different groups in our society, to support, inform and enable injury prevention professionals to implement
- **Establish a learning academy and hub with continuing education training courses/ certifications** 

Conditions for change and assets

For Parachute to be successful, we need to have assets and conditions for change to inform and support our work. The absence of these can significantly impact our work. Some are within our control while others are not.

Conditions for change include:

- **Revenue generation** – Funding partnerships with corporations, government, fees-for-services, foundations, research projects and individuals, in that order, form the revenue generation framework for Parachute. Our ability to sustain, grow, scale and diversity our revenue sources is critical in achieving the strategic priorities.
- **Human resources** – Parachute needs the right people with the right skills, supported by the right tools surrounded by a positive culture.
- **Political environment** – Government cycles, priorities and people impact our ability to be successful in advocacy efforts to inform and influence policies, regulations and standards, and to attract funding to support our programs.
- **Media environment** – The traditional and social media landscapes change and shift regularly. Parachute's ability to assess and stay on top of audience trends and adapt approaches that offer current and catchy messaging will impact our ability to achieve our strategic priorities.
- **Case for injury prevention** – Our ability to create a compelling case for the public and decision-makers that challenges the status quo, creates the health economic perspective
- **Data and evidence** – Access to current/timely, comprehensive national data contributes to Parachute's ability to make a case for injury prevention, track changes and trends to lead causes of injury

Assets

- National scope and perspective
- Reputation as a credible organization with government and stakeholders
- Strong team of experts
- Extensive, strong and positive networks with leaders, decision-makers
- Public health approach and KT framework
- Established track record of running injury-prevention awareness campaigns at the national level