

Number:	<i>to be determined</i>
Topic:	Head Protection for Students and Staff While Ice Skating
Effective:	September 2007
Cross-Reference:	Halton Elementary & Secondary Physical Education Safety Guidelines – Curricular/ Inter-school Module
Revision Date:	December 2008
Responsibility:	Associate Director/School Operations

INTENDED PURPOSE:

The Halton District School Board is committed to the health and safety of all students and staff. Ice-skating is one of many activities which many schools engage in with students in order to promote positive attitudes towards regular physical activity and healthy living. However, in the interest of safety, **all staff and students must wear CSA-approved helmets on the ice.**

PROCEDURE:**Staff:**

As a result of Ministry of Labour intervention (February 2007) **all staff are required** to wear CSA-approved head protection while on the ice during school/Board related events. Staff who purchase helmets for this purpose may request a T2200 for claiming the expense against income taxes.

Students:

OPHEA Guidelines state that “Teachers must communicate to students and parents/guardians the importance of wearing a CSA-approved helmet” for ice-skating.

OSBIE (Ontario School Boards’ Insurance Exchange) recommends CSA-approved helmets as the best protection against ice-skating head injuries. This position is also supported by the

Canada Safety Council and **CSA International**. Note: Although most children have bicycle helmets, these are not suitable for ice skating because they are constructed of collapsible foam which is designed to absorb energy of a single impact, and once this has occurred, must be disposed of afterwards.

Safe Kids Canada recommends that all skaters should wear CSA-approved helmets.

Municipalities of Halton Requirements:

Oakville -- helmets are highly recommended, especially if you are not a strong skater, regardless of age;

Burlington -- children under 7 years of age must wear a CSA-approved skating helmet and a face cage is recommended; adults are also encouraged to wear a CSA approved helmet to maintain safety on the ice;

Milton -- for all children, or anyone with limited skating ability, it is strongly recommended that CSA-approved helmet be worn;

Halton Hills -- protective helmets are mandatory for all shinny sessions; helmets are also strongly recommended to be worn by anyone attending skating programs;

Why continue with school skating programs:

As winter approaches, children and youth tend to become more sedentary and focus on leisure activities that require very little energy. Skating as a health and physical education and school activity continues to play an important role in motivating young children to be physically active throughout the winter months. Children who are exposed to new activities in a safe learning environment will more likely be willing to pursue these activities on their own or with their family. For many children, the school setting is the only opportunity to gain exposure to new activities, particularly for children new to Canada. Skating continues to be an affordable, enjoyable winter activity that is part of our Canadian fabric and provides families with options that they may enjoy together.

We recognize that the requirement of all students wearing helmets may cause barriers to participation for some students. The following ideas may help schools to continue to support ice skating events:

1. Apply to the Halton Learning Foundations “Barriers To Learning” fund to buy a helmet for a student whose family cannot afford one. The application form is available on line.
2. Have a “Helmet Drive” at your school. Many families buy new helmets and often have additional ones that are not longer needed.
3. Approach the local high school to assist in the “Helmet Drive” or have a “Helmet Drive” at their school to assist your school. Many high school students most likely have helmets that they have outgrown.
4. Approach the local second hand equipment store owner to see if your school can get a better deal for promoting the store as the place families can buy a helmet.
5. Approach the local Rotary Club for a donation to buy helmets.