



AUTO21 applauds efforts to keep Canadian children safer

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Windsor, ON: Today, Dr. Anne Snowdon, Health, Safety and Injury Prevention Theme Coordinator for the AUTO21 Network of Centres of Excellence, welcomed the release of "Reaching for the Top: A Report by the Advisor on Healthy Children and Youth," which provides recommendations on how to help improve the health of Canada's children and youth. The report was authored by Dr. Kellie Leitch, the federal government's Advisor on Healthy Children and Youth and the Chief of Paediatric Surgery at Children's Hospital in London, Ontario. A copy of the report is available on the Health Canada website (www.hc-sc.gc.ca).

"Death rates of Canadian children and youth are escalating due to injuries that could be prevented. This situation is not acceptable," said Dr. Snowdon. "The National Injury Prevention Strategy outlined in the report will help to keep Canadian children safer and reduce these needless deaths. I would like to congratulate and express sincere gratitude to Dr. Leitch for implementing this consultation that engaged so many children, youth, parents and professionals in the injury prevention sector."

Dr. Leitch's report proposes a focused and targeted approach to addressing injury prevention issues by building new models of collaboration and innovation with a strong focus on knowledge sharing across disciplines and sectors. The National Injury Prevention Strategy recommends all provinces endorse the mandatory use of booster seats as a way to reduce injuries and deaths to children in motor vehicle accidents.

"AUTO21 is a federal automotive research initiative that partners the public and private sectors. Its research methodology demonstrates that the collaborative and innovative approach outlined in Dr. Leitch's report can result in safer conditions for Canadians," said Dr. Snowdon. "Our research in the area of children's automotive safety has led to education strategies that support children's safety and led to the development of a safer booster seat currently on market. This approach works."

"Many of the recommended strategies within this report are based on successful models that have had significant, positive impact on the health and well-being of children and youth in other OECD nations," added Dr. Snowdon. "All Canadian healthcare organizations share the goal of helping to ensure better health outcomes for our children and youth. The implementation of this Report would be a very positive first step to accomplish that goal."

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The AUTO21 Network of Centres of Excellence currently supports more than 260 researchers working on 41 auto-related research and development projects at 42 Canadian universities and institutions. An annual \$11 million budget of public and private sector funding supports research in the areas of health, safety and injury prevention; societal issues; materials and manufacturing; design processes; powertrains, fuels and emissions; and intelligent systems and sensors. AUTO21 is part of the federal Networks of Centres of Excellence program, and its administrative center is hosted by the University of Windsor.

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