

SAFETY IN SCHOOLS FOUNDATION OF CANADA

Annual Report

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Executive Summary

For over five years, Safety in Schools has focused on providing young workers with the knowledge that they need to stay safe at work by offering free, industry-recognized safety training through Alberta schools. We recognize that there is more to keeping our young people safe than teaching the facts. We need to change attitudes and reach young people in a more personal, meaningful way.

We have expanded our capabilities and reach through the inclusion of additional courseware designed to trigger the emotional reaction to real life stories, stories of courage, hardship and the direct impact of occupational safety incidents on families, co-workers and incident survivors.

By engaging our students through direct presentations, contests and new courseware we are positively impacting their view of occupational health and safety. These life lessons will reduce injuries and fatalities in the workplace, starting with our emerging workforce.

Course Development

With our program of new course development – funded through the Alberta Creative Sentencing Program and Alberta Occupational Health and Safety Innovation and Engagement Grants – we aim to provide students with a more meaningful look into the real-life consequences of failing to work safely.

We have developed and discovered a great deal of capabilities that will allow us to continue strengthening the quality of our program and providing a wider selection of courses, videos and other valuable content. The course development that we have completed over the past year and that we continue to make progress on has allowed us to flex our muscles when it comes to graphic design, videography, audio and video production and editing, and content development. This has been a massive learning experience for our team and we are looking forward to many more opportunities to utilise these capabilities.

Over the past year, we have made progress toward the completion of several new online courses:

1. Life Lessons – Learning the Hard Way (Complete)
2. That's Got to Hurt! Lessons from the Workplace (Complete)
3. Heavy Machinery – It Always Wins (In Progress)
4. Ground Disturbance – Children's Online Program (In Progress)
5. Ground Disturbance Gone Wrong – Societal Impact (In Progress)

Life Lessons – Learning the Hard Way

This course focuses on the lived experiences of two young people who were severely injured at work and a man whose family has been forever changed by the loss of his son to a workplace fatality. *Life Lessons* aims to connect with young workers on a more personal level than other workplace safety training courses, through the filmed interviews of people whose lives were turned upside down by a workplace tragedy.

We officially launched this course at an event at Western Canada High School in Calgary on February 22, 2016. Since its launch, more than 75 students have mastered this course, and several teachers have indicated that they use the filmed interviews in the classroom to facilitate discussion.

That's Got to Hurt! Lessons from the Workplace

That's Got to Hurt! Is a unique type of initiative for Safety in Schools. This project involved more than just developing a new course – it involved significant, meaningful engagement with students through the use of contests.

Content for the course was derived from the video and essay submissions from Safety in Schools students, through these contests. Students were asked to send in a short video or essay outlining an injury or near-miss that they either experienced or witnesses in their own working life, the lessons that they learned from that experience, and how the incident could have been avoided or better managed.

By involving students in the development of this course and learning from them the actual situations they are faced with in their workplaces, we not only provided the opportunity for a student-driven conversation about safety, but were able to provide a course that they can relate to. This course is about the very people who are taking it.

The video and essay contests were closed in June 2016, with course development being completed in August 2016. *That's Got to Hurt! Lessons from the Workplace* was made available on our course library in September 2016.

Heavy Machinery – It Always Wins

Heavy Machinery – It Always Wins focuses on serious workplace incidents involving heavy machines and equipment. Heavy machinery is a factor in a disproportionate number of severe injuries and fatalities, as discovered through the analysis of 51 Occupational Health and Safety convictions in Alberta between 2010 and 2014. Of those 51 convictions, 30 incidents involved heavy machinery, resulting in 16 fatalities.

By engaging youth with real-life examples of the risks heavy machinery poses, we can send them into the working world aware of the risks, engaged with their surroundings and knowledgeable about the role they play in their own safety and that of those around them.

We have completed filming all of the footage that will be used in this course, and would like to say a big thank you to both the Olds College Heavy Equipment Operator Program and BURNCO Rock Products for allowing us access to their sites, equipment and manpower to make this course happen. We had the

opportunity to film young, new equipment operators learning while doing on the Olds College site, and to film seasoned operators at work at the BURNCO site.

With both the filming and content gathering complete, we are currently in the process of developing the interactive online course and hope to make it available in early 2017.

Ground Disturbance – Children’s Online Program

Working with partners from the Alberta Common Ground Alliance (ABCGA), Alberta One-Call, Alberta Agriculture for Life and TransCanada Pipelines, we are developing two complementary education programs that focus on the importance of safe digging and ground disturbance – one for a high school audience and one for an elementary school audience.

Utilizing rural area school connections and Agriculture for Life to disseminate program materials, we are developing age-appropriate print and online educational programs that introduce an age 9-12 audience to the basics of safe digging, such as colour-coding of underground utilities, the importance of calling or clicking before you dig, and some of the dangers of not properly locating underground infrastructure before you begin digging.

The online program will be comprised of both video/animated content and interactive games and activities that are designed to help young minds understand the concepts being introduced and to remember them long term.

In May of 2016, we conducted a focus group session with 11 participants between the ages of 9 and 12 in Olds Alberta. We asked the participants what types of materials and activities are most interesting and engaging to help us determine how to design our ground disturbance program. One common sentiment was that print materials get thrown out when they get home, and videos are often dismissed as boring. Out of that session, we determined that the best way to reach this age group is through an interactive program that feels more like a game than a presentation or video.

This program is currently under development and expected to be made available in early 2017.

Ground Disturbance Gone Wrong – Societal Impact

We are also developing a high school level ground disturbance course that expands on the basic lessons comprising the elementary education program. The high school level course will include the same basic information that comprises the 9-12 program, but will also include a larger focus on the social, environmental and financial impacts of a ground disturbance damage event.

High-school aged students will easily absorb the basic lessons of ground disturbance, such as colour-codes and the need to call or click before digging.

Of greater importance with this age group is focusing on the why. Focusing on the consequences of ground disturbance gone wrong will illustrate for these students the significance of their responsibility, and empower them to make the right decisions for themselves and to encourage others to as well, whether parents, coworkers or employers.

This course is currently under development and is expected to be made available in early 2017.

In School Engagement

Our online course library is the foundation of the work that we do; however, we have learned over the course of our operations that it is equally important to engage with young people in a more personal way. Our courses teach students the things they need to know in order to stay safe on the job, but the other part of the equation is helping them to understand *why* it is important in the first place. That is where our in-school engagement comes into play.

School Speaking Tours

Building on the success of a series of speaking tours with Candace Carnahan throughout 2014 and 2015, we have begun working with Daniel Shoemaker – one of the stars of our *Life Lessons* course and a competitor for the National Paralympic Snowboard Team and Surf Team – in developing an ongoing in-school speaking program.

In September 2016, we visited 6 schools in the surrounding Calgary area with Daniel, and since then we have worked with him to refine his presentation and to plan more speaking sessions for the future. Daniel has committed to being a regular speaker with Safety in Schools and is excited to use his off-time to tell his story in schools. We are currently awaiting his final competition and training schedule for 2017 so that we can begin booking more speaking sessions to take place in the spring of 2017.

Ag for Life Events

We have also partnered with the organization “Ag for Life,” which focuses on agricultural education. Ag for Life hosts several events throughout the year aimed at different age groups, from elementary school kids through high school as well as some community events.

By participating in Ag for Life events throughout the year, such as their Junior and Senior high school Young Farm Worker’s Days, we are able to engage with an audience that we know is performing hazardous work on a regular basis. So far, our focus at these events has been on ground disturbance, with representatives from the Alberta Common Ground Alliance helping us to craft and deliver our message. In future, we would like to bring speakers with us to these events who have been injured performing the type of work young farm workers do.

Ag for Life will also play a pivotal role in disseminating our elementary school aged ground disturbance program once it has been completed, helping us reach a whole new audience!

Events, Promotion and New Partnerships

Maintaining and developing partnerships with other organizations is vital to the work that we do. By partnering up with and supporting the work of other non-profit organizations like Ag for Life, Heads Up Alberta and Threads of Life, we are able to further the reach of our messages into communities across Alberta.

Industry partners, such as the Alberta Common Ground Alliance and Alberta One-Call have allowed us to get an inside understanding of the needs and challenges that employers are facing with regard to job skills and safety.

Events

We attended several events throughout the year to promote our program, both to educators and to potential sponsors. Along with speaking at several Alberta teacher's conventions early in the year, we also spoke at the Alberta Career and Technology Studies Convention in November and the Treaty 7 Education Conference hosted by Tsuu T'ina Education in October. We were registered to host a booth at the Skill City Expo during the Alberta Skills Competition in May; however, this was cancelled due to the space being utilized as an emergency shelter for Fort McMurray evacuees.

In April, we attended the Alberta Common Ground Alliance's Dig Safe Conference in Red Deer, where we hosted a booth and had the opportunity to speak with many different stakeholders in the digging community.

In October, we attended and hosted a booth at the Canadian Common Ground Alliance's Damage Prevention Symposium in Banff, where we were able to connect with supporters in other provinces who are interested in helping us to expand outside of Alberta.

Throughout the year, we presented at a handful of Ag for Life events around Alberta, including their Summer Synergy event in Olds, and two Young Farm Worker Safety Days in Pigeon Lake and Three Hills.

Partnering with First Nations

Over this past year, we have increased our focus on First Nation's schools. We partnered up with TransCanada Pipelines to deliver 50 laptops to Siksika High School in April, 2016. The laptops were donated by TransCanada and with that new resource in place; we registered the school to access our courseware.

We have also begun partnerships with both the Tsuu T'ina Nation and The Kainai First Nation (Blood Tribe). Tsuu T'ina Nation invited us to be part of the Treaty 7 Education Conference that they hosted in October, and plans are in the works to do an in school presentation to educators at the Tsuu T'ina High School and Young Adult Training Centre.

New Subject Areas

This year we developed a new and interesting partnership with a group of scientists from the University of Calgary. *Solar Biocells* is a group of scientists, students and education researchers who have developed an affordable solution for the generation of climate neutral fuels. They are developing a fun, hands-on educational package about solar biocells that combines experiential learning, online learning and collaboration with other students from different schools.

The *Solar Biocells* educational package will allow students to extract CO₂ from the atmosphere and grow algal biomass while learning about climate change and potential mitigation mechanisms. The

educational package will include an online safety course, a biomass inoculum, salts, a solution, a module containing four bioreactors and a raspberry pi (see Figure1).

They have partnered up with Safety in Schools to help reach their target audience, as well as to provide the required safety training course to school participants before they begin their classroom project. This is an exciting opportunity for us to help another forward-thinking organization meet their goals and to become involved in a growing subject area.

Growth of Program

Over the past year, our reach has grown to over 215 schools, including one in Saskatchewan and one in Manitoba. To date, students have mastered more than 47,500 courses and are enrolled in another 87,000!

Through our course development program, we have added two new course offerings and are on track to offer three more in 2017.

Our Founding Partners, **ComplyWorks** and **Gemini Performance Solutions** continue to provide us with the necessary support in order to operate our program. Gemini provides the bulk of the courses that we offer to students, while ComplyWorks provides the ongoing support of our operations and the capabilities needed to support courseware development, delivery and expansion across Alberta. Plans are being prepared for further inter-provincial expansion in 2017.

Our corporate sponsors play a pivotal role in ensuring that we have the funds necessary to market and expand, attend events, and reach more students in more schools. **TransCanada Pipelines** has been a major sponsor, we are completing year 2 of a 3 year commitment with them. TransCanada also continues to play a pivotal role in the development of our First Nations strategy, helping us to build relationships with community leaders and educators.

This year we are also grateful to our many in-kind sponsors, who support our program in various ways. **BURNCO, Shaw, Wingenback Inc.** and **Starkey International** all allowed us to film on their jobsites for various projects, and allowed us to film interviews with employees working on their sites. **Bennett Jones LLP**, through the direct support of Jennifer A. Miller, Q.C. has been a staunch supporter of Safety in Schools since our inception, providing legal oversight and opportunities to expand our services both financially and through the Alberta Creative Sentencing program. **Sphinx Information Technologies** continue to provide our back end server support at a much discounted rate.

Despite the depressed economy, Safety in Schools has managed to reach a neutral revenue position this year. Further fundraising efforts are required to continue this program, a program that is making a positive difference in the educating our emerging workforce, our youth.

Photographs



Daniel speaking with students at the Olds High School.



Daniel speaking with students at Springbank Community High School in Calgary.



Daniel giving his presentation at Jack James High School in Calgary.



Sara giving a presentation to grade 7 and 8 students at Pigeon Lake School during an Ag for Life Young Farm Worker's Safety Day.



Sara presenting to grade 10-12 students at another Young Farm Worker's Safety Day at Three Hills School.