

For Immediate Release

Competitive parents 'brain-dead' when it comes to child's safety

Parents can spend more than \$200 on the best hockey technology to improve a slap shot, but have no option when it comes to protecting their child's head

TORONTO, December, 2009 - Hockey has been adrift in products targeting parents willing to invest a lot of money to improve their child's game. With such a focus on their children's performance, have they neglected their safety? A helmet that addresses current medical research findings is needed.

There is only one certified, child-specific helmet on the market, and it hasn't seen a redesign since its conception in 1993. Parents have only one other option – to buy a scaled down version of an adult helmet, which doesn't protect a young developing head the way it should. Parents should be concerned about the lack of options in children's helmets. As Adele Labine-Romain says, "even finding a properly fitting face mask is next to impossible", a mother of a six year-old hockey player.

According to a report published in the Canadian Medical Journal in July 2003 by Dr. Michael Cusimano and Mr. Anthony Marchie, a young developing brain is at an even higher risk of injury during contact sports. Serious head injury at an early age may interfere with later mental and physical development.

The lack of innovation in this area is likely due to a resistance from the manufacturers to try something new in a market dominated by hockey traditionalists, who want to preserve the nature of the game and the many well-meaning, self-proclaimed experts throughout the ranks of the hockey world. Without talk of the risks and the inadequacies of the current crop of helmets and potential innovations in this area, parents have little information with which to make informed decisions about the right equipment to protect their child's head.

Recent findings by Impact Machine of Toronto, in cooperation with leading specialists, indicate that 90% of concussions are caused from a blow to either the front or the side of the jaw. The Zygomatic arch (the area of the human skull which facilitates the connection of the jaw) is one of the most vulnerable areas for injury to the human head, according to Dr. Leslie Farkas, cranial and facial measurement expert at The Sick Children's Hospital in Toronto. According to Morgan Matthews, principal idea machinist with Impact Machine, "no helmet on the market protects against this pertinent area".

Impact Machine is currently in the process of designing a helmet specifically for children, incorporating current research into sports-related head injuries – while keeping the helmet 'cool' to ensure kids will want to wear it. Says Matthews, "parents have said that they are willing to pay more for a promise of greater protection, and when you can justify spending \$200 or more on a hockey stick, how can you say no to investing into the protection of your child's brain?"

Impact Machine is a Toronto-based company dedicated to the design and development of hockey equipment, combining an unparalleled commitment to safety with passion for the game. Impact Machine has provided design coaching to Itech Hockey, Eagle Hockey, WinnWell Clean Hockey, and Mission Hockey. For more information visit www.impactmachine.com.

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