TOP TIPS

• Recognize that injuries are particularly common in novice in-line skaters, roller hockey players, and those performing tricks.

• Wear full protective gear at all times, including a helmet, wristguards, elbow pads, and knee pads. Properly fit all equipment to the child or adult and ensure that it is certified by a recognized standards organization such as the Canadian Standards Association (CSA), Snell or the American National Standards Institute (ANSI). Skaters performing tricks need heavy duty protective wear.

• Use dead-end streets or cul-de-sacs, streets that are blocked off to traffic or bicycle lanes or paths. Novice in-line skaters should practice first in a protected area before heading out to the street.

• Do not attempt tricks if you are inexperienced.

• ‘Truck-surfing’ and or ‘skitching’ should be prohibited no matter what the level of experience.

• Carefully consider the type and fit of the in-line skates when they are purchased. Ensure they are appropriate for the child’s size and ability.

• Have an experienced teacher provide instruction on appropriate reactions and proper stopping and falling techniques.

• Children with large-muscle motor skill or balance problems and those with any uncorrected hearing or vision deficit should skate only in a protected environment, such as a skating rink or outdoor skating area, where the in-line skater is either alone or away from motor vehicle or bicycle traffic, and where all skaters and pedestrians travel in the same direction.

For more information on this and other sport and recreation injury topics, please refer to the following text: Tator, C.H. (Ed.) (2008). Catastrophic Injuries in Sports and Recreation: Causes and Prevention – A Canadian Study. Toronto, Canada: University of Toronto Press Incorporated