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Two Thumbs Up for Recommendations on Preventing Children from being Injured on High Diving Boards

The Montreal Children's Hospital Endorses Coroner's Report

Montreal August 3, 2006 -- The Trauma and Prevention Program at The Montreal Children's Hospital of the MUHC supports the recommendations made in the coroner's report issued this morning regarding injuries sustained by children while using high diving boards.

"The report issued by Coroner Jacques Ramsay is well done," says Ms. Debbie Friedman, Administrative Director of the Trauma and Prevention Program at The Children's. "He did a very thorough investigation, provided specific recommendations to those responsible for safety issues and addressed many of the significant concerns that we at The Children's have."

Last summer, a number of children were treated at The Children's for serious injuries sustained after falling or slipping off three-meter high diving boards or off their ladders. Seven-year-old Francis Bourgault-Pichette died after falling off the ladder of a high diving board at a pool in Lachine. He suffered a fatal brain injury. Of the cases The Children's sees 40% are due to falls from the diving boards, 40% from the diving board ladder and 20% from injuries sustained from hitting the water.

Ms. Friedman notes these type of fatalities and injuries are preventable and until municipalities implement the coroner's recommendations, she urges parents to think twice about allowing young children to use high diving boards at their local pool or recreational centres.

"We know it is a hot summer and pools are busy but we urge municipalities to limit the use of high diving boards until they have a chance to implement changes identified in the coroner's report. Please remember diving boards are not toys," says Ms. Friedman.

A summary of the coroner's recommendations follows. For the coroner's complete report (#A-159478) please go to:

<http://www.msp.gouv.qc.ca/coroner/coroner.asp?txtSection=recommandations>

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