



# What could go wrong in this picture?



## Scouter's Tips

Scouters know what to do when something doesn't go quite right, and how to report incidents. Why are incident reports so important? Why do we as Scouters report every injury? Every incident submitted in Scouting across the country is tracked and categorized to help us be better prepared to predict and prevent common incidents from reoccurring.



Looking for a quick and effective way to submit an incident report to the Safe Scouting Team? **Try the Scout Safe App!** Fast and efficient, and capture all the important details. **Download to your mobile device.**

# TOBOGGAN SAFETY

## Infographic Risk Identification

### MYTH:

Submitting Incident reports will get you in trouble.

### FACT:

- The culture of safety within Scouts Canada is supported by data (those handy incident reports) which are reported after an incident or near miss.
- Submitting incident reports won't get you in trouble—you'll be helping strengthen the culture of safety!
- The goal of Safety Week will be to highlight some trends from previous years and provide some guidance, tips, best practices, and activities to engage youth to be involved in the planning for the upcoming seasons' adventures. After all, no Adventure is fun if someone gets hurt.

### REVIEW:

- Bring into Lairs or Lodges and give each patrol leader a copy of the illustration.
- Give the youth enough time to each identify any behaviours or risks they can identify. Perhaps ask an open question of what do you think could go wrong in this picture?
- How many things were you able to identify in the Image?



### **Tree in the middle of hill / Bench at the bottom of the hill / Parking lot at the bottom of the hill / Large garbage bin at the bottom of the hill**

- One of the most important aspects of planning a safe tobogganing activity is conducting a site inspection. A safe hill is well-lit, free of major obstacles, including trees, benches, lamp posts, and stationary objects and one that doesn't run out onto a road or parking lot. Choose a hill in advance that isn't too steep and is thoroughly covered with snow (not ice).
- A good hill will have enough of a run-off to allow for a natural stop. Hills that have short run-off areas in which youth must jump off or stop quickly are discouraged. Youth are often not able to react quickly and have struck stationary objects resulting in significant injuries. The same is true for trees or structures that are to be considered a major hazard. Placing Scouters/parent helpers in front of these objects does not mitigate serious injury. The best practice is to choose another hill when these types of hazards are present. Involving youth in risk identification during a site inspection can also help them make wise safety choices for both Scouting and non-Scouting tobogganing events.

### **Icy patch on the hill**

Conduct an additional site inspection by walking the hill at the time of the planned activity. Weather and snow conditions can rapidly change the hill, so keep an eye out for icy patches and newly revealed rocks/hazards before and during the event.

### **Youth walking up the middle of the hill**

Review the rules of the hill with participants prior to each tobogganing event. Identify a side of the hill to be used to walk back up and ensure that those coming down are kept clear of that area.

### **Youth not wearing a helmet**

- As per the [Safety Equipment Standards](#) both adults and youth must wear an appropriate helmet when tobogganing.
- See these links for helpful helmet resources [Head Safe](#) & [Helmet Safety](#) (which includes a link to Which Helmet for Which Activity?)

### **Snow bump / Jump on the hill**

Avoid hills with bumps/jumps. Although the feeling of "getting air" when sailing over a bump on a toboggan may be a quick thrill, losing control when landing can often lead to significant injuries.

### **Spotters looking away / Not paying attention**

Having Scouters or parent helpers located and both the top and bottom of the hill is an important part of conducting a safe event. Having adults stationed at the top of the hill can ensure that youth don't head down the hill until it is clear of participants at the bottom and also to keep an eye on youth who may want to make their own path down an unsafe portion of the hill, e.g. the backside that may be heavily treed or icy.

Scouters or parent helpers at the bottom of the hill can ensure that participants get off their toboggans safely and then direct them to use the pre-determined side to head back up the hill.

### **Youth on tobogganing coming down the hill headfirst**

Ensure participants are seated facing forward on their toboggan. Face down on your stomach with your head forward is the most dangerous position and can lead to serious head, neck, and spine injuries.

### **Too many youths on a toboggan**

Having more people on a toboggan than it is meant to handle is dangerous as they are more apt to lose control and crash.

### **Long scarf and not dressed warmly**

Ensuring participants are dressed warmly as part of planning a tobogganing event is essential. Check the temperature before you go and if it is too cold, have an alternate activity planned. Participants should dress in warm layers and ensure that they have clothes without drawstrings and are not wearing scarves, as these are choking hazards. A neck warmer is ideal. Pack a few extra neck warmers should a youth arrive wearing a scarf. Hand warmers are great to have "on hand." Also, don't forget sunscreen for those sunny days!