From: Masha Giller
Sent: Tuesday, September 20, 2011 10:02 AM
To: Park, Jo-Ann
Subject: EPC Wed, Sept 21 - Letter of support for SPC IRPW Snow Removal recommendation

Attention Jo-Ann Park,

We urge the Executive Policy Committee to support the SPC IRPW recommendation on Snow and Ice Control Policy revisions in light of the many benefits that would result, as well as the potential harmful consequences that may be avoided.

As Outreach Coordinator for Active and Safe Routes to School (ASRTS) with Green Action Centre, I know these recommendations have particular relevance to some of the most vulnerable members of our communities – children. Our goal at ASRTS is to promote active transportation for children as they travel to and from school, and safe winter mobility is a significant issue when we consider the length of our "snow-time" (as my six-year old daughter would phrase it).

Better snow removal will result in easier access to sidewalks and safer commutes for children walking to and from school. Another key recommendation is clearing large snow piles from street edges and intersections. Not only do they impair visibility for drivers, who can't see pedestrians, they also create a dangerous obstruction for any little person about to venture into the street. Finally, as a mother of a young child, I've observed not only my daughter, but many children attempt to scale the massive snow mountains piling up curb-side every winter. This fills me and every parent with dread -- as the element of fun is outweighed by the terrible danger that would befall any child who could (quite easily) slip and yes, fall, quite possibly right into the traffic below.

The ASRTS program includes neighbourhood walkabouts, walking clubs, transportation surveys, no-idling zones, walking school buses for children and special active transportation events including Clean Air Day and International Walk to School Day. In an effort to encourage kids walking to school during winter, it would be helpful to have safe, accessible pathways for their trips. Walking in winter can be a challenge for anyone, yet getting kids walking in any season (or biking during warmer weather) translates into many benefits, including:

- greater physical activity
- safer, calmer streets -- with more eyes on the road
- improved air quality around schools, because more kids walking means less cars driving
- improved concentration levels while at school as kids are better able to learn

If there are any questions, we would invite you to please contact us.

Best Regards,
Masha Giller

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