



# ThinkFirst

National Injury Prevention Foundation

**ThinkFirst** Hospital for Special Care is a chapter of the **ThinkFirst** National Injury Prevention Foundation, founded by America's Neurosurgeons.

## Injuries are Preventable

Each year an estimated 500,000 children sustain brain and spinal cord injuries in the United States. The most frequent causes of these injuries are motor vehicle crashes, falls, sports/recreation and violence. Children and teens are at the highest risk for these devastating injuries, most of which are preventable.

Examples of risky behaviors include:

- Drinking and driving
- Distracted Driving
- Diving into shallow water
- Not wearing a seatbelt

**ThinkFirst** for Teens can increase student understanding of their potential for injury and lead to an increase in safer choices and behavior that will prevent a traumatic injury.

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*We Rebuild Lives.*



Hospital for  
Special Care

*We Rebuild Lives.*

**ThinkFirst!**  
For Teens

hfsc.org

# ThinkFirst!

## For Teens

### About the Program

**ThinkFirst** for Teens is an award-winning public education effort targeting teens and young adults. The goal of the program is to prevent brain, spinal cord or other traumatic injuries through education. Another goal is to teach participants to make safer personal choices to minimize the risk of injury to themselves and those around them.

Along with **ThinkFirst** chapters across the United States and internationally, **ThinkFirst Hospital for Special Care** provides compelling educational presentations at no charge for junior and senior high schools, colleges and after-school programs. Health educators and VIP speakers (Voices for Injury Prevention) who sustained an injury, explain how injuries occur, how they affect the body/daily living with an injury and how they can be prevented. Students learn the profound impact of one poor choice and the effect it can have on an individual's life.

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### How it Works

**ThinkFirst** for Teens is a presentation designed for one 50 minute class period (adaptable for shorter classes as well). Trained educators will teach students about the following safety topics:

- Mechanism of brain and spinal cord injuries
- Consequences of a traumatic injury
- Injury Prevention

### The Program

An injury prevention specialist will start by introducing the program and outlining its components. The introduction is followed by a 10 minute video featuring several teens and young adults who have sustained a brain or spinal cord injury. After the video, the injury prevention specialist will use anatomical models of the brain, skull and spinal cord to explain mechanisms of injury and the potential for permanent injury. Power point slides accompanying this 15 minute discussion will cover the most common causes of injury, including sports, vehicle crashes, violence and falls.

### VIP Speakers

The third portion of the program is a personal testimony from a trained **ThinkFirst VIP speaker** or "Voice for Injury Prevention", who describes their injury and the effect it has had on their life. The final portion of the program is reserved for questions and dialogue between the students and speakers.

## Make Your School a Safe School

### Step One

Plan early. The start of the school year is a great time to begin planning.

### Step Two

To obtain a program and schedule an assembly or classroom presentation contact Hospital for Special Care's **ThinkFirst** for Teens Program.

### Step Three

Incorporate safe choices education into your health and physical education curriculum and help students be involved with school and community initiatives.

### Funding

These injury prevention programs are funded in part by the Hospital for Special Care. For more information or to make a donation, please contact the Foundation at 860.832.6257, or visit the website at [www.hfsc.planmygift.org](http://www.hfsc.planmygift.org).



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For more information about Hospital for Special Care visit [www.hfsc.org](http://www.hfsc.org).