



Workplace Tragedy Family Support Association

New peer support program available for families suffering from a workplace tragedy

Hamilton, Ontario – 28 February 2006 -- A new family peer support program to help families who have suffered from a life-altering workplace injury/fatality or are living with an occupational disease was unveiled today at 7:00 p.m. at the United Steelworkers Hall at 350 Kenilworth Ave. North in Hamilton. The national program is the first of its kind in Canada.

Three people are killed every working day in Canada. By the end of 2005, more than 350,000 Canadians will have suffered a lost-time injury due to a workplace tragedy. Threads of Life was created in 2003 to fill a major gap in Canada's health and safety and social systems. There is no well-known "number" to call or place to go to find the kind of emotional support and caring often required to make it through the aftermath of a workplace fatality or severe injury/illness in Canada.

"Injuries in the workplace are not isolated events," says Shirley Hickman, Executive Director for Threads of Life. "There is no quick fix solution. The ripple effect of a workplace tragedy profoundly impacts the worker's entire family who is devastated by the tragic loss and in need of support." Shirley and her family have been living with the personal impact of a workplace tragedy since her 21-year-old son Tim died as a result of a workplace explosion in London.

Threads of Life is a national, not-for-profit organization dedicated to helping Canadian families after they have experienced a tragedy at work. It provides families with peer support assistance, advisory support regarding the workplace investigation and inquest process, workplace injury prevention promotion and awareness within their own community. Communities and employers can raise the awareness of injury prevention by participating in the Community Action Program which includes a Speakers Bureau of family members who are living with the impact of a workplace tragedy.

Threads of Life is supported by a number of key provincial organizations and receives project funding through the HRDSC, Trillium Foundation, Victim Services Secretariat of the Office of the Attorney General and the Ontario Workplace Safety and Insurance Board (WSIB). It is currently supported by an advisory committee made up of family members who have suffered the loss of loved one to a workplace tragedy, the Council of Leaders for Prevention Breakthroughs, Industrial Accident Prevention Association, Institute of Work & Health, Ontario Federation of Labour and the WSIB.

-30-

For interviews, contact

Suzan Butyn, Community Action Program Manager
Bus: 905-826-5446; Cell: 416-723-8518
www.threadsoflife.ca.