

# Sharing OUR Recovery

A quarterly newsletter dedicated to support victims, survivors, caregivers and loved ones of motor vehicle collisions.

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Editor in Chief - Dawne McKay

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Sharing Our Recovery?

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*Brought to you by:*

Supporting Crash Survivors  
👉👉 One Step at a Time 👈👈

## New Roads Ahead: Summer Steps in Healing

If you're recovering from a motor vehicle crash, this summer might feel different. While others are planning getaways or outdoor fun, you might be facing physical pain, emotional stress, and uncertainty about the future. We created our newsletter just for you to remind you that healing takes time and you're not alone. From recovery tips and legal insights to road safety advice and spotlighting organizations making a difference, our goal is to equip you with the knowledge and encouragement to move forward one step at a time.

It's been a busy spring for us, filled with new initiatives and meaningful progress. We have introduced weekly road safety reminders on our social media channels to help raise awareness and promote safer driving habits. The response has been overwhelmingly positive, with great feedback from our community as well as our followers. We've also launched an online support group for motorcycle crash survivors in response to high demand and the initiative has been both successful and deeply appreciated.

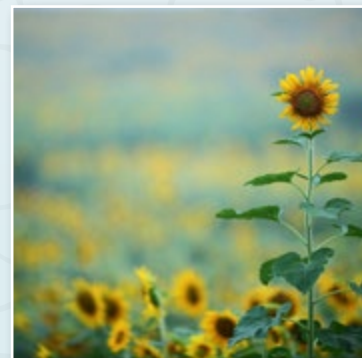
In this issue, you will read about the impact that hot weather can have on your recovery and how you can cope, you will learn why it's crucial to speak with an employment lawyer if you believe your job is at risk, you will read about an inspiring organization created to honor a child's life by working to prevent similar tragedies from happening to others, we introduce you to the Founder of We Save Lives, whose mission is to shift the focus from "accident" to "crash", putting responsibility where it belongs and you will read important road safety tips that could save lives including your own.

Please join us in thanking survivors who have rebuilt their lives, families who have offered steadfast support, healthcare professionals who guide us through the healing process, and advocates who work tirelessly to raise awareness and improve safety. Their collective wisdom and experiences provide a source of comfort and strength to those on the path to healing.

As the summer sun shines brightly, may this issue serve as a beacon of light for those navigating their path to recovery. After every crash, a survivor blooms brighter, like a sunflower in the sun. To every victim of a motor vehicle crash reading this, know that your courage is seen and your struggles are understood. Thank you for allowing us to share this journey with you and for being part of our community.

With care and compassion,

- Dawne





*“The person who killed Kasey was on his 4th or 5th DUI when he plowed into us. The death of my three-year-old daughter was definitely no accident,”* said mother Kelly DeHay about the crash that killed her child.

Every time I hear the word accident, when citing motor vehicle crashes, I cringe, especially when I see or hear it in the media or from a crash victim or survivor.

*Accident: An unexpected happening causing loss or injury which is not due to any fault or misconduct on the part of the person injured but for which legal relief may be sought.*

Each year there are an estimated 6 million motor vehicle crashes, killing more than 42,000 men, women and children and injuring more than 2,300,000 people in this country alone. **Most are not “accidents” – but rather the result of negligent or criminal behaviors.** According to the National

Highway Safety Administration, (NHTSA) human error is a factor in approximately 94% of all motor vehicle crashes. This means that most crashes are the result of negligent or criminal behaviors. They are choices people make, such as distracted driving, speeding, or impairment. These dangerous driving decisions all play a significant role when a crash, collision or wreck occurs.

Accidents are unpredictable. However, drunk, drugged, and distracted drivers are much more likely statistically to be involved in a crash. In other words, they are predictable.

Thus, labelling them as accidental is incorrect and implies that no one is at fault. For this reason, we ask you to use terms that more accurately reflect the realities of such occurrences, such as crash, collision, and wreck. Crime is also good.

### Using the Word Accident Trivializes the Devastation

Each time the media uses that word when describing a crash – especially when there are injuries or deaths – it plays into the hands of defense attorneys who use it to excuse the dangerous driving choice their clients made that are responsible for the crash or crime. I want the public to know that:

- 94% of crashes result from human error.
- Using the word “accident” gives the inaccurate impression that there is no fault or liability involved.
- It reinforces societal permissiveness towards dangerous driving behaviors that often result in injury or death.

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*“Using the word  
accident trivializes  
the devastation loved  
ones feel and insults  
the memory of the  
deceased.”*

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Tim Burrows, former National Law Enforcement Liaison Program Manager and retired police officer, explains, “As a police officer, the most difficult thing for me to do was tell someone that their loved one had been killed in a collision. Using the word accident trivializes the devastation loved ones feel and insults the memory of the deceased.”

It is my mission and that of We Save Lives to put responsibility where it belongs, on the driver. We need to change how we speak about these events and stop excusing dangerous driving choices. I am calling on everyone to Drop the “A” Word and stop excusing dangerous and irresponsible driving choices. If you have used this word when describing your own crash on social media please consider changing it. Thank you.

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Many thanks to Candace Lightner for sharing this informative article and for her continued support. For more information on We Save Lives, please visit: Home - [We Save Lives](#).



**DONATE AND  
MAKE A DIFFERENCE TODAY**

We believe in the power of making a difference in crash survivor's lives. But, to achieve our goals we need your support.

By donating, you will be supporting the continued efforts of our much-needed resources that we continue to offer to improve the lives of crash survivors.



# Two Sides of the Same Road: Safety and Support After a Crash

As a survivor of a horrific motor vehicle crash, I've experienced firsthand the emotional trauma, physical pain, feelings of loss, financial struggles, insurance denials, constant medical appointments and the life-changing impact a crash can have. There is also an overwhelming realization that my life could have ended in an instant.

I used to believe that being a safe driver was enough. I followed the rules. I was cautious. I was a good driver. I never imagined I'd be involved in a crash — until I was. Surviving a crash changes you. It's not just the physical recovery, though that alone can be grueling. It's the emotional weight, the mental toll, and the shift in perspective that stays with you long after the crash scene is cleared. For many, the trauma doesn't end at impact. And for families who lose loved ones in fatal crashes, the road to healing is long, uncertain, and deeply personal. That's why I've come to believe that road safety and emotional support must go hand in hand.

The lessons I've learned have made me more determined than ever to help others avoid the same fate.

Because road safety isn't just a set of rules. It's a mindset, a responsibility, and a way to protect the people we love. Here are some road safety tips that can save lives including yours.

## 1. Always Wear Your Seatbelt

It's the simplest piece of advice but one that saved me from more serious injuries. If I hadn't been wearing my seatbelt, I might not be writing this today. Seatbelts are proven to reduce the risk of death and injury in a crash by up to 50%. It may seem like a hassle to click it every time, but in those critical seconds, your seatbelt could be the difference between life and death. Always wear your seatbelt, no matter how short the drive.

## 2. Don't Use Your Phone While Driving

Distracted driving is a major cause of motor vehicle crashes and was the reason I was seriously injured in a crash and all it took was one second. Even taking your eyes off the road for a split second can result in disaster. If you need to take a call or send a message, pull over and stop in a safe place. No message or phone call is worth risking your life and others on the road.

## 3. Obey Speed Limits

Speeding drastically increases the chances of a severe crash. The faster you go, the less time you have to react to obstacles or sudden changes in road conditions. Driving at or below the speed limit gives you a better chance to stop safely in an emergency.

## 4. Be Extra Cautious in Bad Weather

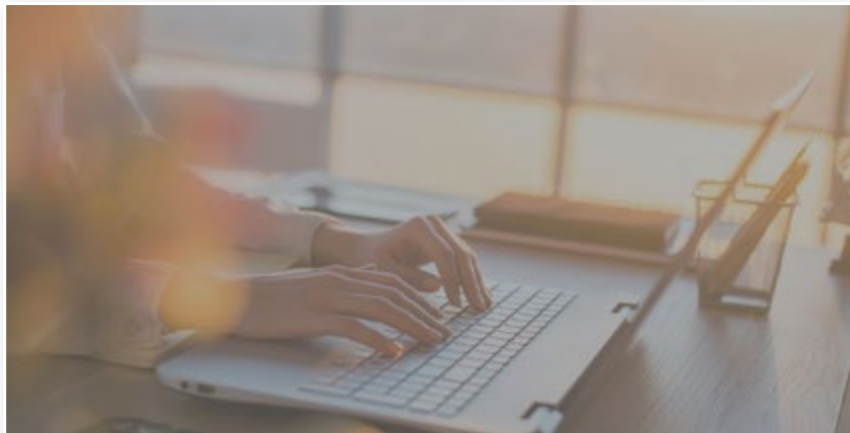
Rain, snow, fog, or ice can make driving conditions dangerous. Always adjust your speed and driving behavior when the weather is less than ideal. Give yourself more time to react, and increase the distance between you and the car in front of you.

## 5. Stay Alert and Avoid Fatigue

Drowsy driving is as dangerous as drunk driving. If you feel sleepy, pull over and rest, or better yet, take turns driving with someone else.

## 6. Check Your Vehicle Regularly

Car maintenance is essential for road safety. Tires, brakes, lights, and fluid levels should be inspected regularly to ensure your vehicle is in optimal condition. It's better to



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take a few minutes to check before heading out than to face a breakdown or worse, a motor vehicle crash. Get your car checked regularly, especially before long trips.

## 7. Keep a Safe Following Distance

Tailgating increases the risk of a rear-end collision. Leaving a proper following distance gives you more time to react if the car in front of you suddenly brakes. A safe rule of thumb is to maintain at least three seconds of distance between you and the car ahead.

## 8. Use Your Indicators

Communicating with other drivers is key to avoiding collisions. Whether you're changing lanes or turning, make sure to signal early enough so other drivers can react accordingly. Many crashes happen when drivers fail to signal, leaving drivers or even pedestrians unsure of their intentions.

## 9. Stay Sober Behind the Wheel

Driving under the influence is not only illegal—it's incredibly dangerous and is one of the leading causes of collisions. If you've been drinking or using any substance that impairs your judgment, don't drive. Designate a driver or use a ride-sharing service.

## 10. Stay Calm and Focused

Lastly, staying calm and focused on the road is crucial. Panicking or letting emotions affect your driving can cloud your judgment and reaction time. Whether it's road rage, frustration, or just feeling rushed, it's essential to keep a clear mind while driving. If you feel stressed or upset, take a few deep breaths and remind yourself that no destination is worth risking your safety.

My own recovery journey has taught me that healing can come through purpose. By speaking up, sharing my story, and supporting others, I've found strength and connection in places I never expected. We often talk about road safety in terms of rules, statistics, and campaigns — and that's essential. But behind every crash report is a person, a family, a life altered forever. It's about understanding what's at stake: real lives, real pain and real resilience.

Being seriously injured in a motor vehicle crash is something no one should have to go through and we all have the power to make better choices behind the wheel to keep ourselves and others safe on the road. I hope these tips can help you avoid the heartache and pain that comes with a motor vehicle crash because road safety isn't just about following the rules; it's about taking responsibility for your own safety and the safety of others. Let's all do our part to make the roads safer for everyone.



**SAFE DRIVING STARTS WITH ME**

**Take our Reck Pledge!**

Let's make the roads safer for everyone. Show your commitment to safe driving practices and take our pledge today.

We are Driving Towards Safety One Pledge at a Time!

Join us in making a difference.

**TAKE OUR PLEDGE**

# The Impact of Hot Weather on Recovery and How to Cope

Submitted by Dawne McKay



Summer is often associated with sunshine, vacations, and outdoor fun but if you're recovering from a motor vehicle crash, the heat can introduce a new set of challenges. From physical discomfort to complications with medication or therapy, hot weather can interfere with your healing process in ways you might not expect.

Recovering from a crash is not easy but doing so during the summer months can bring unexpected challenges. High temperatures, increased outdoor activity, and travel disruptions can all affect your physical and emotional healing. Understanding how hot weather impacts your recovery can help you stay safe, comfortable, and on track.

## Dehydration Slows Healing

Summer heat increases your risk of dehydration, which can hinder your body's ability to heal. Water helps transport nutrients to injured tissues and supports joint and muscle recovery. If you're recovering from injuries like whiplash, fractures, or surgery, even mild dehydration can increase

fatigue and discomfort. Drink plenty of water throughout the day, especially if you're outside or taking medication.

## Heat Can Worsen Inflammation and Swelling

If you're dealing with soft tissue injuries, burns, or bruising, heat can increase inflammation, leading to more pain and discomfort. Hot temperatures cause blood vessels to expand, which can worsen swelling in already-injured areas. That extra inflammation can make pain management more difficult and slow down your overall recovery. Stay cool. Use ice packs as directed by your doctor, elevate swollen areas, and avoid spending long periods in direct sun.

## Medication Side Effects May Be Stronger

Certain pain medications, muscle relaxants, or antibiotics prescribed after a motor vehicle crash can cause side effects like dizziness, light-headedness, or sensitivity to heat. These effects are often intensified in high temperatures. Read

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medication labels carefully and avoid prolonged sun exposure if heat sensitivity is listed.

### Fatigue and Heat Exhaustion Are Real Risks

The body works overtime to regulate its temperature in hot weather, which can lead to increased fatigue especially for those already dealing with physical trauma. This can leave you feeling drained, making it harder to keep up with appointments, exercises, or everyday tasks. Pace yourself and rest when needed. Avoid doing too much during the hottest parts of the day and wear lightweight, breathable clothing.

### Physical Therapy and Outdoor Exercise May Need Adjusting

Summer is a popular time for walking, swimming, and light stretching outdoors which are all great for rehabilitation. But in high heat, these activities can become risky if not properly timed and paced. Schedule physical therapy and outdoor activity during cooler morning or evening hours. Never push through pain or exhaustion and always wear breathable, light-colored clothing.

### Emotional Stress Can Increase

Heat can contribute to irritability, mood swings, and mental fatigue all of which are common during recovery. If you're dealing with post-crash anxiety, PTSD, or depression, the added stress of extreme weather can make things feel worse. The emotional strain of recovery, combined with summer heat, can feel overwhelming. Practice self-care. Take breaks, spend time in air-conditioned environments, and seek support from friends, family, professionals or our online support group if you're feeling down or anxious. Sometimes, even a change of scenery (like a cool, quiet room) can help you reset.

Recovering from a motor vehicle crash during the summer adds unique challenges but with a few precautions, you can stay on top of your recovery and avoid setbacks. Stay hydrated, keep cool, and listen to your body. Remember, healing takes time and protecting your health now lays the foundation for a stronger tomorrow.



**You've been asking and we listened. The Crash Support Network is proud to launch online support built specifically for motorcycle crash survivors. We invite you to connect, share, and heal with a support community who understands.**

**Raw. Real.  
Rider to Rider.**





# Pain into Purpose: How Our Daughter's Story Became a Mission to Save Lives

*Submitted by David and Wendy Mills*

On October 28, 2017, our world shattered in an instant. Our beautiful 16-year-old daughter, Kailee, was on her way to a Halloween party with friends, just a few minutes from home. She was riding in the backseat of a car when she took off her seat belt to take a quick selfie. Moments later, the car went off the road. Kailee was the only one not wearing a seat belt — and the only one who didn't survive.

Losing a child is indescribable. It shakes you to your core and leaves you searching for meaning in the midst of unimaginable pain. But from those depths of grief, we found purpose. Within days of Kailee's passing, we began sharing her story in the hopes that it might save even one life. The response was overwhelming. Parents, students, teachers, and first responders reached out — many of them saying her story changed their habits immediately. We realized we had a responsibility to do more.

**Buckle up. Every ride. Every time.**

That's how the Kailee Mills Foundation was born — to honor Kailee's life by preventing similar tragedies. We work every day to raise awareness about seat belt safety, particularly among teens and young adults. Through school presentations, public service campaigns, scholarships, survivor support, and community programs, we've been able to reach millions with the simple, life-saving message: Buckle up. Every ride. Every time.



This work hasn't just helped others — it has helped us heal. Advocacy gave our grief a direction. It gave Kailee's life a legacy. And it gave us hope that her story might be the reason someone else gets to live out theirs. To anyone who has lost a loved one to a crash, or who is navigating life after trauma: we see you. We know the ache of absence, the anger at what could have been, and the desperate desire to prevent it from happening to someone else. You're not alone, and your voice matters. Your story matters.

We are so grateful to the Crash Support Network for giving us a platform to share Kailee's story and to continue reaching families who understand this kind of loss. Together, we can turn tragedy into change, and pain into purpose.

Thank you for remembering Kailee with us and for helping us make sure her story saves lives.

With love and hope,  
David and Wendy Mills  
Kailee Mills Foundation

For more information on the Kailee Mills Foundation please visit: [www.kaileemillsfoundation.org](http://www.kaileemillsfoundation.org).





# Healing After the Impact

Submitted by S. Dawne McKay

Post  
Crash  
Tip

Motor vehicle crashes can leave lasting effects both physically and emotionally. One moment you're on the road, and the next, your life can feel completely disrupted. Whether you're dealing with visible injuries, emotional trauma, or both, it's important to approach your recovery with patience, support, and the right mindset.

Healing after a motor vehicle crash is about giving yourself time and space to come back emotionally and mentally too.

Be gentle with yourself. Celebrate every bit of progress. And remember, you are not alone.



Navigating life after a motor vehicle crash can feel isolating, but it doesn't have to be. If our paths have crossed and you've found a beacon of hope in our support and resources that we continue to offer, your feedback can illuminate the way for others in similar situations.

Sharing a review with us could be the guiding light for someone in the darkness of post-crash turmoil. Your feedback not only encourages us but also helps others discover the variety of helpful resources that we continue to offer our crash survivor community.

[SHARE REVIEW](#)



# Why Crash Survivors Shouldn't Hesitate to Talk to an Employment Lawyer

*Submitted by Teresa Park, Managing Partner and Employment Lawyer at Iacobelli Law Firm*



At The Crash Support Network, we hear heartbreaking stories every day. Stories of hardworking individuals who, through no fault of their own, are left unable to work after being injured in a motor vehicle crash. These injuries take a deep physical, emotional, and often financial toll. Yet many people don't fully understand their rights when it comes to employment and income support after a crash. They're overwhelmed, confused about what's next, and unsure where to turn.

As recovery stretches into weeks or months, many are forced into painful decisions. Some feel pressured to return to work before they're physically or emotionally ready. Others are left wondering if their employer will support them or quietly move on without them.

I remember constantly worrying: "Will they replace me? Will I lose my job?" We hear this over and over again. If you're asking yourself the same questions, you are not alone.

Some employers stop communicating altogether. Others question your limitations or pressure you to return before you're ready. In some cases, they may even take steps to replace you. This is where speaking to an employment lawyer can make a real difference.

When your job is in jeopardy, you're not just managing your recovery. You're also facing complex laws around medical

leave, disability accommodations, and job protection. An employment lawyer can help you understand:

- What your employer is legally allowed to do while you're recovering
- What types of workplace accommodations they are required to provide
- How to respond if you're being treated unfairly or pushed out of your role

## Legal Help Might Be Closer Than You Think

Many people assume that employment lawyers are too expensive, especially when they're already facing medical bills and may have hired a personal injury lawyer. What they often don't realize is that some employment lawyers offer contingency fee arrangements, too.

This means:

- You don't pay anything upfront
- The lawyer only gets paid if they recover compensation for you
- You can explore your rights without taking on additional financial risk

Employment lawyers can help protect your job, your income, and your legal rights. Whether you're dealing with wrongful dismissal, discrimination, unpaid leave, or an employer refusing to accommodate your injuries, legal guidance can give you peace of mind. Sometimes, your workplace issue is connected to your personal injury case. When that happens, having coordinated legal support can make a real difference in your outcome.

## You Deserve to Focus on Healing, Not Fighting for Your Job

We understand how overwhelming this process can be. For many crash survivors, hiring another lawyer feels out of reach — especially when dealing with rehab, lost income, and daily pain. But your ability to return to work might be uncertain. Maybe your employer has gone quiet. Maybe they've been supportive, but you still don't know what rights you have or what protections are in place.

This is exactly when an employment lawyer becomes essential. It's not about adding more to your plate — it's about giving you clarity, security, and a stronger path forward.



## Struggling with Work After a Crash?

At Iacobelli Law Firm, we believe that justice should never be out of reach, especially when your ability to earn a living is on the line. That's why we proudly offer employment law services on a contingency fee basis across Toronto and Ontario. This model is rare among employment lawyers, but we've chosen it because we know how stressful and uncertain life becomes when a job is suddenly at risk.

If you or someone you know is dealing with job uncertainty after a crash, don't wait to get help.

Teresa Park, Managing Partner and Employment Lawyer at Iacobelli Law Firm, is a dedicated advocate for fairness in the workplace. She brings extensive experience in employment law and is deeply committed to helping individuals who have

been wrongfully dismissed, denied severance, or subjected to discrimination or harassment at work.

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*"... we believe that justice should never be out of reach, especially when your ability to earn a living is on the line."*

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Her mission is clear: to empower injured workers and ensure no one is left behind simply because they can't afford legal representation. Teresa understands how intimidating it can be to challenge an employer, especially while recovering from a traumatic injury. That's why she approaches every case with empathy, honesty, and an unwavering commitment to results.

With offices in Toronto and throughout Ontario, we're here to support you wherever you are in your recovery. For more information on employment law please contact: Teresa Park at [Iacobelli Law Firm](#).

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## Ask-A-Lawyer

We offer FREE legal guidance to help you move forward in your recovery journey.



**ASK A PERSONAL INJURY LAWYER**

After a motor vehicle crash, it's natural to feel unsure about speaking with a lawyer and it can feel both overwhelming and intimidating. That's why we created Ask a Personal Injury Lawyer to offer you a safe space to ask all your legal questions which is a simple and practical way for you to get the answers you need, stress-free. The Crash Support Network is here to support you and will help you can get the legal answers you need without any pressure.

[CLICK HERE](#) 



# MANY THANKS TO OUR 2025 SPONSORS!

*We couldn't have done it without your support!*

By sponsoring the *Sharing our Recovery Newsletter*, you are supporting the continued growth of this valuable free resource for crash survivors.

## Would you like to be part of Sharing Our Recovery?

### Articles/Stories:

We are always looking for articles or stories,  
and we would love to hear from you!

Want to share?

Email: [info@crashsupportnetwork.com](mailto:info@crashsupportnetwork.com)

### Sponsors:

We are always looking for  
*Sharing Our Recovery* sponsors.  
Interested in sponsoring?

Information:



### Meet Dawne McKay – Founder

S. Dawne McKay is the Founder of the Crash Support Network and continues to donate countless hours to her crash survivor community by sharing resources, highly informative articles, a quarterly newsletter and a blog that allows her to share her own personal journey as a crash survivor. Dawne works hard at bringing awareness to crash survivors through CSN's social media platforms and the online support group by sharing inspirational posts with survivors from all across the world. Dawne is also the author of the book, "Talk Crash to Me - What to Expect After Surviving a Motor Vehicle Collision and How to Manage Your Recovery" which is [available on Amazon](#).

**Our mission is to raise awareness about the recovery journey that many people face after being affected by a motor vehicle crash and to provide a compassionate online community to help survivors rebuild their lives while actively promoting road safety.**



### CONNECT WITH US ON SOCIAL MEDIA

All information in *Sharing Our Recovery* is not intended as medical advice or treatment. *Sharing Our Recovery* has been created for informational purposes only. Please consult with your family physician if you have concerns about your health. The views and opinions expressed in any part of this newsletter are not necessarily those of the Publisher (Crash Support Network) or any contributor. The Publisher accepts no responsibility for errors in articles, contributors' pages or advertisements.