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National Ski Patrol Teams Up with Ski Helmet Advocacy Program

BURLINGTON, VT - The [National Ski Patrol](#) and PHAT, a ski helmet advocacy program supported by Vermont Children's Hospital at Fletcher Allen Health Care, have formed a partnership to promote increased use of helmets at the nation's ski areas.

The National Ski Patrol will assist PHAT (Protect Head at All Times) with distributing information explaining the benefits of [ski helmets](#) around the nation, and will include information about PHAT on its website. A study by the U.S. [Consumer Product Safety Commission](#) found that nearly 8,000 head injuries each year could be prevented if all [skiers](#) and snowboarders wore helmets.

"In just a few years, PHAT has created an effective, non-coercive program to increase usage of ski helmets and raised the visibility of the issue across the nation. We're very pleased to be partnering with PHAT to help skiers and snowboarders of all ages have a safer experience on the slopes," says Tim White, Executive Director of the National Ski Patrol.

"I can't overstate the importance of the National Ski Patrol's help with this initiative. Our program is based on the use of role models, and research shows the public recognizes ski patrollers as leaders in both skiing ability and safety," said Robert Williams, M.D., a pediatric anesthesiologist at Vermont Children's Hospital at Fletcher Allen who founded the PHAT program in 2002. "Their example will help change the culture at ski resorts and establish the use of ski helmets as the norm."

A study released in 2008 by the University of Vermont shows that more than 80% of children are now in helmets at Smugglers' Notch, up from 60% in the 2002-2003 season when PHAT started its program. Helmet use by adults has nearly doubled, with almost 60% of adult skiers and riders now using helmets, up from 30% on the 2002-2003 season. The study, based on more than 30,000 observations of skiers and riders over four winters, shows that among children, female snowboarders are the least likely to wear a helmet while younger male skiers are the most likely to wear a helmet.