

Go tell it on the mountain



Here's a good kind of PHAT: "[Protect Head at All Times](#)." There will be a lot more helmets on the slopes if the doctor who launched the program to protect skiers and snowboarders from head injuries and the [National Ski Patrol](#) and ski resorts have their way.

The numbers of helmet-heads are already climbing: A 2008/2009 study by the National Ski Areas Association shows that helmet use was up 12 percent over the year before. In Vermont, where PHAT began in 2002, observational studies show that more than 80 percent of children under 18 are now in helmets at Smugglers' Notch, up from 60 percent in the 2002/2003 season. [Helmet use by adults](#) at Smugglers Notch has nearly doubled.

That's no small thing. The National Ski Areas Association runs a [list of facts](#), including the very sobering one that close to 40 people, on average, die skiing or snowboarding every year, and another 43 or so are seriously injured—and they mean serious—becoming paraplegics and suffering serious head injuries.

January 16-22 is skiing's [National Safety Awareness Week](#). So if you're not already wearing a helmet on the slopes, now would be a good time to start. (Especially you, young woman! At Smuggler's Notch, under-18 female snowboarders were the least likely to wear helmets.)