

PRESS RELEASE DATED 10TH DECEMBER 2008

PLEASE be careful.

That's the festive season plea to everyone from the Head Injury Society of Southland, which won't have to shut down thanks to the Invercargill Licensing Trust.

Head Injury Society of Southland manager, Raewyn Stuart, said an ILT donation of \$15,000 would enable it to continue operating and to help a growing list of Southlanders and their families needing head injury help.

ILT president, Alan Dennis, said supporting Head Injury Southland was crucial because the organisation was under-resourced and did a fantastic job, handling 140 head injury cases annually.

Mrs Stuart, one of just two part-time workers at the society, was grateful for the ILT's support but she feared a rise in head injury cases over the Christmas and New Year period.

"And it's young males who are the biggest worry," she said.

"It's not just assaults; it's car accidents as well. They just seem to be more prone to it."

Mrs Stuart said aggressive young males still didn't realise the implication of head assaults.

"It can only take one punch in the wrong place on the head and that young man, or young woman, is damaged for life.

"So I just want everyone to keep safe and be aware that a head injury is an ongoing thing."

Mrs Stuart and her co-worker offer professional advice, support and education to head injury patients and families, and work with them to ensure they are getting the right ACC financial support.

"There are 90 people a day who suffer some form of head injury in New Zealand," she said.

"Not all of those people are hospitalised, of course, but that's a very high figure.

"Here in Southland we're also becoming busier because people are more aware of us now, so we're just so relieved the ILT has helped us out. Their donation will help with the wages, with everything."

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