

Selkirk woman warns public about seat belt safety, 10 years after serious brain injury

By Global News

WINNIPEG — Nearly ten years after a serious highway collision, Jamie Townsend is now walking on her own, something doctors said would never happen.

On September 7, 2007, Townsend was driving her impaired friend home on Highway 206, when one of the tires on her vehicles blew.

“My car started to roll, and then we were both ejected,” Townsend said.

She wasn't wearing her seat belt, and was sent through the windshield of the vehicle. Suffering serious brain damage, Townsend was sent to HSC in Winnipeg.

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Suffering from Hemiplegia, a condition that affects movements on one side of the body, she underwent four surgeries, and still she couldn't speak, or stand up.

“I hurt. It was really hard on my mom and step dad.”

A few months later, Townsend was sent to the Movement Centre of Manitoba for rehabilitation.

“I never wanted to be not mobile,” she said.

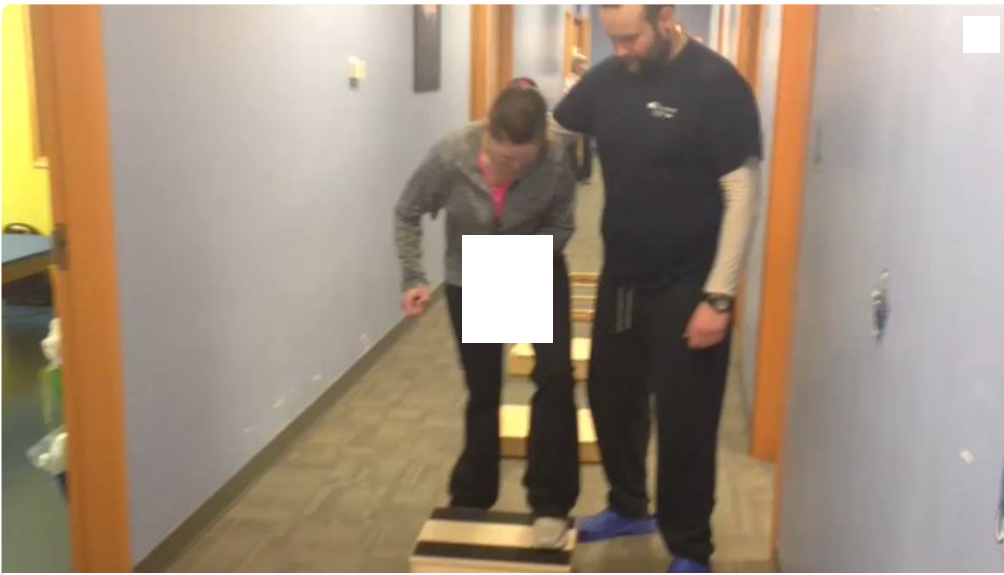
At first, Townsend struggled with learning how to properly stand up and walk.

“It's about trying to get the to use their right arm and their left arm, their right leg and their left leg as equally as possible,” Conductor at the Movement Centre, Christopher Martin said.

Townsend would have trouble with simple things like standing straight up, and keeping her shoulders square Martin said.

“It was really tough, I hated it at first,” Townsend said.

But visiting the Movement Centre twice a week, Townsend's movements improved significantly over the years.



Shelden Rogers
@SheldenRogers

Meet Jamie Townsend. Ten years ago doctors told her she'd never walk again after a serious car crash. This is her today. Full story at 6.

13 2:32 PM - Apr 5, 2017 · Winnipeg, Manitoba

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She can now walk without any assistance.

“You have to watch Jamie now, because she’ll just get up and start walking around,” Martin said.

Now as she jokes with staff members at the facility, Townsend said clients and conductors at the movement centre are the closest people in her life.

“They’re like my family. They’re the people I really care about.”

Nine years after the accident, Townsend said she hopes her story serves as a reminder for people on the road, to buckle up no matter what.

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“I hope this could help other people build with it and learn from it,” she said.

The movement centre sees around 100 patients every week, and there is a waiting list for people signing up for treatment.

The service is not publicly funded, and has an operating budget of \$800,000 per year.