

Sheldon Kennedy – Biography

Sheldon Kennedy won a Memorial Cup, World Junior Gold Medal and skated for three teams in his eight-year NHL career. He is best known for his courageous decision to charge his Major Junior Hockey league coach with sexual assault for the abuse he suffered over a five year period while a teenager under his care. Through this disclosure, and the important work that Sheldon continues to do, he has become an inspiration to millions around the world.

Kennedy's off-ice contributions are extensive and his impact has extended well beyond sport and the Canadian border. Sheldon has been instrumental in bringing governments, public and private sector partners together to work collaboratively to influence policy change and improve the way child abuse is handled. He has influenced changes in Canadian law and has taken his message to the International Olympic Committee and the US Senate. His impact has extended well beyond sport and the Canadian border.

Sheldon was Co-Founder of the Calgary Child Advocacy Centre, the first-of-its-kind in Canada, offering full wrap-around services for victims of child abuse. He is also the Co-Founder of *Respect Group*, which provides empowering online abuse, bullying and harassment prevention education to sport organizations, schools and the workplace. Respect Group has currently certified over 2 million Canadians.

Some of Kennedy's noted accomplishments are listed below, with a detailed list on the following pages.

- Designed and launched the "*Speak Out*" program with Hockey Canada in 1997
- In-line skated across Canada in 1998 to raise awareness of child abuse and donated all \$ 1.2 M proceeds to the Canadian Red Cross to maintain the Speak Out program
- Named Newsmaker of the Year in 1997 and featured in hundreds of media interviews and keynote speeches, in Canada and abroad, to influence social change
- Co-founded the Sheldon Kennedy Child Advocacy Centre
- Spent countless volunteer hours as Lead Director of the Sheldon Kennedy/Calgary Child Advocacy Centre and was instrumental in the development and implementation of an Integrated Practice Model
- Instrumental in bringing the topic of *Mental Health and Addiction* into the realm of Sport and beyond
- Co-Founded Respect Group which has certified over 2 M Canadians through the *Respect in Sport* programs, designed to prevent bullying, abuse, harassment and discrimination
- Anonymous volunteer resource for the NHLPA substance abuse program
- Athlete member/Subject Matter Expert of the International Olympic Committee Medical Committee
- Change Agent for Federal Legislation (Victims of Crime)
- Change Agent for Provincial Legislation (Sharing of information)
- Won numerous Awards (see below) including the *Order of Canada* and the *Hockey Canada Order of Merit*
- Authored "*Why I Didn't Say Anything*" (see below)
- Had an award-winning movie made about his life (see below)
- Funded and produced the Documentary "*Swift Current*" (see below)
- Achieved numerous other significant milestones (listed below)
- Trusted Subject Matter Expert and Advisor to various hockey leagues, including NHL, CHL, WHL, OHL

Sheldon Kennedy - Key Accomplishments and Milestones

1996	Kennedy files report of sexual assault against his former Junior Hockey Coach, Graham James
1997	January 2, James pleads guilty to two counts of sexual assault involving more than 350 encounters with two underage players over a span of 10 years, and was sentenced to three and a half years in jail.
1997	Gordon Kirke publishes <i>Players First Report</i> on behalf of the Canadian Hockey League in response to the Sheldon Kennedy case. This Report led to the creation of Hockey Canada's " Speak Out program " which was mandatory classroom training for all hockey coaches.
1997	Kennedy works with Hockey Canada and the Red Cross to develop and implement " <i>Speak Out</i> " across Canada
1997	Kennedy named " <i>Newsmaker of the Year</i> " awarded by The Canadian Press
1997	Kennedy Nominated for Bill Masterton Trophy for " <i>raising sport consciousness of sexual assault</i> " https://www.sun-sentinel.com/news/fl-xpm-1997-04-13-9704120204-story.html
1997	Kennedy appears on <i>Oprah Winfrey</i>
1998	Kennedy named Peter Jennings " <i>Man of the Year</i> "
1998 May - Oct	Kennedy In-line skates across Canada. Covers 8000 kilometers in 4 ½ months. From meeting with Prime Minister Chrétien, consoling other victims and speaking in small communities and hockey arenas across the country, Kennedy gets daily media coverage, and increases Canadian's awareness of child sexual abuse.
1999	Sheldon Kennedy Foundation donates all \$ 1.2M proceeds from the in-line skate to the Canadian Red Cross to grow and maintain the <i>Speak Out</i> program for Hockey Canada
2004	Kennedy Co-Founds Respect Group. A company devoted to the on-line training (<i>Respect in Sport</i>) of Canadian coaches, parents and officials to prevent bullying, abuse, harassment and discrimination in sport.
2007	Kennedy/ <i>Respect in Sport</i> featured in interview with CBC's, Peter Mansbridge, during Hockey Day in Canada, Jan. 13th in Nelson, BC. https://respectgroupinc.sharefile.com/d-s85521871bdc4888a
2007	Kennedy sits as Athlete Representative on IOC Medical Committee (Lausanne, Switzerland) that develops the first <i>Consensus Statement on Sexual Abuse in Sport</i> https://stillmed.olympic.org/media/Document%20Library/OlympicOrg/News/20070802-IOC-adopts-Consensus-Statement-on-sexual-harassment-and-abuse-in-sport/EN-Sexual-Harassment-Abuse-In-Sport-report-1125.pdf#_ga=2.99806877.2045449239.1550014495-1089241523.1547418984
2009	Hockey Canada replaces <i>Speak Out</i> program with on-line certification through <i>Respect in Sport</i>
2010	Kennedy works with Calgary Chief of Police and other child protection stakeholders to collaborate on the creation of the <i>Calgary Child Advocacy Centre</i> .
2011	Canadian Hockey League implements <i>Respect in Sport</i> for all coaches and billets.
2011	Kennedy is first Canadian to Speak to US Congress in response to the Penn State sexual abuse scandal. He cites Canada's leadership in mandating prevention education in sport. https://abcnews.go.com/blogs/politics/2011/12/hockey-star-sheldon-kennedy-urges-congress-to-fight-child-sex-abuse/
2012	<i>Calgary Child Advocacy Centre</i> Opens
2013	Kennedy participates on <i>Hot Stove Panel – Hockey Canada Foundation Gala</i>
2013	<i>Alberta Children First Act</i> is enacted. Kennedy plays key role in working with Alberta government to prioritize legislation to allow agencies to share information "in the best interest of the child".
2013	Calgary Child Advocacy Centre is formally renamed, by Prime Minister Harper, the Sheldon Kennedy Child Advocacy Centre . The SKCAC has become the International "best practice" for handling child abuse cases through Integrated Practice. https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/calgary/child-advocacy-centre-named-after-sheldon-kennedy-1.1355223

2014	Respect Group is one of 4 major presenting sponsors of <i>Hockey Canada's 100th Anniversary Century Tour</i> https://www.hockeycanada.ca/en-ca/corporate/about/history
2014	Kennedy speaks at <i>Hockey Canada's 100th Anniversary Gala</i>
2015	<i>Canadian Victims Bill of Rights</i> is enacted. Kennedy plays key role through his work with the Federal Minister of Justice and testifying at numerous Senate Sub-Committee Hearings.
2015	Kennedy Interview on Sportsnet regarding Swift Current Documentary (see below) https://www.sportsnet.ca/hockey/nhl/leah-hextall-with-sheldon-kennedy-2/
2015	Kennedy is instrumental in first "Start the Spark" for mental health game sponsored and promoted by the Calgary Inferno of the CWHL http://calgary.thecwhl.com/calgary-inferno-start-spark-youth-mental-health-january-20-2018
2016	<i>Sheldon Kennedy Scholarship</i> established at Mount Royal University for 3 rd year Child Life Students
2016	<i>Swift Current Documentary</i> (see below) screened at <i>Hockey Hall of Fame</i> for Board Members/local dignitaries.
2017	Kennedy/Respect Group work with the International Olympic Committee to develop the first "Safeguarding Athletes" program
2018	Kennedy speaks to all Sportsnet and Rogers staff after dismissal of Gregg Zaun
2018	Respect Group surpasses 1M Certified Users; sport parents, coaches, billets and officials.
2018	Kennedy, a survivor of the Swift Current Bronco's bus crash in 1986, becomes a beacon of hope for First Responders and families of the Humboldt Broncos bus crash. Interview with Ron MacLean; https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nDI2kJAjFaU
2018	Kennedy gives SKCAC back to Calgary community https://www.ctvnews.ca/sports/sheldon-kennedy-removing-name-from-child-advocacy-centre-he-founded-1.4214537
2019	Hockey Day in Canada – Swift Current 1. 1 st Annual Sheldon Kennedy Youth Outdoor Classic https://twitter.com/Sportsnet/status/1093665413236436993/video/1 2. Sheldon Kennedy Rink officially named and unveiled https://regina.ctvnews.ca/swift-current-names-rink-after-sheldon-kennedy-1.4287506
2019	Winner – Season 5 - Battle of the Blades - \$100,000 raised for Canadian Tire Jumpstart Charities https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P-tH6drXHm0
2019	Nov 30, SportsNet with Ron Maclean and Sheldon Kennedy - Discussing sports culture of hazing & abuse https://www.sportsnet.ca/hockey/nhl/conversation-hockey-platform-help-drive-change-canada/ https://www.sportsnet.ca/hockey/nhl/conversation-discussing-sports-culture-hazing-abuse/

Sheldon Kennedy - Major Awards

2007	Canadian Red Cross Caring Award
2012	Scotiabank Humanitarian Award
2012	Honourary Doctorate of Laws, University of the Fraser Valley
2013	Calgary Citizen of the Year
2014	The David Foster Foundation Humanitarian Award
2014	<p>Member of The Order of Canada</p> <p>For “his courageous leadership in raising awareness of childhood sexual abuse and his continued efforts to prevent abuse in schools, sports and communities.”</p> <p>https://www.macleans.ca/news/canada/order-of-canada-welcomes-sheldon-kennedy/</p>
2015	Honourary Doctorate of Laws, University of Calgary
2015	Lincoln Alexander Outstanding Leader Award, University of Guelph
2015	Member of The Order of Manitoba
2016	<p>WHL Alumni Achievement Award to honour “the remarkable humanitarian work of Sheldon Kennedy, whose contributions to society extend well beyond the arena and corporate boardrooms”.</p> <p>http://whl.ca/whl-to-honour-sheldon-kennedy-with-alumni-achievement-award</p>
2016	Alberta Order of Excellence
2016	Honourary Bachelor of Child Studies, Mount Royal University
2016	Honourary Bachelor of Business Administration, Southern Alberta Institute of Technology
2016	Member Swift Current Broncos Hall of Fame
2016	Member Manitoba Hockey Hall of Fame
2016	Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH) Transforming Lives Award https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8FhWv9Ap_S0&feature=youtu.be
2018	<p>Hockey Canada Order of Merit (West)</p> <p>https://www.hockeycanada.ca/en-ca/corporate/awards/hc-awards/recipients/2018</p>
2018	Courage Award, Assiniboine Community College
2018	Honourary Doctor of Laws, University of Regina
2020	<p>Order of Hockey in Canada</p> <p>https://www.hockeycanada.ca/en-ca/news/2020-oohc-class-of-2020-named-to-order</p>
2020	<p>WHL Governor’s Award</p> <p>https://whl.ca/video/whl-announces-sheldon-kennedy-as-recipient-of-whl-governors-award</p>
2020	<p>Order of Sport - Canada’s Sports Hall of Fame – Builder Category</p> <p>Order of Sport - Canada's Sports Hall of Fame</p>
2023	Queen Elizabeth II Platinum Jubilee Medal (Alberta)
2023	Queen Elizabeth II Platinum Jubilee Medal (Saskatchewan)

Sheldon Kennedy - Books

2006	Kennedy writes/publishes - Why I Didn't Say Anything https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/12035817-why-i-didn-t-say-anything
2012	Updated and Republished – <i>Why I Didn't Say Anything</i>
2013	Power Play (Fiction) – Eric Walters – Based on Sheldon Kennedy, “Afterword” written by Sheldon Kennedy
2014	It's Our Game – Celebrating 100 Years of Hockey Canada – Michael McKinley - Chapter 69 “Speak Out” – Features Kennedy and Respect in Sport - Quote; “ <i>Hockey Canada's goal is to help players not only become better athletes but better people. Sheldon Kennedy exemplifies both.</i> ”
2019	Everyday Hockey Heroes - Bob McKenzie and Jim Lang – Commentary by Sheldon Kennedy

Sheldon Kennedy - Movies

1999	The Sheldon Kennedy Story , Gemini Award Winning Movie about Kennedy's life https://seven24films.com/production/the-sheldon-kennedy-story/
2001	Close to Home Documentary (USA) – Produced by Ali Dickson Gray and the Mark McGuire Foundation – follows the lives of sexual assault survivors including Kennedy https://seven24films.com/production/the-sheldon-kennedy-story/
2015	Swift Current Documentary - November 9 th Premiers in Toronto at Rendezvous with Madness Film Festival World's largest Mental Health and Addiction Film Festival – Hosted by Governor General David Johnston Trailer - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y3alMRSlylA Governor General - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l4-1GfsMu-A Premiers on Global TV Nov 21 https://globalnews.ca/video/2352256/swift-current-a-documentary-film-of-sheldon-kennedys-story-premieres-saturday-nov-21st-on-global Live Premieres in Montreal, Ottawa (Parliament Hill), Winnipeg, Swift Current, Calgary and Vancouver Released on Amazon, iTunes, etc. in 2016