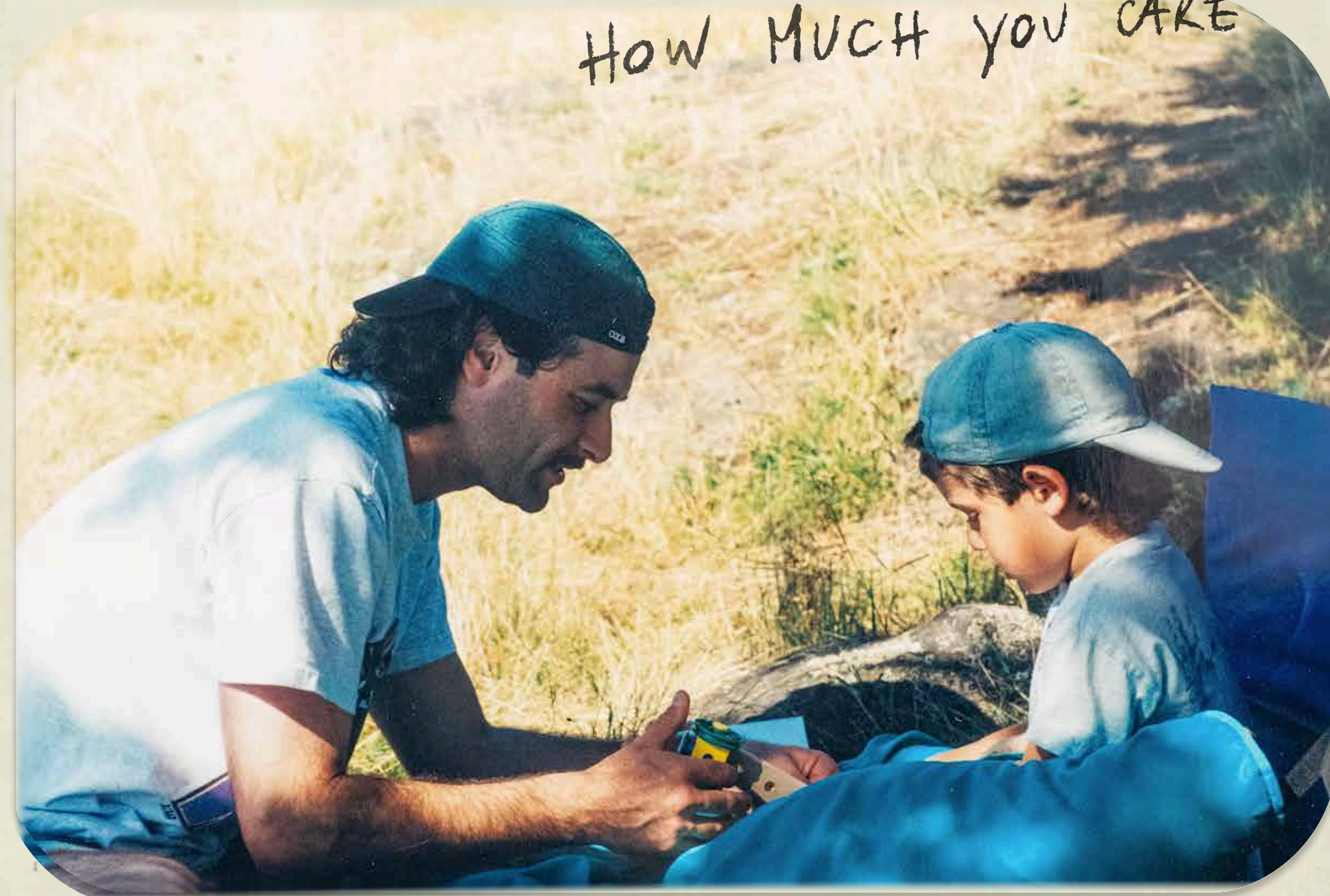


BUDDY CHECK

F R JESSE

NO ONE CARES
HOW MUCH YOU KNOW
UNTIL THEY KNOW
HOW MUCH YOU CARE



THIRD MAN MEDIA PRESENTS A DOCUMENTARY BY MICHAEL ANTHONY "BUDDY CHECK FOR JESSE" PRODUCED WITH THE SUPPORT OF TELUS STORYHIVE
DEVELOPED WITH THE PARTICIPATION OF CREATIVE BC AND THE PROVINCE OF BRITISH COLUMBIA FEATURING STU GERSHMAN, MD CARSON STROM ROBYN VANDERSTEEN DR. BRUCE PINEL
AND JESSE SHORT-GERSHMAN EDITED BY MAXINE HOOD PRINCIPAL PHOTOGRAPHY MICHAEL ANTHONY SECONDARY PHOTOGRAPHY CHRISTIAN WEIBE DIRECTED BY MICHAEL ANTHONY



*Jesse Short-Gershman
with his father, Stu
- Victoria BC*



After losing his incredible son, **Jesse Short-Gershman**, at age 22 to suicide, **Dr. Stu Gershman** made a decision to talk openly about mental health in an unlikely place — the locker room.

L  GLINE

*Buddy Check for Jesse
was founded in honour
of Jesse Short-Gershman*



Jesse

After the losing his brilliant son, **Jesse Short-Gershman**, to suicide at age 22, father and coach **Stu Gershman** made a choice to talk openly about mental health in an unlikely place: the locker room.

What started as yearly coaches chats with his sons' minor hockey team has grown into a **multi-sport mental health awareness program** called *Buddy Check for Jesse*.

Today that program, and their symbolic green tape, reaches over **18,000 youth** on hockey, basketball, soccer, softball, and volleyball teams in BC, Manitoba, and all across Canada.

Jesse's impact and story lives on, helping change the lives of young athletes like **Carson Strom**, parents like **Robyn Vandersteen**, coaches like **Dr. Bruce Pinel**, and even sparking a national dialogue through *Hockey Day in Canada*.

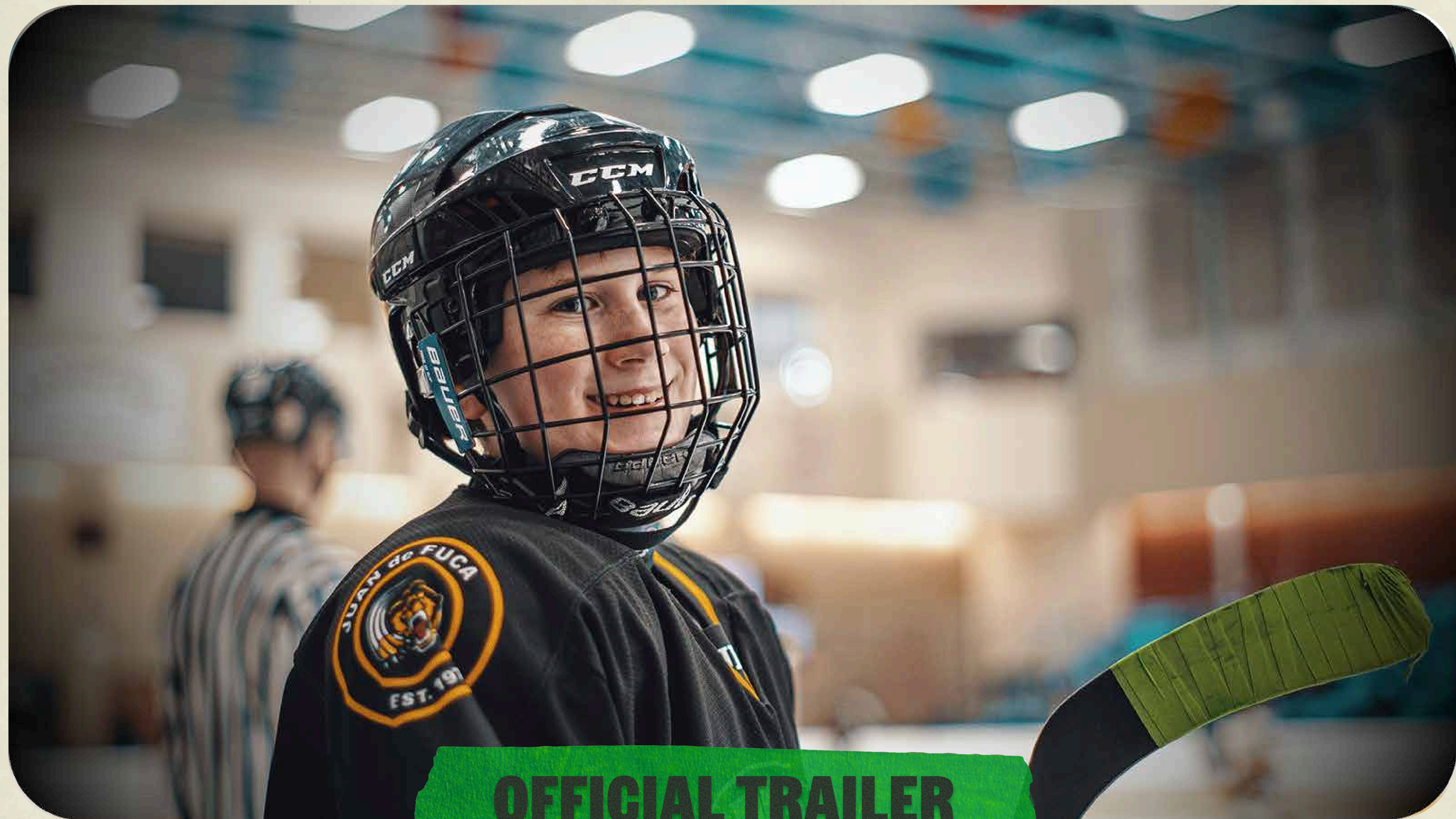
SYN  **PSIS**





'Stu took the loss of his son, turned his grief into a passion to honour him and to perhaps help change the generation to come.'

- Robyn Vandersteen



OFFICIAL TRAILER



Owen Goulet, one of 18,000 youth participating in Buddy Check for Jesse

DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

In late 2020, my brother Darcy fell into a sudden coma. In the hospital, I'd read to him everyday, hoping it would help him wake up. He passed not long after at age 36. *So it goes.*

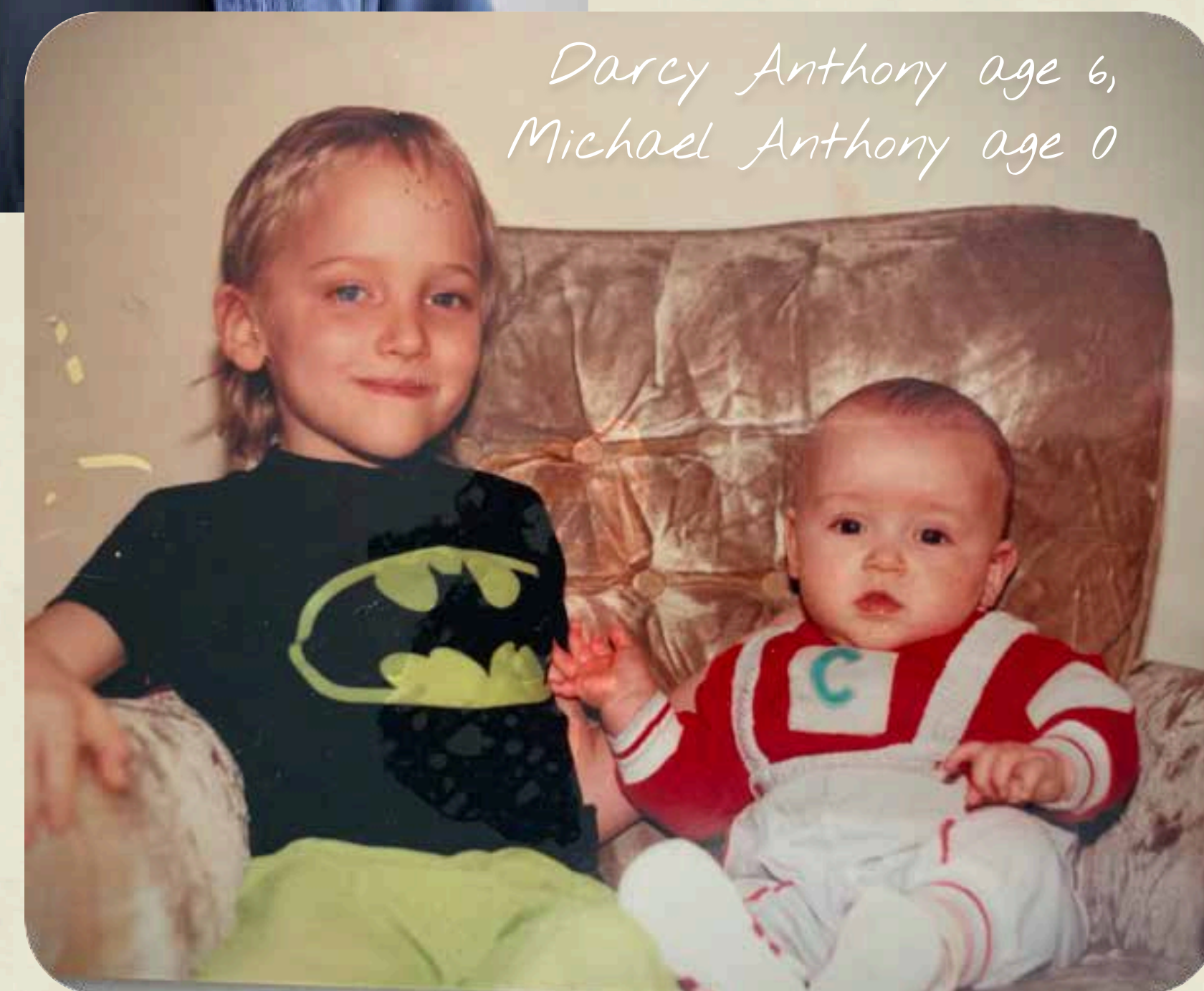
When I miss him, I read out loud to him, as if he was still with us. It's how I keep him in my thoughts.

When I met Stu, I recognised this same instinct: to remember who we've lost by saying their name, telling their stories, and **keeping their memory alive.**

Where I had lost my brother, Stu had lost his son. Instead of retreating into silence, Stu chose to open up; and in doing so, created something **extraordinary.**

Following Stu's journey, I've learned that grief can be a bridge, not just a weight. This film is my way of uncovering that truth, and **honouring Jesse's legacy.**

- Michael Anthony, Director



How do you know if you, a teammate, or another friend is having a problem with their ability to enjoy each and every day?

B: Behaviour.

Is someone you know behaving in an obviously new and unexpected way? Is it unpredictable?

U: Uncomfortable.

Does someone's behaviour or attitude make you feel "unsafe" or uncomfortable?

D: Depressed.

Does someone you know seem depressed, unhappy, withdrawn or irritable more often than not?

D: Different.

Is someone consistently just a little different than what you are used to?

Y: You.

You are not alone. Trust what you are feeling. Other people may feel just like you. Remember you should be your own buddy too.

#BuddyCheckForJesse
BuddyCheckForJesse.com

Suicide is the 2nd leading cause of death in youth

STU GERSHMAN, MD



Stu Gershman is a father, physician, coach, and founder of *Buddy Check for Jesse*. After the loss of his remarkable son, **Jesse**, to suicide at age 22, Stu made a decision not to hide his grief, but to talk about it. Opening up in this way has sent Stu on a life-changing journey that has kickstarted a national conversation.



Jesse Short-Gershman
age 6



CARSON STROM

Carson Strom is an outspoken public speaker on issues of mental health in sport. After being personally helped by the *Buddy Check for Jesse* program, Carson became a youth ambassador at age 17, delivering coach's talks and bringing the message to a new generation.



KODAK GC 400

26

KODAK GC 400

27

KODAK GC 400

27

GC 400

'People my age and even older have reached out and said that this story has changed their life;



'And being a 17 year-old Kid, It really opened my eyes to how important this is.'



*1 in 5 youth experience
a mental illness.*

ROBYN VANDERSTEEN



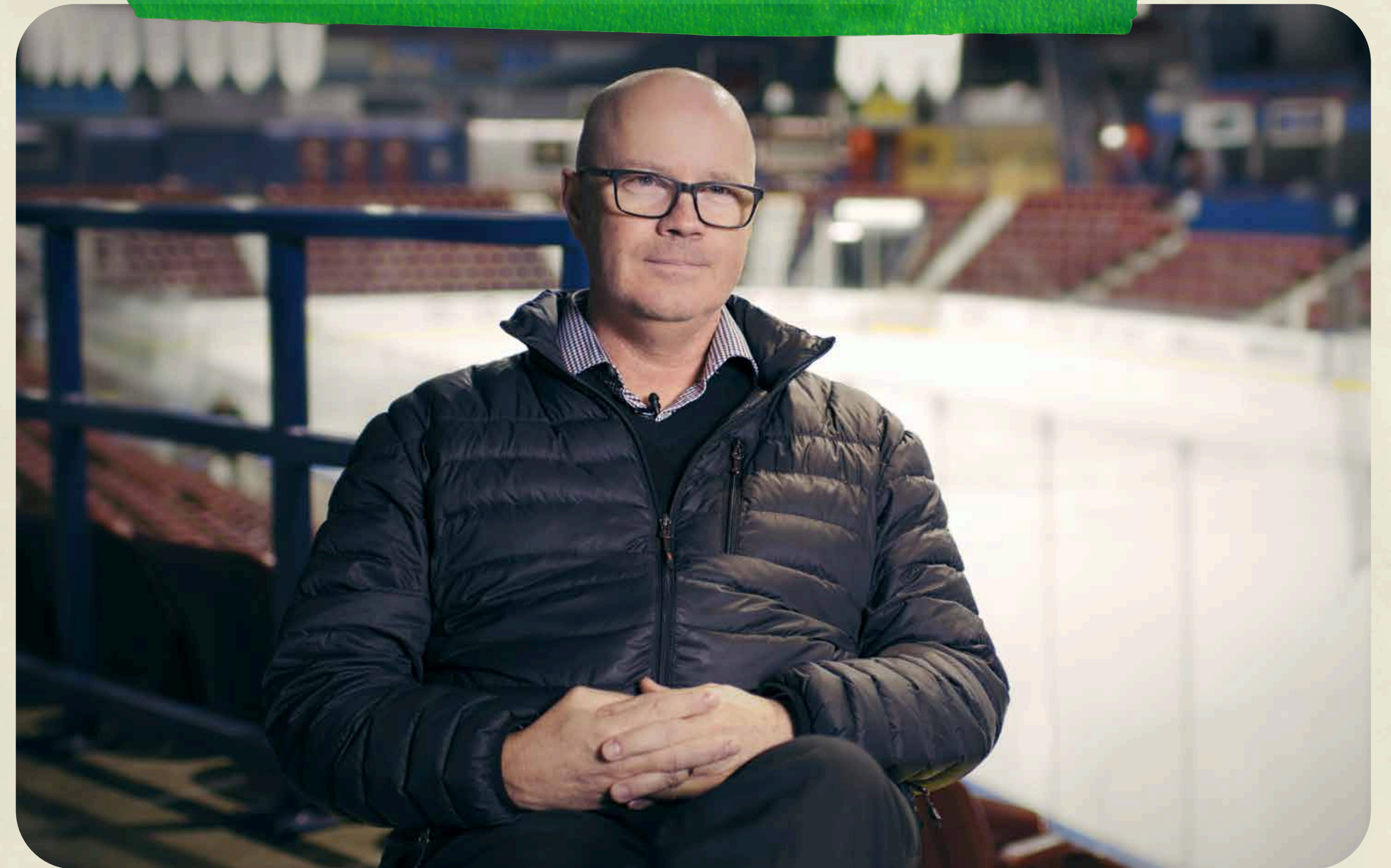
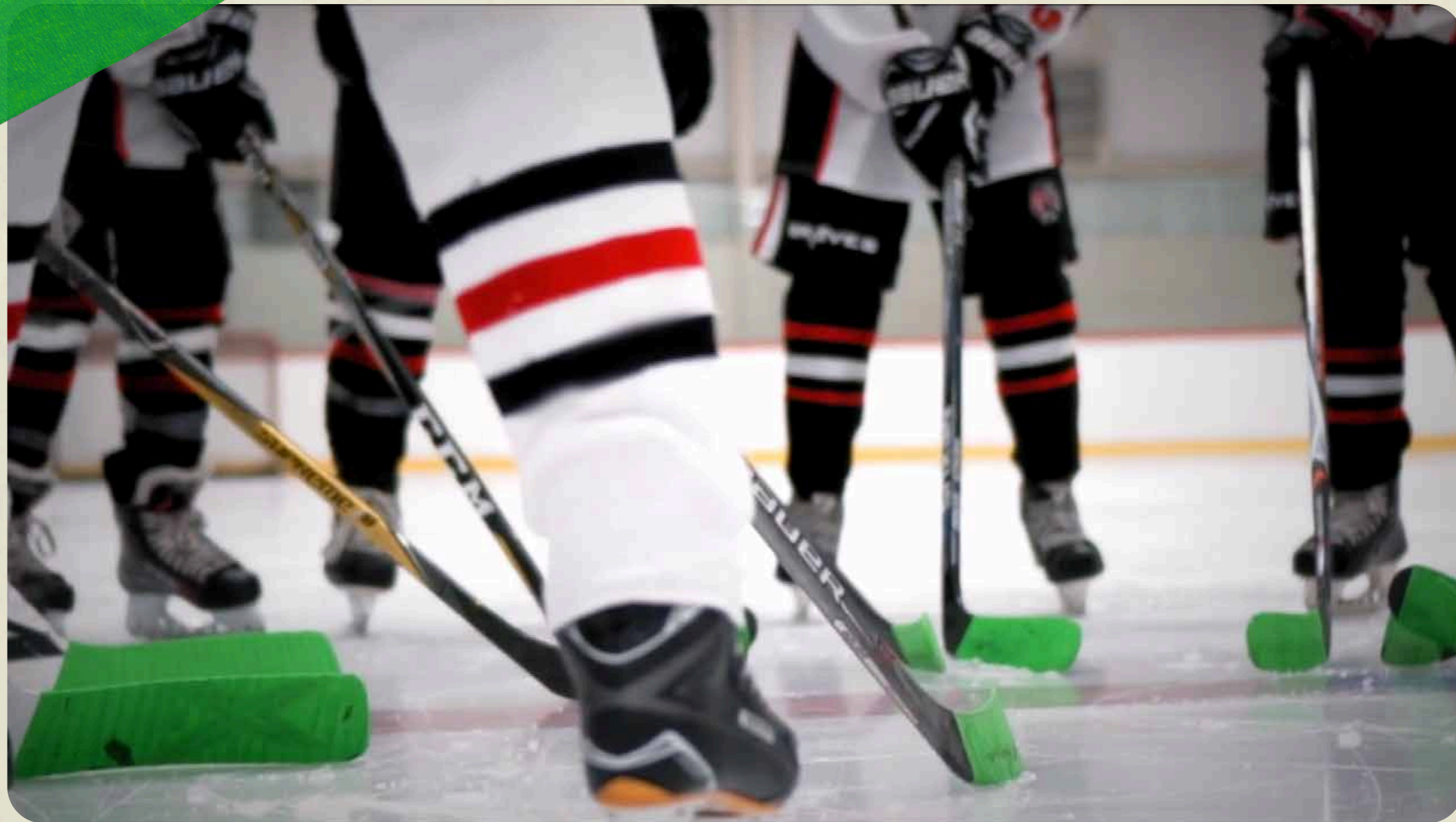
Robyn Vandersteen was a long-time first responder who shares openly about her PTSD diagnosis in the hope of helping others. Inspired by Stu's story, Robyn scaled the *Buddy Check for Jesse* program across Manitoba, starting with minor hockey before branching other sports like soccer, softball, and volleyball. Robyn and her family lost a friend to suicide at the age of 16, and she hopes the program can help her kids and this next generation speak more openly about mental health.



*'If our generation had that language, they would still be here. Probably living full lives. I want the next generation to know differently.'
- Robyn Vandersteen*



DR. BRUCE PINEL



As a clinical counsellor and Ph.D. in sport psychology, **Dr. Bruce Pinel** has worked with some of the most talented athletes in the world, including Team Canada, the Vancouver Canucks, Rugby Canada, and Rowing Canada. Bruce offers his unique insight into mental health, and the value of checking in our loved ones.



Ken Reid and Ron Maclean celebrate Buddy Check for Jesse at Hockey Day in Canada

JESSE SHORT-GERSHMAN



Jesse Short-Gershman was brilliant, talented, and warm. An avid golfer and polymath, he graduated at just 16, won the UVic Governor General's medal, then landed his dream job coding at Google. But Jesse had been struggling with a less visible challenge to his mental health. He died by suicide on October 29, 2014, at the age of 22. We remember him in this film; his relationships with his brothers and sisters, the legacy he leaves and the many things he teaches us to this day.



Jesse, Ashley,
Max and Zak



FESTIVALS & AWARDS

FESTIVAL

DATE

ABBOTSFORD FILM FEST

September 4, 2025

LENSES - VIFF
WINNER 'BEST DOCUMENTARY'

September 23, 2025

CENTRAL ALBERTA FILM FEST

October 1, 2025

DURHAM REGION INT'L FILM FEST

October 24, 2025

NEW WEST INT'L FILM FEST

October 25, 2025





*35% of elite athletes experience
mental health issues*

FILM DETAILS & MEDIA



Title: Buddy Check for Jesse
Genre: Documentary Short
Runtime: 29 minutes 24 seconds
or 17 minutes 1 seconds
Ex. Formats: 2K DCP / Digital File
Frame Rate: 23.796
Aspect Ratio: 1.78:1 (16:9)
Completion: May 2025
Language: English
Country: Canada

Media Folder (Stills, Trailers, Press Releases)

Contact: Michael Anthony, Director
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[Instagram.com/buddycheckforjesse](https://www.instagram.com/buddycheckforjesse)





In loving memory of Jesse Short-Gershman

THANK YOU

