

## I Can't Believe We Made It! "

If you lived as a child in the 40's, 50's, 60's or 70's, looking back, it's hard to believe that we have lived as long as we have...As children, we would ride in cars with no seat belts or air bags. Our cots were covered with bright coloured lead-based paint. We had no childproof lids on medicine bottles, doors, or cupboards, and when we rode our bikes we had no helmets.

We drank water from the garden hose and not from a bottle. Horrors.

We would spend hours building go-carts out of scraps and then ride down the hill, only to find out we forgot the brakes. After running into the bushes a few times we learned to solve the problem.

We would leave home in the morning and play all day, as long as we were back when the streetlights came on. No one was able to reach us all day.

No mobile phones. Unthinkable.

We got cut and broke bones and broke teeth, and there were no law suits from these accidents. They were accidents. No one was to blame, but us. Remember accidents?

We had fights and punched each other and got black and blue and learned to get over it.

We ate cakes, bread and butter, and drank cordial, but we were never overweight... we were always outside playing. We shared one drink with four friends, from one bottle and no one died from this.

We did not have Playstations, Nintendo 64, X-Boxes, video games, 65 Channels on pay TV, video tape movies, surround sound, personal mobile phones, Personal Computers, Internet chat rooms ... we had friends. We went outside and found them.

We rode bikes or walked to a friend's home and knocked on the door, or rung the bell, or just walked in and talked to them. Imagine such a thing. Without asking a parent! By ourselves! out there in the cold cruel world! Without a guardian - how did we do it?

We made up games with sticks and tennis balls, and ate worms, and although we were told it would happen, we did not put out very many eyes, nor did the worms live inside us forever.

Footy and netball had tryouts and not everyone made the team. Those who didn't, had to learn to deal with disappointment.....

Some students weren't as smart as others so they failed a grade and were held back to repeat the same grade. Tests were not adjusted for any reason.

Our actions were our own. Consequences were expected. No one to hide behind. The idea of a parent bailing us out if we broke a law was unheard of. They actually sided with the law - imagine that!

This generation has produced some of the best risk-takers and problem solvers and inventors, ever. The past 50 years has been an explosion of innovation and new ideas. We had freedom, failure, success and responsibility, and we learned how to deal with it all.

**And you're one of them. Congratulations!**

Please pass this on to others who have had the luck to grow up as kids, before lawyers and government regulated our lives..... for our own good...."

**Jerry O'Connell**