



United Nations Association in Canada
Association canadienne pour les Nations Unies

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

What Canadian kids have to say about their health as they prep for back to School

Thursday, September 7th, 2006, Ottawa, Canada, The United Nations Association in Canada (UNA-Canada) through its trailblazing Healthy Children, Healthy Communities (HC²) programme are asking children (9-12) what their perceptions of their own health are. Research from this project will reveal the links that children are making between their health and various social factors in communities across Canada. The HC² project has found initial findings based on their Child Health Perceptions Survey.

The data from the first stage of this survey will serve as a resource before it is disseminated nationally across Canadian schools in over 10 communities across the country in the coming months. These communities are: Antigonish, NS; Montreal, PQ; Ottawa, ON; Peterborough, ON; Calgary, AB; Yellowknife, NWT; Vancouver, BC; Castlegar, BC; Kelowna, BC; Prince George, BC; Terrace, BC;

Some of the initial survey findings include:

- **92.1% of students believed that being bullied was harmful to their health**
- **98.5% of students agreed that cigarette smoke was harmful to their health**
- **76.4% of students believed that feeling sad a lot of time was harmful to health, yet less than 40% had received information on depression and emotions**
- **66% of students believe being poor was harmful to their health**
- **59.6% believe having a parent unable to find employment is harmful to their health**
- **57.2% of students believed that not knowing how to read was harmful to their health**
- **Only 54.7% of students report having received information on sexuality**

The next phase of the project will consist of a second-tier, larger national launch of the Child Health Perceptions Survey and a series of high-level roundtables on the Social Determinants of Health and children which will reveal the commonalities and differences that exist across a diversity of communities in Canada.

Healthy Children, Healthy Communities (HC²) Through community workshops and a Child Health Perceptions Survey, children (aged 9-12) and child health stakeholders exchange



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knowledge about social factors that impact health. In their communities, participants create plans to ensure that their priorities are included in health initiatives in their schools and communities, provincially, nationally, and internationally.

UNA-Canada is a national charitable organization celebrating its landmark 60th anniversary. As a ‘think and do’ organization, UNA-Canada supports a network of fifteen volunteer branches with a National office in Ottawa and Western professional office in Vancouver. Our mandate is to engage Canadians in the work of the UN and the critical global issues which affect us all, through innovative projects, policy research, and on-going communications with Canadians.

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