



MEDIA RELEASE

Healthy Schools Challenge to Engage the Creativity of Students

Toronto, December 15, 2006 – The Ontario Healthy Schools Coalition (OHSC) congratulates the Ministries of Education and Health Promotion on their newly announced Healthy Schools Challenge. The Ontario Healthy Schools Coalition is supported by the Ontario Public Health Association (OPHA).

“The Healthy Schools Challenge shows a clear commitment to engaging Ontario’s youth in developing healthy minds and bodies,” said Carol MacDougall, co-chair of the Ontario Healthy Schools Coalition. “Equally important, it helps schools become the healthiest learning environments possible.”

The OHSC is pleased that this announcement recognizes the creativity of students and the important contribution they can make in identifying issues of concern among their peers, and actions that would best address these concerns.

The challenge also recognizes the important work that many schools are already doing to promote health, and encourages all schools to take steps in this area. While physical activity and healthy eating are priority issues province-wide, this initiative enables schools to focus as well on critical issues such as bullying, mental health, substance use and abuse, personal safety and injury prevention, and healthy growth and development.

“It is encouraging when two ministries such as Education and Health Promotion work together to improve the health of our young people,” said Dr. Garry Aslanyan, President of OPHA. “The Ministries clearly understand the need for partnerships, and OPHA and public health staff throughout the province look forward to working with the government, parents, students and educators on this important challenge.”

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Media Contact: Susan Sperling, Ontario Public Health Association, 416-367-3313 ext 230