



For Immediate Release
Wednesday, January 19, 2011

THE SANDBOX PROJECT CELEBRATES SUCCESS OF INAUGURAL CONFERENCE: ACTION THROUGH COLLABORATION

The Sandbox Project Inaugural Conference will foster collaboration and knowledge sharing to drive action in areas of children and youth mental health, injury prevention, healthy weights and the environment

Mississauga, ON - Today, The Sandbox Project's Inaugural Annual Conference, titled "Action Through Collaboration", brought together academic, industry, not-for-profit and government leaders who, over the course of the day, collaborated to address key health issues impacting Canadian children and youth. Expert speakers including, Dr. Judith Bossé, Associate Assistant Deputy Minister of the Public Health Agency of Canada, Dr. Stan Kutcher, internationally renowned children's mental health expert, nutritionist and author Rose Reisman, and Olympic champion kayaker Adam van Koeeverden.

The conference of over 250 participants was hosted by Microsoft Canada at the company's Canadian headquarters in Mississauga, Ontario.

"Children's health is a pillar of Microsoft Canada's Citizenship program and as such we were happy to host this important event," said Gavin Thompson, Director, Corporate Citizenship, Microsoft Canada. "Through initiatives like Child Life Interactive Computers for Kids (CLICK), Microsoft is committed to working with health professionals in children's hospitals across the country, providing technology that enables kids to stay connected, brings fun into the hospital and inspires them to think creatively."

"Ensuring the health and wellness of our children is more than simply the right thing to do; it is critically important for our long-term well-being as a country. Bringing leaders from all sectors together, "to play together" in the same sandbox, is crucial to driving social behaviour change and generating good public policy for Canadian children and parents." said Dr. Kellie Leitch, a paediatric, orthopaedic surgeon at The Hospital for Sick Children and founder of The Sandbox Project.

The Sandbox Project will launch dynamic project teams with students, representatives from government, industry and academia to investigate the opportunities brought forth during the conference. Having researched these healthcare issues over a 12-month period, project teams will Return to the 2012 Sandbox Project Conference with a plan to implement these policy ideas and best practices across Canada.



“Injury remains the leading cause of death and serious injury for Canadian children. The Sandbox Project's collaborative, action oriented approach to injury prevention may be the single most important opportunity to work with all sectors to improve the safety of our children, and the health and well being of future generations, stated Dr. Anne Snowden, Professor at the Odette School of Business and leading researcher in children’s injury prevention.

Registered Nutritionist and author of *The Art of Living Well*, Rose Reisman commented that, “The Sandbox Project is one of Canada’s true endeavours to discuss the seriousness of child obesity and formulate concrete and practical solutions to this chronic and critical problem.”

The Sandbox Project fosters collaboration among leading Canadian experts, translating that knowledge through the development of interactive tools, social media and best practices by building partnerships between parents, academic leaders, industry, and governments to help make Canada the healthiest place on earth for children and youth to grow up.

“Focused, evidence driven investment in improving the lives of children and their families is a fundamental action that Canada must take to improve our civic, social and economic present and future. We owe it to our young people, our children and our grandchildren to do all that we can to try and make sure that the world that they inherit is worth inheriting, concluded Dr. Stan Kutcher, Sun Life Financial Chair in Adolescent Mental Health.

The Sandbox Project was created to respond to recent and startling research reported by Dr. Kellie Leitch in her report “Reaching for the Top” on behalf of the Government of Canada in 2007/2008. The report can be found at http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/hl-vs/alt_formats/hpb-dgps/pdf/child-enfant/2007-advisor-conseillere/advisor-conseillere-eng.pdf.

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