



The Sandbox Project
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MEDIA RELEASE
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The Sandbox Project hosts 3rd national conference to improve health for young Canadians

TORONTO, Ont. (January 17, 2013) — Building a better future for Canada's next generation took the spotlight at a national conference featuring some of the country's leading experts in child and youth health.

The Sandbox Project hosted its 3rd national conference and workshop on Thursday, January 17th, 2013 at TELUS House in Toronto, creating a venue for experts and conference participants to work together on strategies to improve health outcomes for young people throughout Canada.

The conference provided a launch pad for a new Young Canadians Round Table on Health, which will use comprehensive research, education and awareness to help The Sandbox Project achieve its goal of making Canada the healthiest place in the world for young people to grow up.

"The ideas and strategies generated during this conference will form the groundwork for national advocacy initiatives, fundraising plans, partnerships and new community programming that will help improve the lives of young Canadians in every province and territory," said Christine Hampson, President and CEO of The Sandbox Project.

Keynote speakers at the conference who will provide perspectives on child and youth health include:

- Dr. Kellie Leitch, MP for Simcoe-Grey, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development and a pediatric orthopedic surgeon, who will give an update on *Reaching for the Top: A Report by the Advisor on Healthy Children and Youth*;
- Hon. Lisa Raitt, Minister of Labour, who will discuss the health and safety of young workers; and
- Hon. Laurel Broten, Ontario Minister of Education, Children and Youth Services, who will speak about educating the mind, body and soul for the 21st Century.

"The Government of Canada remains focused on creating jobs, growth and long-term prosperity and we understand the vital link between safe and productive workplaces and our economy," said Minister Raitt. "By coming together at events like today's to share insights on young workers, we will continue to build on our successes and maintain Canada's reputation as a great place to work and do business."

"This conference is a wonderful opportunity to bring people together who share a commitment to the health, well-being and success of our children," added Ontario Minister of Education Laurel Broten. "Whether they are experts in bullying prevention, concussion management or mental health issues, everyone here is doing their part to improve the well-being of students and ensuring all of our students have the opportunity to succeed."

During the morning plenary session, leadership of The Sandbox Project provided updates on progress made in several key areas of research and advocacy over the past year.

Afternoon working sessions enabled participants to help develop action plans outlining innovative solutions to problems and challenges affecting child and youth health. Session topics included: increasing health and safety of



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young workers, preventing and reducing suicide and diabetes among Aboriginal youth, building strong and inclusive communities and increasing the uptake of health living tools and programs.

“Taking action to improve the health of Canada’s young people accomplishes two goals — it makes their individual lives better, but it also helps make the country better as a whole,” said Hampson. “Canada’s overall health and our long-term economic growth demand that we have a healthy and productive workforce, including our young people.”

To ensure Canada remains on a level playing field with global competitors, The Sandbox Project has taken part in this year’s federal pre-budget submission process and has proposed that the government invest \$5 million in seed funding over five years to create an independent research-based think tank dedicated to driving change in the social and physical behaviour of young people aimed at helping them sharpen Canada’s competitive edge. To view the full submission, please visit:

http://www.parl.gc.ca/Content/HOC/Committee/411/FINA/WebDoc/WD5709773/411_FINA_PBC2012_Briefs/SandboxProjectE.pdf

About The Sandbox Project:

The vision of The Sandbox Project is to make Canada the healthiest place on Earth for children and youth to grow up. It is focused on improving children and youth health outcomes with respect to injury prevention, growing healthy bodies, mental health and the environment. For more information, visit <http://sandboxproject.ca>

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