

## Communications Office

Peterborough County-City Health Unit  
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[www.pcchu.ca](http://www.pcchu.ca)



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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# Giving You Something to Think About

## *Health Unit Launches iThink Campaign to Debunk Unhealthy Marketing Tactics*

Peer leaders of the Peterborough County-City Health Unit launched the iThink campaign today to help local youth make connections between branded advertising and their health.

"Everyday young people are bombarded with brands and advertisements, but don't realize how much impact it potentially has on their health," said Keith Beecroft, Youth Development Worker with the Health Unit. "Advertisers and marketers portray their products as part of a normal lifestyle, when in reality much of what is conveyed is not always healthy."

The iThink campaign was launched to denormalize big industries by showing youth the other side of using their products. For example, alcohol advertising portrays drinking as a good time, but never shows the potential negative impacts, such as injuries, lost productivity and cancer. Also, tobacco companies continually use celebrities that smoke as a way to influence youth to use their products. Likewise, fast food companies often advertise "value menus" and "healthy choices", but do not show the impact of higher fat, higher sodium food choices or the true cost of portions larger than the recommended serving sizes in Canada's Food Guide.

"The iThink campaign is not about saying no, as much as it is about asking why. Why are name brands mentioned in song lyrics? Why are certain products featured in television shows? Why are some lifestyles glamourized over others?" said Carley Gilbert, student peer leader. "We are encouraging people to be more aware of the world around them and understand the link between the popular messages they receive and the health choices they make."

"Research shows that engaged youth are resilient youth, and this campaign empowers youth to take charge of their health and well-being," said Dr. Rosana Pellizzari, Medical Officer of Health. "The iThink campaign is an innovative way to generate discussions addressing media and its impact on a young person's health and wellbeing."

The iThink campaign uses a number of social media, such as a dedicated Facebook

NEWS RELEASE

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page and YouTube channel where visitors can watch videos, view photo galleries, and engage in conversation through posted comments.



To access iThink on Facebook, search "iThink"



The iThink YouTube video is available by clicking:

<http://www.youtube.com/SpeakUpSpeakOutPTBO>

The video is also accessible from the Health Unit's website [www.pcchu.ca](http://www.pcchu.ca) .

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