

Communications Office
Peterborough County-City Health Unit
10 Hospital Drive
Peterborough, ON K9J 8M1
(705) 743-1000, ext. 391
www.pcchu.ca



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Local Campers Explore Healthy Choices in Tobacco Takedown

Health Unit Summer Camp Program Combines Health Messages and Fun

Today dozens of local youth at the YMCA day camp will partake in creative activities like "Tobacco Takedown" and "Protect Your Egg" to encourage healthy lifestyle choices as part of the Peterborough County-City Health Unit's summer camp program.

Developed by the Health Unit's youth employees known as Speak Up! Speak Out! (SUSO), this initiative will engage more than 200 young people throughout Peterborough County and City in issues concerning physical activity and their overall health.

"The literature shows that engaged youth become resilient youth who are then able to make good decisions about their health," said Alex Stinson, a Peer Leader with SUSO. "We developed these summer activities as a way to get youth interacting with health topics that they may otherwise find uninteresting."

The Health Unit has been exploring the merits of asset based programming for our youth initiatives, building on the strengths that young people already possess. The Summer Camp Program is in line with this approach, which is also known to foster resiliency in young people.

The camp features activities such as:

- **"Tobacco-Takedown"** – an obstacle course that challenges participants to test their lung capacity
- **"Divide your Dinner"** – an activity that helps campers understand the importance of good nutrition and a balanced diet
- **"Protect your Egg"** – an injury prevention game that teaches the importance of wearing protective gear when engaging in physical activity, such as a helmet.
- **"Mosquito Swat"** – a West Nile Virus prevention game that teaches campers about protecting themselves from mosquitoes.

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NEWS RELEASE

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Through the summer camp program participants will better understand the importance and benefits of making healthy choices, focusing on the following key messages:

- Using cigarettes and smokeless tobacco diminishes athletic ability.
- Eat healthy, think healthy— helping you make healthy food choices.
- Head injuries can cause brain damage, which can affect your quality of life.
- Mosquitoes can carry West Nile Virus.

Speak Up! Speak Out! is a group of youth who work out of the Peterborough County-City Health Unit, advocating for other youth and encouraging healthy lifestyles by working under a peer-to-peer model. SUSO is funded by the Ministry of Health Promotion and Sport. The Peer Leaders participate in a variety of youth activities in Peterborough City and County, while also creating their own events and campaigns to promote healthy choices among their peers.

For further information, please contact:

Keith Beecroft
Youth Development Worker
Peterborough County-City Health Unit
(705) 743-1000, ext. 238