



Boys & Girls Clubs of Canada
Clubs Garçons & Filles du Canada

MEDIA RELEASE

Boys and Girls Clubs make After-School time for Canadian children safer and enriching, thanks to a \$300,000 donation from Sears Canada

30 Clubs across Canada will each receive a \$10,000 grant to expand after-school programs

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: MARKHAM, ON (October 10, 2007) – After the school bell rings, the majority of children and youth in Canada aren't heading home to a parent waiting to greet them. For many kids, the after-school options are hanging out, unsupervised, at the local mall, school yard or in the street. Thanks to a \$300,000 donation from Sears Canada, Boys and Girls Clubs across Canada will be able to provide a safe, fun and enriching after-school alternative to the streets for thousands of children and youth.

Thirty Boys and Girls Clubs across the country will receive a \$10,000 Sears After-School Enhancement Grant for the 2007/08 school year. With this grant, Clubs will be able to enhance existing after-school programs, which comprise a wide range of activities including: dance; technology learning; homework clubs; cooking; native drumming; sports; and more. Clubs can also use the grants to create new after-school programs and expand existing programming to meet the needs of more local children and youth.

"After-school is a critical period where young people who have nowhere safe to go are more likely to become involved in risky, destructive or criminal behaviours," said Pam Jolliffe, President and CEO, Boys and Girls Clubs of Canada. "And with 80 percent of Canadian parents working at this time of day, bullying, gangs, drugs and other negative influences are very real dangers. Kids need positive places to go where, with the help of caring adult mentors, they can participate in activities that assist with developing their personal, social, physical and academic abilities. That's what Boys and Girls Clubs after-school programs offer."

According to Statistics Canada's most recent crime figures, the crime rate among youth aged 12 to 17 in Canada increased by three percent in 2006, the first reported increase since 2003. The rate of young people accused of homicide was also the highest since 1961 last year.

"Without the Club, I don't know where I would be. I know a lot of kids from the community who don't attend the program that are constantly getting into trouble after-school," said one after-school program participant, age 12. "There are so many bad influences around. All kids should attend a Boys and Girls Club in their community, so they won't be tempted to get into drugs, fights or other bad behaviours."

"Sears Canada is proud of its more than 40-year history of providing help to children, youth and families through its support of Boys and Girls Clubs of Canada," said Dene Rogers, President and CEO, Sears Canada. "Our commitment to Boys and Girls Club after-school programs is giving children and youth the chance to develop healthy behaviours and attitudes, and valuable skills for life that will enable them to succeed at school, at home and in the broader community."

Since 2001, Sears Canada has contributed over \$1.8 M to enhancing Boys and Girls Club after-school programs. These programs have helped thousands of children and youth, especially those in disadvantaged communities, gain access to opportunities that are enabling them to build confidence and skills, overcome personal challenges and achieve their individual potential. Local media events will take place at Boys and Girls Clubs in communities across the country throughout October to highlight how the Sears After-School Enhancement Grants will be used to benefit local children and youth this year.

More...

Boys and Girls Clubs in the following communities will receive a 2007 After-School Enhancement Grant:

AB - Camrose, Diamond Valley, Edson, Hinton, Slave Lake, Strathcona County

BC - Cranbrook, Okanagan Valley

MB - Thompson

NB - Charlotte County, Dieppe, Fredericton, Havelock, Miramichi

NL - Gander, Norris Arm

NS - Dartmouth, Spryfield

ON - East Scarborough, Kawartha Lakes, Kingston, Pembroke, Thunder Bay, Toronto Kiwanis, York Region

PEI - Summerside

QC - LaSalle, Longueuil

SK - Battlefords, Yorkton

About Boys and Girls Clubs of Canada

Boys and Girls Clubs of Canada is a leading, national provider of programs to children and youth that support the healthy physical, educational and social development of close to 200,000 young people and their families each year. In 700 community locations across Canada, clubs offer after-school programs in physical recreation, technology, the arts, literacy, personal growth and more. Many clubs also provide meals, emergency shelter, family support programs and other support to children, youth and families at risk. Boys and Girls Clubs have been helping young Canadians to discover, develop and achieve their potential for over 100 years. To learn more, visit www.bgccan.com.

About Sears Canada

Sears Canada is a multi-channel retailer with a network of 196 corporate stores, 179 dealer stores, 61 home improvement showrooms, over 1,800 catalogue merchandise pick-up locations, 106 Sears Travel offices and a nationwide home maintenance, repair, and installation network. The Company also publishes Canada's most extensive general merchandise catalogue and offers shopping online at www.sears.ca.

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