



Boys and Girls Clubs of Canada  
Clubs Garçons et Filles du Canada

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **Boys and Girls Clubs of Canada Says “Thanks a Million Sears!” For Million Dollar Donation to Charitable Youth Organization in 2003**

**MARKHAM, ON (June 4, 2004)** – Thousands of children and youth in communities across Canada are gaining access to a variety of quality social development and recreational programs, thanks to the donation of over \$1-million by Sears Canada (TSX: SCC) to Boys and Girls Clubs of Canada (BGCC) in 2003. Sears, through its community investment program, Sears Young Futures, provided generous support to BGCC and its 101 member clubs throughout Canada, to help them expand their capacity as leading providers of after-school programs for children of all ages from coast to coast.

This significant contribution marks the first year that Sears annual contribution has topped \$1-million in a long-standing partnership between the 103 year-old national youth-serving organization and Sears Canada, who has supported BGCC for the last 38 years.

“Sears outstanding legacy of support to our organization and the company’s growing commitment is invaluable to our clubs,” said Pam Jolliffe, National Executive Director, Boys and Girls Clubs of Canada. “Sears and its associates and customers across Canada are ensuring that Boys and Girls Clubs have the ability to reach out to Canadian children and youth who are in need of a safe, positive place to go when the school bell rings at the end of the school day. You don’t often find a partner who has this depth and length of commitment,” added Jolliffe. “We feel very fortunate to have Sears whole-hearted support for the safety and positive development of kids.”

As part of Sears major contribution to Boys and Girls Clubs last year, Sears Young Futures awarded 30 clubs in communities from Gander, Newfoundland to Victoria, British Columbia each with a \$10,000 After-School Enhancement Grant. Since 2001, 83 Boys and Girls Clubs have received After-School Enhancement Grants from Sears Young Futures.

These grants help clubs provide and enhance a variety of social and recreational after-school programs for local children and youth, which are proven to have a positive impact on children’s physical and emotional health, peer relationships and academic performance. Clubs are currently using the grants to expand after-school activities and extend their reach to roughly 50,000 at-risk children and youth during the current school year.

In addition, Sears Young Futures sponsored four Youth Forums in Halifax, Toronto, Calgary and Vancouver, where Boys and Girls Club youth from each city gathered to discuss community issues negatively affecting youth such as gangs, youth violence, bullying and drugs. The youth then identified and recommended positive solutions. The youth then presented these recommendations to key decision makers in each city.

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Sears also provided tremendous support to Boys and Girls Clubs through local charitable partnerships between 39 clubs and 87 Sears stores in a number of Canadian communities. Through a variety of fundraising initiatives, Sears associates and their customers in these communities supported a broad range of club activities that benefit children and youth.

“Sears supports Boys and Girls Clubs of Canada because we believe in the importance of providing children with a safe, constructive place to go after-school, where they can take advantage of supportive activities which promote their personal growth” said Mark A. Cohen, Chairman and CEO, Sears Canada. “Boys and Girls Clubs across Canada are dedicated to helping all children and their families and we think this is a mission that is very worthy of our support.”

### **About Boys and Girls Clubs of Canada**

Boys and Girls Clubs of Canada (BGCC) is a leading national youth organization established over 100 years ago. BGCC’s network of 101 community-based clubs help children and youth reach their full potential, by providing safe, fun and stimulating recreational, educational and social development programs. Club programs aim to build skills, develop character and foster self-esteem in children and youth, so that they can become healthy, contributing adults. Clubs currently offer services to 150,000 children and youth in 429 communities nationwide. Please visit [www.bgccan.com](http://www.bgccan.com) for more details.

### **About Sears Canada**

Sears Canada has been a strong supporter of BGCC for close to 40 years. Sears Young Futures, the community investment program of Sears Canada, supports organizations that provide enriching after-school programming that inspires children and youth to believe in themselves. Additional funds are raised through in-store campaigns and customer donations of Sears Club points. For the 5<sup>th</sup> year in a row, Sears Young Futures has contributed over \$3 million to after-school providers across Canada.

Sears Canada, the retailer with the most extensive multi-channel network in the country, began serving customers in 1953. The Company has 48,000 associates and, in an independent consumer survey, ranks first in trust, respect, and quality products and services. There is a Sears location within a 10-minute drive of 93% of Canadians, and Sears is dedicated to providing them with quality merchandise and exceptional service coast to coast through its 122 department stores, 47 Sears Home stores, over 2,200 catalogue merchandise pick-up locations, 147 dealer stores, 12 outlet stores, 51 floor covering centres, 110 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](http://www.sears.ca).

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### **For more information, please contact:**

Carol Davies  
National Communications  
Boys and Girls Clubs of Canada  
(905) 477-7272  
[cdavies@bgccan.com](mailto:cdavies@bgccan.com)