



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

MEDIA RELEASE

Boys and Girls Clubs across Canada make a lasting positive impact on generations of Canadian children and youth

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: (Toronto, ON, July 7, 2005) – According to a new Ipsos-Reid survey conducted on behalf of Boys and Girls Clubs of Canada and financially supported by Sears Canada, 81% of Boys and Girls Clubs alumni say the Club had a very positive impact on their life and two thirds (66%) say their Boys and Girls Club experiences continue to have a lasting positive impact on their life today.

For over a century, Boys and Girls Clubs in Canada have provided children and youth with safe, supportive and affordable places to discover, develop and achieve their potential. At Boys and Girls Clubs children and youth can experience new opportunities, overcome barriers, build positive relationships, and develop confidence and skills for life. Young people participate in fun, challenging club programs and activities that encourage healthy living, personal growth, learning, and community involvement.

More than 9 out of 10 alumni agree that their involvement with the Club has made them better off today (97%), provided them with valuable life skills (95%), and helped them learn to be a leader (96%). Many also acknowledged that their involvement in Boys and Girls Club activities helped them avoid trouble with the law (73%) and really saved their life (69%).

“Whenever I stop to think about who I am, my thoughts turn to the Boys and Girls Club in the east end of Hamilton. Without that Club, my life would have been entirely different. Club leaders gave me the help and support that every child needs to feel safe and secure. They encouraged me to stay in school, to try new things, to go to university and reach for my goals,” said Dr. James J. Rice, Professor, School of Social Work, McMaster University.

Reflecting on their own experiences, 91% of respondents strongly agree that Boys and Girls Clubs of Canada contributes in a meaningful way to the well being of children, is an organization you can trust (89%), has a positive impact on communities (88%), listens to and cares about the needs of children (88%), and is a valuable organization providing youth with essential skills (79%).

The study revealed that Boys and Girls Club leaders make a considerable impact on the lives of the children in their care and the majority of alumni (93%) credit a particular staff member for developing, helping and supporting them. Alumni acknowledge that Boys and Girls Club leaders played a very important role in the following areas: helping members to have fun (89%), learning leadership skills (73%), developing self-confidence (67%) and self-esteem as a child (65%), teaching them how to get along with others (65%), knowing right from wrong (64%) and for being someone to talk to (61%).

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“These results are a tribute to the thousands of local staff and volunteers who have dedicated their lives to supporting children and youth, believing in each child’s potential and providing them with opportunities many of us take for granted,” said Pam Jolliffe, National Executive Director, Boys and Girls Clubs of Canada.

Supporting the obvious real impacts the Club had on lives of its members, the large majority of alumni (84%) would definitely recommend joining a Boys and Girls Club to parents or children in the future.

“The results of this survey reinforce our reasons for supporting the Boys & Girls Clubs of Canada,” said Scott Marshall, Senior Vice-President and Operations Officer, Sears Canada. “Besides keeping our children and youth safe during the after-school hours, the programs offered by the Clubs have a very long-term and positive impact on the lives of thousands of Canadians.”

The national study, supported by Sears Canada, involved telephone interviews with 343 Boys and Girls Club alumni from across Canada and was conducted by Ipsos-Reid in April and May 2005. One third (33%) of the sample were club members prior to 1980, 39% from 1980-1999, and 28% from the year 2000 or later. Average number of years as a member was 8.7. These results are considered accurate to within ± 5.3 percentage points, 19 times out of 20. For full tabular results of the study, visit www.ipsos.ca .

About Boys and Girls Clubs of Canada

Boys and Girls Clubs of Canada is a leading provider of programs to children and youth that support the healthy physical, educational and social development of more than 150,000 young people and their families each year. In 700 community locations across Canada, clubs offer after-school programs in physical recreation, technology, the arts, personal growth and more. Many clubs also provide meals, emergency shelter, family support programs and other supports 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 has been a strong supporter of Boys and Girls Clubs of Canada for over 40 years. *Sears Young Futures*, the Sears Canada community investment program, supports organizations that provide enriching after-school programs for children and youth across Canada. Along with corporate contributions, funds are raised through in-store campaigns and customer donations of Sears Club points. Since 1999, Sears has contributed over \$3 million annually to Canadian charities. In 2004, the company contributed over \$4 million to after-school program providers across Canada.

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Media Contacts:

Carol Davies
Manager, National Communications
Boys and Girls Clubs of Canada
(905) 477-7272
cdavies@bgccan.com

Michael Bouliane
Manager Media & Public Relations
Sears Canada
(416) 941-4427
michael.bouliane@sears.ca