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**School-based and School-linked Prevention of Problematic Substance Use
Developing & Disseminating Evidenced-based Guidelines and Knowledge
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Project Overview

This project, co-led by the [Canadian Association for School Health](http://www.cash-aces.ca) and the [Canadian Centre on Substance Abuse](http://www.ccsa.ca), provides the means for Canada to disseminate the school-based prevention guidelines developed by the [Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission \(CICAD\) of the Organization of American States](http://www.oas.samhsa.gov), a commitment that Canada made as part of an international meeting held in the fall of 2005, in a manner that meets the needs of those involved in substance abuse prevention.

This project will collect, translate and disseminate the evidence that underlies the CICAD Guidelines to Canadian education, health, police, mental health and addictions personnel, and thus make a significant contribution to the advancement of school-based and school-linked prevention in this country. This project will also address the third priority of the [National Framework for Action to Reduce the Harms Associated with Alcohol and Other Drugs and Substances in Canada](http://www.ccsa.ca) by addressing the needs of children and youth.

The activities in this project will enable local, provincial/territorial and national agencies to assess the current situation in relation to the CICAD and similar school-based prevention guidelines through provincial/territorial (PT) environment scans/assessments, a national survey of policies and programs and a national planning forum that will take place as part of the National School Health Conference set for June 8-10/07 in Vancouver, BC.

A comprehensive summary of the knowledge and evidence on this issue will be prepared and used to create a variety of knowledge transfer tools including a policy-makers kit, collection of key documents and research reports/reviews, telephone/web briefings and an ongoing round table of stakeholders.

A planned, sequential dissemination campaign will bring this summary and these tools to the attention of decision-makers and practitioners at all levels so that they can be adapted and adopted in appropriate ways. The impact of the project will be evaluated by a second survey of policies and programs undertaken within provinces and territories.

This project also builds on a unique opportunity in Canada held in November 2005 wherein multi-sectoral, federal-provincial/territorial dialogue among health, education, police and addictions PT/regional coordinators called for joint actions. Many of the activities agreed to at that meeting are key elements of this project, including:

Collaborative Assessment and Planning

1. Conducting detailed **national and provincial/territorial needs assessments** and planning activities to ensure that the CICAD Guidelines and related Knowledge Summary build on existing initiatives and involve the relevant PT partners from the very beginning.
2. Organizing a **Pan-Canadian Planning Forum** involving PT coordinators, federal officials, NGO representatives and researchers to set the overall direction of the project.
3. Conducting a **national survey of local education, addiction, public health, police and mental health agencies** to establish a baseline for further planning as well as evaluation of the impact of the project on existing policies, programs and practices.

Identifying and Describing Better Practices

4. Preparing a rigorous **Knowledge Summary, adapting the international CICAD Guidelines and identifying similar Canadian and other better practice advice** to form the research evidence base underlying the suggested practices. See appendix one for a closer look at the Knowledge Summary.

5. Preparing a **web-based policy-makers kit and collection** for local education, health, police, mental health and police services/agencies to ensure that the policy-related recommendations of the CICAD Guidelines are addressed.

6. Identifying, collecting and retaining **unpublished documents** (grey literature) in a documentation centre and a **published list with links to important research reviews, landmark studies and key reports** to facilitate easy access to these documents by PT and local decision-makers and practitioners.

Disseminating Knowledge and Knowledge Tools

7. A **planned, sequential dissemination and awareness campaign** to ensure that local agency staffs and professionals are aware of the knowledge tools produced by this project and by other sources.

8. Organizing a **series of telephone/web briefing sessions** designed specifically for local agency decision-makers, administrators and leaders that will highlight key aspects of the CICAD Guidelines and Knowledge Summary.

9. Forming and **supporting a multi-sectoral Work Group and broadly-based Round Table** of organizations, experts, practitioners and client groups to ensure on-going dialogue about the Guidelines, Knowledge Summary and school-based prevention.

This project also coincides with the creation of a new emerging knowledge network of local agencies and other knowledge exchange infrastructure that can be leveraged to make significant and sustainable improvements to policies, programs and practices relating to school-based and school-linked substance abuse prevention and health promotion. This [Canadian School Health Knowledge Network](http://www.safehealthyschools.org) (www.safehealthyschools.org) is being developed and funded in part by the [Health & Learning Knowledge Centre](#) affiliated with the [Canadian Council on Learning](#). The SH Knowledge Network brings together local education, health, municipal, addictions and police agencies as well as all of the concerned national agencies and interested federal departments.

The Health, Education and Enforcement Program (HEP) and its participating coordinators and networks are key elements to the success of this project given it builds on the work of many. In particular, HEP networks are well placed to:

- Continue to strengthen and in some cases initiate new relationships (e.g. with P/T Safe Schools and School Health Coordinators among others) that are key to effective school-based and school-linked efforts.
- Help ensure the project efforts build on what already exists by providing leadership on environmental scans and needs assessment exercises at the provincial/territorial levels.
- Provide input into the development of three key tools to support effective school-based substance abuse prevention (e.g. Knowledge Summary; policy collection and a series of webinars) and subsequently introduce, adapt and support the uptake of these tools to support efforts across Canada.