

March , 2006



Dear Parent/Guardian:

Time to **Turn off your Screens and turn your activity level up!**

York Region Health Services and York Region Physical Activity Network are organizing and promoting the third annual **Turn off the Screens week from April 24 to 28, 2006.**

We are challenging students and their families to turn off their televisions, video games and computers for one week, except for use with homework. If this goal is too much of a challenge, even reducing the length of time spent in front of screens is an indicator of success. The primary goal is to increase the activity levels of our children and youth and their families.

The research is compelling. Obesity among Canadians and Canadian children has increased dramatically over the past 20 years. It is estimated that one third of children are overweight (Raine 2004). We know that physical activity is a key element in preventing serious health problems like heart disease, diabetes and obesity. Television, computer, and video games are occupying children for more than 28 hours a week. Because children are influenced by what their parents do, lead by example and participate with them. **Turn off the Screens week** provides the perfect opportunity to improve the health of you and your family.

**How can you participate?**

- Even if your school has not signed up for this event, you as a parent can still participate. To obtain your Parent resource package (activity log, tips for parents, strategies for limiting screen time, and a community events calendar), contact York Region Health Services *Health Connection* at 1-800-361-5653 or visit our website at the beginning of April [www.york.ca](http://www.york.ca)
- For strategies on how to manage TV, video games and computer, visit Child & Family Canada at [www.cfc-efc.ca](http://www.cfc-efc.ca) or Media Awareness Network at [www.media-awareness.ca](http://www.media-awareness.ca)

Parents have a powerful influence on young people's health behaviour choices April 24-28, 2006 is a perfect opportunity for you and your family to **Turn off the Screens and turn your activity level up!**

For more information about **Turn off the Screens** visit [www.tvturnoff.org](http://www.tvturnoff.org) or contact York Region Health Services *Health Connection* at 1-800-361-5653.

Sincerely

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