



WHERE FAMILIES COME FOR HELP

## Youth Drug Prevention Efforts Save Society \$315 Million Per Year According to a New Study by McGill University and Drug Free Kids Canada

**TORONTO** (August 1, 2017) – Drug Free Kids Canada (DFK) today released the results of a study it commissioned to evaluate the lifetime cost to society of a pre-teen or teenager who suffers from drug addiction. The study found that the cost per youth can be quantified at \$450,000, resulting in a \$315 million social return on investment based on the approximately 700 youth that benefit from the prevention efforts of Drug Free Kids Canada each year.

The study developed by the McGill School of Business Not-for-Profit Consulting Group was commissioned earlier this year. It evaluated the **measurable cost to society of youth addiction** which includes health care, law enforcement and the loss of productivity.

The study further analyzed the impact of drug education prevention messages created and disseminated by DFK Canada over the past six years. It concluded that **each year** by targeting parents and encouraging them to talk to their kids about drugs, **the total reduction in drug abuse by teens attributable to DFK was ~700 kids.**

*“Demonstrating the value to society of investing in prevention has always been a difficult exercise” says Drug Free Kids’ Executive Director Marc Paris. “That’s why this study is so important as it clearly shows that it is better to invest in prevention strategies up-front rather than deal with the heavy cost of addiction later”.*

The study also revealed that Drug Free Kids Canada is a highly efficient organization. The partnerships that it has developed over the years with their 60+ media partners, various advertising agencies and research firms has allowed them to generate \$39 in in-kind services for every dollar donated.

The costs of substance use disorder (SUD) extend far beyond the measurable dollars and cents but also in the toll it takes on individuals and families. Angie Hamilton, co-founder of Families for Addiction Recovery says, “when a child has SUD the entire family is affected. Siblings can feel like they have become invisible as parents mourn the loss of a child who is alive but whom they no longer recognize. The whole family needs to recover together.”

Paul Allison, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, Raymond James Ltd. and DFK’s new Chair of the board who recently replaced Dick Pound says, *“I was very impressed by the organization which has such an impressive national impact with very limited resources – **\$700 in the hands of DFK can save a teenager from a life of addiction”.***



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### **About Drug Free Kids Canada**

Drug Free Kids Canada is a private sector, non-profit organization that creates and disseminates drug education and prevention messages with the help of their partners in advertising, research and media. DFK also offers parents tools and practical tips on how to start the dialogue at [DrugFreeKidsCanada.org](http://DrugFreeKidsCanada.org).

### **For more information:**

**Suzanne Diab**  
NATIONAL Public Relations  
(416) 848-1399  
sdiab@national.ca