



August 29, 2011

Tosha Rhodenizer
National Capital Region YMCA-YWCA
100 Argyle Street
Ottawa, Ontario

Dear Ms. Rhodenizer:

Re: CHEO Support for Y Kids Academy Program

The Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario (CHEO) is pleased to support the *Y Kids Academy – Grade 6 Health Initiative* being launched through the National Capital Region YMCA-YWCA. The program brings a needed multi-faceted, accessible and proactive approach to the complex issues of physical inactivity, obesity and related health concerns. By working with a diversity of partners, such as CHEO and the school boards, it has addressed issues around curriculum and evaluation, universal access, and a role for families. Physical, emotional and social issues are well integrated and key to its 12 hour orientation program. These are all necessary ingredients for an effective program.

The YMCA-YWCA's broad goal of improving the health of individuals and communities is shared by CHEO. We also share the concern that children and youth are not getting sufficient physical activity to promote healthy growth and development. As the *Y Kids Academy* states 'it takes a collective effort to improve attitudes and behaviours around physical activity and healthy living and to positively impact the growing rates of obesity and chronic illness'.

At CHEO, we see more and more children with health issues related to obesity and inactivity. We are addressing this through research (Healthy Active Living and Obesity Research Group - HALO) and specialized treatment (Centre for Healthy Active Living program – CHAL). As Dr. Stasia Hadjiyannakis, CHAL Medical Director, says: "the Y program addresses issues from a preventive, accessible and early intervention perspective and is an excellent complement to our clinical work at CHEO; we are pleased to be able to assist with program content". Dr. Mark Tremblay, HALO Director, adds: "we look forward to sharing our expertise in research and evaluation with this new initiative".

The healthy development of children and youth is anchored in the commitment and caring of all in our community. We welcome the opportunity to support partners in this important goal.

Sincerely,

Michel Bilodeau
President and CEO