

Health Unit Media Release

September 8, 2011



Photovoice: See the Bigger Picture

We all have varying opinions about what's important when it comes to health and social issues. Public health employees are tasked with trying to view the world through different perspectives in order to develop programs and provide services to meet the varying needs of the community. **Youth in many communities feel they are not listened to or that they do not have a voice. The under-representation of this segment of our population is an area of concern for the Leeds, Grenville & Lanark District Health Unit.**

In the fall of 2011, youth in Leeds, Grenville & Lanark will have a chance to be heard. **Photovoice is a photography project that allows youth to highlight and explore issues around health & well being in their community.** The issues can be positive or negative, and range from tobacco & substance use, to physical activity, to mental health and beyond. What's important is that the youth themselves are identifying the real issues affecting their day to day lives.

"*Photovoice* is a project that could give a sense of empowerment to those youth who might otherwise feel they have no influence," says David Patterson, Youth Engagement Advisor at the health unit, "It's a chance for them to give others a look at the world through their eyes."

Photovoice is being run throughout Eastern Ontario, led by the six health units therein. Beginning September 12th, participants will submit photos (cameras can be provided), along with a description of what the picture represents/means to them. **There will be weekly draws for over \$10,000 in prizes and the grand prize is an Xbox with Kinect.** In December, after the initiative has ended, a community gallery featuring the photos will be held, to which local media and decision-makers will be invited, along with a selection of youth participants.

To get involved, or for more information, visit the Photovoice link on the Health Unit's website front page www.healthunit.org, or contact David Patterson, Youth Engagement Advisor, LG&L District Health Unit at sfoa@healthunit.org.