

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## Statement by Rita Notarandrea, CEO, on International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking

**Ottawa | June 26, 2017** – Today, with the United Nations, governments, NGOs and citizens from around the world, the Canadian Centre on Substance Use and Addiction (CCSA) is proud to recognize the International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking. Led by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, the theme of this day is a worthy one: **Listen First**. The initiative calls for increased support for evidence-based drug-use prevention programs and encourages investment in the well-being of children and youth, their families and their communities.

Adolescence marks a period of significant change in which drug use often begins. It is also the opportune time to begin prevention efforts – free of judgement or scare tactics – to ensure this vulnerable segment of the population has the information it needs to make healthy, informed decisions.

CCSA has a long history of opening lines of communication with youth through focus groups, studies, panels, presentations and more: **we listen**. Our team has successfully engaged youth from across the country on topics such as binge drinking, alcohol harms, cannabis and drug use prevention in an effort to expand the body of available evidence.

Because of these initiatives, a clearer picture of youth perceptions on critical topics is emerging, driving research and knowledge mobilization throughout the country. More and more, youth enjoy improved access to unbiased, evidence-based information on everything from low-risk alcohol and substance use, the dangers of impaired driving, and accessing supports and services for substance use disorders.

Recent CCSA-led projects focused on youth include:

- ***The Effects of Cannabis Use during Adolescence***: Part of the Substance Abuse in Canada series, this report provides parents, teachers, healthcare providers and policy makers with the evidence needed to develop and employ more effective youth drug use prevention and intervention programs.
- ***Canadian Youth Perceptions on Cannabis***: This report showcases the findings from a series of 20 focus groups with 77 youth from Ontario, Saskatchewan, Nova Scotia and Alberta, held by CCSA to increase our understanding of youth perceptions of cannabis.
- ***The Postsecondary Education Partnership – Alcohol Harms***: The recently launched collaborative unites a network of campuses, led by CCSA and Universities Canada, in an effort to increase our understanding of the campus drinking culture and best practices to reduce harms.
- ***Canadian Standards for Youth Substance Abuse Prevention Portfolio***: CCSA developed this portfolio in partnership with the Canadian Standards Task Force to provide guidance on how to plan, select, implement and evaluate prevention efforts.

For more information on these and other projects, please visit [www.ccsa.ca](http://www.ccsa.ca)



CCSA also congratulates the UNODC on the release of the [World Drug Report 2017](#), marking 20 years since the report's inception. Over the course of two decades, the World Drug Reports have aimed to improve the understanding of the world drug problem, and foster greater international cooperation for countering the impact on health and security.

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Canadian Centre  
on Substance Use  
and Addiction

CCSA was created by Parliament to provide national leadership to address substance use in Canada. A trusted counsel, we provide national guidance to decision makers by harnessing the power of research, curating knowledge and bringing together diverse perspectives.

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