



## Media Release

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### **Planet Youth Nipissing Launches in West Nipissing and North Bay: A dynamic and collaborative approach to substance use prevention**

NORTH BAY, ON – Planet Youth Nipissing has officially launched in West Nipissing and North Bay, with the release of voluntary anonymous surveys to grade 10 students. Planet Youth Nipissing is a five-year pilot project targeted to reduce teen substance use in our communities. The project is based on the [Icelandic Prevention Model](#), an evidence-based, community-led approach that successfully reduced teen substance use in Iceland over a 20-year period.

In 2023, the North Bay Parry Sound District Health Unit brought together 68 community organizations to hear from Planet Youth representatives. Based on widespread interest, a coalition of members serving the communities of West Nipissing and North Bay was formed.

Member organizations include the Canadian Mental Health Association North Bay and District, Children's Aid Society Nipissing & Parry Sound, City of North Bay, Conseil scolaire catholique Franco-Nord, Conseil scolaire public du Nord-Est de l'Ontario, District of Nipissing Social Services Administration Board, Hands TheFamilyHelpNetwork.ca, Municipality of West Nipissing, Near North District School Board, Nick's Place For Us, Nipissing-Parry Sound Catholic District School Board, Nipissing University, North Bay Parry Sound District Health Unit, North Bay Police Service, North Bay Regional Health Centre, OUTLoud North Bay, West Nipissing Community Health Centre, and YMCA of Northeastern Ontario.

The grade 10 anonymous surveys will provide data that will be used to help communities better understand the lives of young people and what is impacting their health and well-being. From there, communities will be better positioned to respond and adjust community initiatives that support the well-being of youth and reduce high-risk behaviours such as substance use. The goal is for the project to engage schools, parents, youth, local organizations, and the community to create an environment that promotes well-being among adolescents.

“I want to thank all the community partners who have come together to spearhead this project,” said Mayor of North Bay, Peter Chirico. “Our young people are our future, and providing support early on through this kind of initiative will help to empower them to overcome challenges and realize their full potential.”

The key element to Planet Youth’s success is its proactive and preventative strategy. By identifying risk factors and positive influences that impact the development of risky behaviors,

it becomes possible to intervene early and make changes to the environment, where needed, for youth to thrive.



PARTNER *Nipissing*

“Our children are our future. We are so excited to work in partnership with the coalition members in building a community that engages and encourages the growth and development of youth in West Nipissing,” said Mayor of West Nipissing, Kathleen Thorne Rochon.

Coalition members are eagerly advancing the project, motivated by everyone’s commitment to create opportunities for youth to reach their full potential. The visible support of community leaders invested in the health and well-being of youth further fuels members’ determination and optimism for the journey ahead.

For more information on Planet Youth Nipissing visit [www.planetyouthnipissing.ca](http://www.planetyouthnipissing.ca).

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### **Media Inquiries:**

Alex McDermid, Public Relations Specialist

P: 705-474-1400, ext. 5221 or 1-800-563-2808 ext. 5221

E: [communications@healthunit.ca](mailto:communications@healthunit.ca)