

MediaPulse: Measuring the Media in Kids' Lives is a national media and health public education initiative developed for Canadian paediatricians, family physicians and other health professionals by **Media Awareness Network** (MNet) and the **Canadian Paediatric Society** (CPS), with funding from Health Canada's Population Health Fund.

MNet and CPS recognize that, on a daily basis, children and adolescents are absorbing and interacting with messages from a wide range of media – the Internet, television, movies, music, magazines, wireless media and video games. While media offer children many opportunities to learn and be entertained, media consumption may also be a contributing factor to a variety of health concerns including: sedentary lifestyle, poor nutrition and obesity; unhealthy body image and poor self-esteem; risky sexual behaviour and poor lifestyle choices.

Health practitioners are in a unique position to relay information about media to children, adolescents and their parents. The objectives of the *MediaPulse* initiative are to raise awareness among Canadian paediatricians and family physicians about the role of media in young people's lives, familiarize them with current research findings, and to provide practical information to help them talk to patients and their families and to encourage parental involvement. The *MediaPulse* initiative will include:

- ✓ A guide for health practitioners that explores media influences on public health and offers practical suggestions to incorporate media awareness into the practice setting.

- ✓ A media history form that physicians can use to measure their patients' media use and habits.
- ✓ A tip sheet for parents, included with the guide for health professionals.
- ✓ A theme issue of *Paediatrics & Child Health*, the peer-reviewed journal of the Canadian Paediatric Society published in June 2003. The issue includes articles presenting current research on media and specific health issues, as well as an updated position statement from the CPS on children and the media. More than 15,500 paediatricians, family physicians and other health professionals will receive the *MediaPulse* guide with the issue.
- ✓ A professional development workshop presented at the Canadian Paediatric Society's 2003 Annual Meeting in Calgary, June 18 - 22.
- ✓ Practical online resources for physicians and parents are available on the CPS (www.cps.ca) and Mnet (www.media-awareness.ca) websites.

Media Awareness Network (MNet) is a non-profit Canadian organization whose mission is to support media education and its widest possible integration into Canadian schools, homes and communities. For more information about MNet, visit www.media-awareness.ca.

The **Canadian Paediatric Society** (CPS) is a national organization, founded in 1922, that represents more than 2,000 paediatricians, paediatric residents and paediatric subspecialists across Canada. To learn more about CPS, visit www.cps.ca.