Editor's Welcome:

It is with great pride and excitement that we welcome you to the first issue of YOUTH ENGAGEMENT IN HEALTH PROMOTION.

The goal of this new Journal is to provide an international forum for those committed to engaging youth through meaningful participation in health promotion efforts to share knowledge and research. The idea for this Journal was borne out of frustration as practitioners in health promotion unable to find a centralized collection of the incredible work we knew was being done in engaging youth in health promotion. We wanted to provide a platform for those working side-by-side with youth on health issues to share their experiences whether it be in the form of community-based research, academic/original research or commentary on new or emerging strategies. We also chose to include a unique feature in this publication – youth experiential papers. In keeping with the purpose of engaging youth in health promotion we wanted to make sure that youth voice has been accurately represented in this forum. Youth who have been actively and meaningfully involved in health promotion efforts are encouraged to submit their perspectives to be published here. This mix of academic research papers, community-based case studies and youth experiences is meant to provide a breadth of information to our readers.

We would like to take this opportunity to present a brief introduction to the members of the editorial board.

Rachel Roy MSc, PgDip, BA, BSc

Rachel is currently a Health Promotion Specialist with the City of Hamilton Public Health Services. She has worked as an adult ally with the Unfiltered Facts youth program on tobacco control, physical activity and mental health and wellness projects. She has a certification in youth development from Queen’s University. She has experience with research and evaluation as a practitioner and through her Health Promotion and Population Health Master of Science degree. Previous research areas include men’s health promotion and workplace health promotion.

Adrienne Seabrooke RN, BScN, MEd

Adrienne is a Registered Nurse in the Neuro/Trauma Intensive Care Unit at the Hamilton General Hospital and part-time clinical instructor at McMaster University. Her most recent research, as part of her Master’s of Education, centered on traumatic injury in rural communities with an end goal of developing injury prevention initiatives, including curriculum and policy development, specific to rural youth.

Charlotte Lombardo MHSc, BSc

Charlotte is a Program Director of the MPH in Health Promotion and a lecturer with the Dalla Lana School of Public Health. Her research interests include youth health promotion with a focus on engagement through community and media arts. Her work is a mixture of front-line practice, community-based evaluation and participatory research. Charlotte is also the faculty representative for this Open Access journal hosted by the University of Toronto.
Heather Touzin BA, BEd

Heather is currently a district assistive technology resource teacher with the Lambton-Kent District School Board; this involves presenting on best practices in assistive and 21st century technologies at the district and provincial levels. She is a Curriculum Leader of English and is heavily involved with programme planning, student assessment, IEP accommodation, curriculum review, OSSLT and EQAO in both front-line teaching and leadership capacities.

Maulik Baxi MD, MPH, CPH, PMP

Maulik is a physician and epidemiologist formerly involved in public health research at the Hospital for Sick Children in Toronto and is currently affiliated with Alberta Health Services. Dr. Baxi is the current chair of the Minority Affairs Committee of the American College of Epidemiology. He brings extensive knowledge of research, including experience as a reviewer for several journals as well as having his own work published.

Renata Faber MEd, BSc, BEd

Renata began her career as a classroom teacher and moved to Niagara Region Public Health as the first Youth Action Advisor where she co-developed Niagara’s Youth Action Alliance (YAA). This highly successful program continues today having doubled in size under Renata’s leadership. She is currently a Health Promotion Specialist in the School Health Program and is actively involved in several community-based youth engagement projects.

Kayla Ward: Youth Editorial Board Member

Kayla was the successful applicant for the position of Youth Editorial Board member out of a pool of over 20 well-qualified youth. Kayla is a passionate youth engagement advocate who has worked with The Phoenix Centre for Children and Families and has attended "Disable the Label" an annual conference in Orillia that trains youth in the area of mental health and youth engagement as well as "Unleash the Noise" a student-led summit in Toronto that gathers every year to create solutions for issues surrounding the stigma around mental health. She is an avid reader and writer and has been a peer tutor for students at her high school. As an adolescent who has experienced some of the issues we would like to shed light on through this journal, she has expressed an eagerness to focus on the needs of youth; to talk about health, wellness, development, and youth-driven projects.

This first issue has examples from across the spectrum of available research including a University-based research paper on engaging youth in addressing alcohol misuse, a Public Health supported project highlighting the use of PhotoVoice as a strategy for effectively engaging youth in community health issues, two experiential papers from youth who have actively participated in youth-led health promotion campaigns, and a commentary by a health promotion practitioner that explores the application of youth engagement strategies currently being used in the area of tobacco control. We hope you embrace this
first issue of Youth Engagement in Health Promotion and continue to support this innovative journal as we move forward with our mission.

We would like to thank our editorial board, our review team and the manuscript contributors that showed dedication and patience as we worked through the ins and outs of publishing this inaugural issue.

We are passionate about meaningfully engaging youth in health promotion initiatives and are extremely honoured to be able to present to the readers of this journal research and experiences being done in this area. By working alongside youth to create health promotion interventions we not only foster increased self-esteem and self-efficacy but also a greater sense of civic engagement and leadership. By valuing youth voice as it applies to their health and well-being, we provide them with a platform to take action on issues they feel are important to their health and the health of their community. Youth need to be recognized as powerful allies in the battle to prevent injury and disease if we are to maximize the success of the efforts of health promoters. The creativity and insight that youth can provide should never be underestimated.

Thank you for reading and once again, welcome.

Rachel Roy BA, BSc, MSc and Adrienne Seabrooke RN, BScN, MEd

Editors-in-chief Youth Engagement in Health Promotion