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*Some donors wish to remain anonymous*

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# Wired For Health



The Heart and Stroke Foundation is committed to providing you with the tools you need to improve your heart health when and where you need them. That's why we're providing an increasing number of online resources to help you evaluate and improve your lifestyle.



In summer 2009, the Heart and Stroke Foundation launched My Heart&Stroke Healthy Weight Action Plan ([www.heartandstroke.bc.ca](http://www.heartandstroke.bc.ca)), a 12-week, step by step program that will support healthy habits and a healthy weight for life.

Other online tools offered by the Foundation include My Heart&Stroke Risk Assessment, which helps you to understand your personal risk factors for heart disease and stroke, and My Heart&Stroke Blood Pressure Action Plan, which helps you manage and control your blood pressure with interactive tools to track your blood pressure readings, set goals, access helpful information and more. Both of these resources can be found at [www.takethepressuredown.ca](http://www.takethepressuredown.ca).

Women can also head to [www.thehearttruth.ca](http://www.thehearttruth.ca) to sign up for Heartbeats, a service that delivers heart-health advice to your inbox once a week for a year. Each change is achievable for women of all health and fitness levels, and if you incorporate each one into your lifestyle, you'll see your health and energy levels improve over the weeks and months.

These online tools allow you to take your health to heart anytime, from anywhere in the world. With a little determination, and the help of the Foundation's interactive tools, a healthier you is only a click away!

## Heart Month 2010

The Heart and Stroke Foundation of BC & Yukon is thrilled that next February's Heart Month will coincide with the world's biggest celebration of health and fitness: the **2010 Olympic Games**. To celebrate this monumental occasion in our province, we're proud to announce that a Foundation team has been invited to carry the flame in the Vancouver **2010 Olympic Torch Relay**. Our team of 20 will be made up of volunteers, donors, and heart disease and stroke survivors. Please join us in cheering them on.

Heart Month is an especially vital time for the Foundation's fundraising efforts so we're looking closely at the 2010 Olympic plans to leverage opportunities for our programs, in particular Jump Rope for Heart, Hoops for Heart, and the Person to Person Campaign, to minimize any potentially adverse impacts. We'll be communicating our strategies to our valued volunteers as we approach February. Heart Month 2010 has the potential to be the healthiest Heart Month of all, but we need your support to make that happen. Please consider volunteering your time to raise life-saving funds for the Heart and Stroke Foundation next February. For more information, visit [www.heartandstroke.ca/help](http://www.heartandstroke.ca/help).

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**HEART & STROKE**  
FOUNDATION  
OF BC & YUKON

*Finding answers. For life.*



### GO GREEN!

If you wish to **receive heartsandminds by email**, please contact:

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## A Generation at Risk



Across Canada, the Heart and Stroke Foundation has invested more than \$1.1 billion in research since the 1950s. Since then, the death rate from heart disease and stroke has reduced by 70 per cent. But a new generation of Canadians is facing a growing threat from unhealthy eating and sedentary lifestyles, and they need our help. A staggering 26% of Canadian children and adolescents are overweight or obese – triple the number affected just 25 years ago.

The good news is we can stop this trend. But we must start now.

In this issue you'll read about the Foundation's efforts to turn around this potentially devastating trend. You'll learn about our children's programs like HeartSmart Kids™, which help students learn to make healthier decisions, and Jump Rope for Heart, which teaches active play while raising funds that are vital to the Foundation's work. You'll learn how we're advocating on your behalf to make it easier for

British Columbians to live healthier lives. You'll also see how your donations are funding research that will help prevent cardiovascular disease before it starts.

With early intervention, cutting-edge research, and support from British Columbians like you, we will reach our vision of *generations free from heart disease and stroke*.

*Bobbe Wood  
President and CEO  
Heart and Stroke Foundation of BC & Yukon*

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## Advocating for a Healthy Future

The Heart and Stroke Foundation of BC & Yukon works hard to change public opinion and government policy to help improve the health of British Columbians. Here is an overview of some of our advocacy priorities:

Tobacco related illness is still the leading cause of preventable death in BC. We are a founding member of the Clean Air Coalition and active in the Imagine! A Smoke-Free BC campaign. We work with stakeholders and government to promote tobacco-free pharmacies, subsidized nicotine replacement therapy and smoke free patios, parks and beaches.

More than a quarter of British Columbians are obese. To encourage healthy weight, we support public education campaigns, tax incentives for physical activity and equipment, subsidies for healthy food, and daily physical activity and healthy food choices for students. We also work with provincial organizations to develop and implement obesity reduction strategies.

Stroke is the number one cause of acquired long-term disability in adults in BC. The Foundation oversees the BC Stroke Strategy, a comprehensive plan for stroke prevention, identification, treatment, and rehabilitation. Several prototypes are in the planning stages or are already underway, including improving patient access to neurological consultants, and rapid assessment and treatment for people who have experienced a mini-stroke.

Although BC is rated among the healthiest places to live, inequities in health determinants and standards of living have a significant negative effect on health. Working with the BC Healthy Living Alliance, we urge the provincial government and stakeholders to improve income and food security, encourage students to complete their education, provide universal access to high-quality, publically funded early learning and childcare programs, and increase the number of social housing units. [www.heartandstroke.bc.ca/advocacy](http://www.heartandstroke.bc.ca/advocacy)

## A Legacy for Life



Jean Morrison was an elementary teacher, a world traveler, a tour guide, and an athlete throughout her life. Born in 1927 in Linlithgow, outside Edinburgh, Scotland, she was frugal, fun-loving, and had a memorable sense of humour. While Jean never had children of her own, she held close to her heart the many young students she taught at Edith Cavell School on Vancouver's west side. Moreover, she was a favourite auntie to her own nieces and nephews, and took the children of her many friends under her wing. Jean retired early from teaching to explore the world. An intrepid traveller, she journeyed to the far reaches of the earth, including Scotland, England, Morocco, South Africa, Australia and India, among others.

Her lifelong commitment to sport and physical exercise included competing successfully in Stanley Park tennis tournaments, curling, and skiing at Whistler with friends and family until she was well into her 70s. Looking back on her 81 years of life, David Culbard, Jean's nephew, fondly describes his aunt as "a woman who lived life to the fullest on her own terms."

On August 30, 2007, Jean Morrison made a choice that will forever change the lives of British Columbians everywhere. She made a will in which she remembered the Heart and Stroke Foundation of BC & Yukon. Thinking of her many dear friends who died of cardiovascular disease, she created a "residual bequest," thereby giving part of her remaining estate to the Foundation, after provisions were made for family members.

Cardiovascular disease is the number one cause of death among the people of BC and the Yukon, and across Canada. Jean Morrison's gift will save precious lives by advancing critical research and health educational programs. We forever remember the generosity of Jean Morrison with deep gratitude.

**If you are considering how to leave a life-changing legacy, please contact:**

**Linda Netherton**, Director of Personal Gifts • Heart and Stroke Foundation of BC & Yukon

**Tel:** 604-737-3421 • **Email:** [Lnetherton@hsf.bc.ca](mailto:Lnetherton@hsf.bc.ca).

# Heart Health in the Classroom

Since 1981, obesity has tripled among Canadian children, largely due to a lack of physical activity and poor diet. Obese children are more likely to grow up to be obese adults who are at greater risk of developing heart disease, stroke, cancer and diabetes, and of dying from these diseases at an early age.

The good news is that research shows the habits we form as young people can impact our health for the rest of our lives. That's why the Heart and Stroke Foundation of BC & Yukon is dedicated to educating young people about heart-healthy living.

This school year, the Heart and Stroke Foundation, in conjunction with the BC Pediatric Society, is launching Sip Smart! BC™ in BC schools. This classroom-based program is an initiative of the BC Healthy Living Alliance and is aimed at helping young people make healthy beverage choices.

We all know that physical activity and healthy eating are essential parts of healthy living. What is less commonly known is that what we drink has a major impact on our overall health. Child health experts believe that reducing the consumption of sugary drinks is a key strategy in curbing the rising rates of childhood obesity.

This program will build on the ongoing success of HeartSmart Kids™, our school-based program that encourages children to make heart-healthy lifestyle choices like healthy eating, active living and being smoke-free. Introduced in the fall of 1995, the HeartSmart Kids™ program has reached over 7700 teachers and more than 200,000 children. The program is designed to encourage the adoption of heart-smart habits at an early age.

The Heart and Stroke Foundation also has a decades-long tradition of engaging young people in the cause through Jump Rope for Heart and Hoops for Heart, national fundraising programs that get kids physically active while raising vital funds for the Heart and Stroke Foundation.

Funds raised through Jump Rope for Heart and Hoops for Heart are used to support programs like Heart Smart Kids and research, which will help improve the cardiovascular health of future generations of Canadians. In this way, kids help other kids while learning healthy habits and the spirit of philanthropy.


With support from British Columbians like you, the Heart and Stroke Foundation will continue to fight for a healthier tomorrow for our children.

## Working in Partnership

The Heart and Stroke Foundation of BC & Yukon works in partnership with many like-minded organizations through the [BC Healthy Living Alliance \(BCHLA\)](#) to ensure a healthy future for BC's kids. Here are a few of the programs supported through that partnership:

- **Quitters Unite:** Led by the Heart and Stroke Foundation, this is an online campaign to encourage young adults to live smoke-free.
- **Food Skills for Families:** A new food skills program geared to the needs of vulnerable families, led by the Canadian Diabetes Association as part of the BCHLA Health Eating Strategy.
- **Tobacco-Free Post Secondary Initiative:** Led by the BC Lung Association, this initiative ensures protection from tobacco marketing, enacts tobacco-free policies, and develops cessation resources for students and faculty at BC's colleges and universities.

# Stopping Heart Disease Before It Starts

A close-up photograph of a young girl with dark hair, blowing a dandelion seed head. The seeds are captured in mid-air, creating a soft, ethereal effect. The background is a blurred green field, suggesting an outdoor setting.

An increasing number of younger Canadians are facing a future plagued by heart disease, according to a major study funded by the Heart and Stroke Foundation of Canada, which finds the risk factors for cardiovascular disease have risen by as much as 260 per cent among Canadians aged 12 to 34 over a 10-year period between 1995 and 2005.

The Foundation is facing this challenge with cutting-edge research in a diverse range of fields to reduce the risks of heart disease and stroke in British Columbia, the Yukon, and across the country.

Using genetics, our researchers are finding ways to predict risk factors that lead to heart disease and stroke. Some even foresee that within five to 10 years, we could have new preventive therapy for those who are at increased risk.

We're also funding research that will make it easier and safer for British Columbians to get active, like the UBC study, headed by Prof. Kay Teschke of the School of Population and Public Health, that's using a variety of research techniques to discover what kind of urban bike routes would be safest for all concerned. With better-designed bike routes, population health researchers believe we could curb heart disease due to increased activity and lowered air pollution.

Many people don't know that air pollution is a contributing factor to heart disease, but research has shown that, of the 6000 additional deaths that result from air pollution annually in Canada, more than two thirds are from heart disease or stroke.

To combat this threat, the Foundation is funding the work of Dr. Stephan van Eeden, a pioneer in the study of the relationship between air pollution and cardiovascular disease. In this new study, he will explore the effects of statin drugs on atherosclerosis (the thickening of arteries) caused by the fine particulate matter in air pollution. This will be the first-ever study anywhere to investigate the possibility of therapeutically preventing the effects of air pollution on the cardiovascular system.

Because of your support, promising developments in several fields – from genetics to how communities are designed – could lead to new and more effective ways of preventing cardiovascular disease, helping our children and grandchildren live longer, healthier lives.