



March 14, 2002

Erica Phipps  
Program Manager, Technical Cooperation  
Commission for Environmental Cooperation

Via email to: [ephipps@ccemtl.org](mailto:ephipps@ccemtl.org)

Hello Erica,

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the CEC for providing a travel and accommodation subsidy so that I could attend the JPAC meeting in Mexico City earlier this month. Without the subsidy, I would not have been able to attend the session.

The March 6 and 7 meetings were informative, cooperative and helpful. I have attached a brief overview of my comments and requests for information, as well as additions into the cooperative agenda and advice to council regarding Children's Health and the Environment in North America.

Could I request that my e-mail address be added to CEC/JPAC listserv?

Again, thank you for the opportunity to impact the activities of the JPAC on Children's Health and the Environment. I look forward to being kept abreast of the activities of the JPAC and SMOC.

Sincerely,

Betty Ferreira  
Chief Executive Officer  
Childhood Cancer Foundation ~  
Candlelighters Canada

55 Eglinton Avenue East, Suite 401  
Toronto, ON, M4P 1G8  
Phone: 416-489-6440 ext 20  
Fax: 416-489-9812  
Email: [betty@candlelighters.ca](mailto:betty@candlelighters.ca)

# Comments on the Co-operative Agenda Draft Document on Children's Health and the Environment

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## **Childhood cancer must be placed on the agenda**

The CEC through the JPAC on Children's Health and the Environment has been mandated to address the health effects of environmental contamination. As the CEC's own documents show, approximately 80% of the childhood cancers are caused by environmental contamination. It is thus the duty of the CEC to identify childhood cancer as an outcome of environmental contamination, and to provide recommendations to the Ministers of the Environment from each respective country, so that policy can be formulated and implemented that will eliminate and curb not only the use of environmental contaminants, but also the rate of childhood cancers.

All three countries (Canada, Mexico and the USA) identified childhood cancer as one of the primary causes of mortality among children. Somewhat similar to asthma, childhood cancer is a chronic disease, and it is also a fatal one. In Canada, approximately one third of children affected with cancer will not survive.

On behalf of the Childhood Cancer Foundation of Canada, including the children and parents of children affected by cancer, I strongly request that childhood cancer be referred to on the cooperative agenda not only as a cause of environmental contamination, but also as a chronic and fatal disease that can benefit through stronger environmental policies that will eliminate and curb the use known carcinogens from our environment.

The strategy of providing a transparent cooperative agenda by including various stakeholders will benefit the formulation of the advice to council, and can also leverage the successes of the CEC by way of collaborative efforts with these various stakeholders. For example, in the case of childhood cancer, by placing childhood cancer on the agenda, the CEC will assist to directly impact policy at the federal levels, and indirectly facilitate additional research and advocacy by the government, non-profit's and NGO's.

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## **Lack of medical organizations and university's present at the JPAC meeting**

I found that there was a lack of medical organizations and university's present at this JPAC meeting. Were provincial/state and national medical organizations and the appropriate representatives from universities invited to attend?

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## Comments on cooperative draft agenda items:

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Item # 2 –  
Effects of lead

- Include the mining industry

Request to include assessing lead levels in:

1. Breast milk
  2. Children’s products (particularly products children use and play with)
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Item # 3 -  
Effects of  
exposure to  
toxic  
substances

Request to place on the agenda the identification of childhood cancer caused by exposure to toxic substances.

- 3.1 I would like to request that the Childhood Cancer Foundation ~ Candlelighters Canada to be involved and/or updated on the activities on the SMOC program.

Action: Can you please identify manners in which we can be involved and/or updated on the activities of the SMOC program?

- 3.2 Request that The Childhood Cancer Foundation ~ Candlelighters Canada be put on list to receive hard copies of the “Taking Stock Reports”
- 

**Item # 4 – Risk  
Assessment and  
Economic  
Valuation**

- 4.1 Request that the coordinating body for developing the tri-lateral workshop includes
  1. Policy makers,
  2. Risk Assessors, and the
  3. General Public/NGO’s and non profits

Action: Request to be kept abreast of activities relating to the development and implementation of the Risk Assessment Workshop.

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Item # 5 –  
Strengthening  
the knowledge  
base for long-  
term solutions

- 5.3 Action: May I request to be kept updated on the development of the report and receive the final copy
    - It is important to understand that NGO’s and non-profits require these reports (among others) to strengthen their own programs, activities relating to joint and collaborative efforts in advocacy and research
    - I would request that JPAC list no more than 3 major goals along with clear guidelines for activities and time lines with the objective of including economic impacts of environmental effects that are the causes of childhood cancer
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## Comments on cooperative draft agenda items, continued

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Item # 6 –  
Public  
Information,  
outreach and  
education

Action: Please keep me updated on activities and initiatives relating to Public Information, Outreach and Education,

Action: I would like to offer the opportunity to partner with the Childhood Cancer Foundation ~ Candlelighters Canada in regards to public information, outreach and education campaigns.

Please understand that your efforts can leverage through collaborating and partnering with NGO's and non-profit organizations.

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## Comments on the Draft Advice to Council: No 02-01

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**Point  
numbered 2, on  
page 1**

Request that the NARAP contain components identified as risks to children's health and in particular, to childhood cancer.

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**Second page,  
second set of  
bullets, bullet  
number 3**

Bullet number 3: Efforts should be made to identify target audiences for education, capacity building and training activities, for example, health advocates and other "front line" workers.

Action: We would like to extend an offer to partner with CEC/JPAC on this initiative. The Childhood Cancer Foundation ~ Candlelighters Canada is a national non-profit organization in Canada, with over 50 parent support groups located across the country with partnerships with treatment centers and hospitals. As we have national and local membership, we would be an ideal partner for joint education and training initiatives.

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**Second page,  
second set of  
bullets, bullet  
number 4**

Bullet number 4: Indoor air quality issues should feature in the work, particularly in buildings where children congregate.

Action: Please specify schools and the home as the "buildings" where children congregate.

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## Comments on the Draft Advice to Council: No 02-01

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**Second page,  
third set of  
bullets, bullet  
number 4**

Bullet number 4: Invite Expert Advisory Board to attend the June 2002 Council Session to present results to date.

Request: We request that we be invited along with other non-profit's and NGO's to the June 2002 Council Session to hear the results to date.

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**Second page,  
third set of  
bullets, bullet  
number 5& 6**

Request: That the CEC ensures that non-profit and NGO's be invited to attend and participate in relevant meetings of the JPAC and Children's Health and the Environment, and that subsidies continue to be available to ensure their participation.

## Can I request the following information from you Erica?

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**Forward  
information**

Erica, at your earliest convenience please send me the following:

- All of the PowerPoint presentations made at the meeting via e-mail
  - Hard copies of:
    - Towards a Healthier Environment for Our Kids
    - Inventory of Activities Related to Children's Health and the Environment in North America
    - Taking Stock 98 Summery report (is there a more recent report available yet?)
    - North American Agenda for Action 2002 2004; Three year program
  - Any information relating to childhood cancer and it's link to the environment
  - Please keep me updated on the activities of the SMOC working group.
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