

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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***Youth Rally Together for Support and to Learn about a Devastating Disease that impacts them all.***

(Halifax, NS) November 18, 2015 – On November 21, 2015 youth from across Canada will join together for support and to learn more about a devastating disease that impacts them all – Huntington disease. Likened to having the symptoms of Alzheimer’s, Parkinson’s and ALS simultaneously, Huntington disease is one of the cruelest diseases known to humankind.

So what do you do when you are impacted by this disease? You get involved! You create a support system and you learn all you can about how to change the future.

Created in 2008, the Young People Affected by Huntington Disease (YPAHD) youth Chapter have worked with the Huntington Society of Canada (HSC) to host one-day youth conferences in 2012 and again in 2014. Based on the overwhelming response and the need from the HD community for more education, greater support, and the importance for youth to cultivate the connection between youth in the HD community, HSC and YPAHD will host a Regional YPAHD Day on November 21, 2015 in three locations across Canada: Halifax at the Delta Halifax, Calgary and Toronto.

Catherine Price, from Newfoundland, will be joining in on the fun this year as well, in Halifax. “I really want to connect with other people who are in the same kind of situation as myself,” she explains. That is what motivated her to get involved with YPAHD in the first place.

“I am just so excited to see familiar faces again,” says Aly Hughes of British Columbia, anticipating this year’s YPAHD Days in Alberta. “I am really looking forward to meeting new people and sharing our stories.”

When asked about the Regional YPAHD Day, President Jaclyn Skinner responded, “I’m really, really excited about this year’s YPAHD day. I think it’s important that we can connect face-to-face as often as possible to stay motivated, be inspired and to remember what, and who, we are working for. It’s an incredible feeling, and I’m honoured, to be a part of a group of such strong and hopeful young people who are so determined to change the HD world.”

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Huntington disease (HD) is a debilitating brain disorder that is fatal and incurable. About 1 in every 7,000 Canadians has HD and approximately 5 in every 10,000 are at-risk of developing the disease. Many more are touched by HD whether as a caregiver, a family member, or a friend. Huntington disease is devastating for both the body and the mind. The symptoms, which may include uncontrollable jerking movements and relentless cognitive and emotional impairment,

usually present between the ages of 30 and 45, and gradually worsen over the 10-25 year course of the disease. Eventually they lead to total incapacitation and death.

The Huntington Society of Canada (HSC) is a respected leader in the worldwide effort to end Huntington disease (HD). HSC is the only Canadian health charity dedicated to providing help and hope for families dealing with Huntington disease across Canada. The Huntington Society of Canada aspires to a world free from Huntington disease.

Young People Affected by Huntington Disease (YPAHD) began as a way for young people in the HD community to develop support networks and build lasting friendships.

YPAHD strives to:

- Provide a community and support network for young people affected by HD
- Increase public awareness thereby enabling others to understand the disease
- Raise funds to deliver services for those living with HD and to further research in order to slow and prevent HD.
- Listen to and advocate for the needs and goals of young people affected by HD through the communication mechanisms provided by the Huntington Society of Canada

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