



The Edmonton Peace Festival

September 21 - October 2

“Cultivating Peace at the Heart of our City.”

Peace Festival Information for: ***THE HEALTH SECTOR***

If communities are peaceful, they will be healthy; and if they are healthy, they will be peaceful.

Peace is an integral part of a community’s comprehensive approach to health. Experts acknowledge the social determinants of health and the interrelationship of health with other issues (housing, education, peace, equity, social justice). We hope that the Edmonton Peace Festival might, in a meaningful way, contribute to the overall health of our city and its citizens by helping to cultivate a culture of peace in which everyone thrives and feels included.

We encourage those in the Health Sector to explore ways to incorporate the spirit of the Peace Festival into your work in ways that are most meaningful to you. We would like to share the following information for your consideration.

From the Healthy Cities/Healthy Communities Initiative (Uof Kansas):

The health of a community, like that of an individual, depends on far more than freedom from pain or disease. Health, or its lack, for a community is the result of a large number of factors, often intertwined, that span the social, economic, political, physical, and environmental spheres. Virtually any community issue has an effect on, and is affected by, the overall health of the community as a whole, and therefore should be approached in a community context.

A healthy community is one in which all systems work well (and work together), and in which all citizens enjoy a good quality of life. This means that the health of the community is affected by the social determinants of health and development— the factors that influence individual and community health and development. These social determinants include: socioeconomic equity, social connectedness and a sense of personal or collective efficacy.

A healthy community encourages social networks, provides gathering places where people from all parts of the community may mingle, nurtures families and children, offers universal education and other services, strives to foster non-violent and healthy behavior, invites familiarity and interaction among the various groups that make up the community, and treats all groups and individuals with respect.

From the Canadian Nurses Association:

With the acceptance of peace as a determinant of health in the 1980s, the link between health and peace began to be interpreted as bidirectional and more dynamic in nature. Health interventions are now seen as a contributing factor toward achieving peace, and not simply the other way around. In 1981, the World Health Assembly passed a resolution highlighting the role significant role of health workers in the promotion of peace.

Social justice, peace and health are inextricably linked. Reference to health being a fundamental prerequisite for peace is included in the 1978 Declaration of Alma-Ata (WHO, 1978). The WHO constitution states that “the health of all peoples is fundamental to the attainment of peace and security and is dependent upon the fullest co-operation of individuals and States” (WHO, 2006).

From Andrew Pinto “Peace Through Health”:

Peace Through Health, or bringing together the goals of health and peace, is a growing movement, and reveals an effective role for physicians to play. The importance of Peace Through Health is illustrated by the World Health Assembly statement, “The role of physicians and other health workers in the preservation and promotion of peace is the most significant factor for the attainment of health for all.”

Canada has a role to play in this movement, as the Canadian Public Health Association resolved that health professionals "contribute to prevention of conflict by creating the conditions that enable individuals, communities and societies to achieve their goals without resorting to violence".

Peace is no mere matter of men fighting or not fighting. Peace, to have meaning for many who have known only suffering in both peace and war, must be translated into bread or rice, shelter, health, and education, as well as freedom and human dignity - a steadily better life. – Ralph Bunche

“The public health community has long recognized the direct linkage between peace and good health. There is a connection between public health, peace and the environment. I’ve always said that a peaceful community is a healthy community, and vice versa; and that a violent community is a sick (not healthy) community. One cannot have good public health unless peace and conflict resolution are present. Violence, in all of its manifestations, has tremendous negative impacts on people’s physical and mental health, and on the solidarity of a community. Whether it’s local crime, domestic violence, terrorism or war, both individuals and communities are always impacted by injury, death and socio-economic effects. So one of our very top priorities in the public health field must be to build peace and thereby improve public health. - Paul Walker