



NEW PARENTING RESOURCE HELPS PARENTS OF NEWBORNS IN COMMUNITIES ACROSS CANADA

Get Set for Life Welcome to Parenting Box provides parenting support to those most in need

Toronto, ON (May 21, 2003) – With great support from Unilever Canada Foundation, Invest in Kids has launched the **Get Set for Life Welcome to Parenting Box**. This important resource contains a range of materials for parents of newborns who might not otherwise have easy or affordable access to information or resources to support them in their role as parents. Family and child-focused centres, organizations and programs will distribute the Boxes to 10,000 new mothers across Canada.

“The **Get Set for Life Welcome to Parenting Box** contains a wealth of practical, easy-to-understand materials designed to help improve the knowledge, skills and confidence of parents of newborns,” says Dr. Chaya Kulkarni, Vice President, Invest in Kids.

Research has shown that the first five years of life are pivotal in a child’s future development. The way children are cared for in their earliest years is central to their ability to learn and create, to love, to trust and to develop a strong self image. The care they receive has a lasting impact on how productive, resilient, compassionate and confident children will be as adults. In its *National Survey of Parents of Young Children*, Invest in Kids found that 92% of Canadian parents believe parenting is the most important thing they can do, yet have relatively little knowledge about how children grow and develop. As a result, too many lack confidence in their parenting skills. For parents who struggle on different fronts—lack of finances, access to services, support networks, and resources—the challenges of parenting can be even greater.

“The materials in the Box put parenting information right in the hands of parents who need it most, at no cost to them,” says Dr. Kulkarni. “They are based on **Comfort, Play & Teach: A Positive Approach to Parenting™** which is a simple approach we developed to build on the every day activities that are part of a parent’s daily routine. When you comfort, play with and teach a child, you open a world of possibilities to that child. The new guidebook, **The Amazing World of Your Baby: Birth to 18 Months**, explains what parents can expect at different stages of their infant’s development and how through **Comfort, Play & Teach** they can encourage their baby’s healthy growth. Similarly, the guide we provide with the **Galaxy Whoozit®**, an award-winning developmental toy, shows parents how to use the toy to comfort, play with and teach their child.”

“Unilever Canada Foundation is committed to providing Canada’s youngest children with the best possible start in life,” says Kevin Boyce, President and CEO, Unilever Canada. “We are very proud to be involved with Invest in Kids in developing a creative solution to one of the most important challenges facing new parents.”

The Boxes will be delivered by professional and para-professional home visitors who will provide parents with an orientation on how the materials in the Box can be used to strengthen their parenting skills. Other materials in the Box include **Parenting with the Zap Family**, a video and guidebook of typical parent-child situations in the lives of this entertaining, animated TV family; a **Get Set for Life on CBC** bib; lists citing national and community resources customized for each province and territory; and product samples and coupons.

Invest in Kids will assess this program over the coming months with an eye to developing a plan to create and distribute even more **Get Set for Life Welcome to Parenting Boxes** in the future.

About Invest in Kids

Invest in Kids is a national, not-for-profit organization aimed at promoting the healthy social, emotional and intellectual development of children aged zero to five. Our research, parent education and professional education initiatives focus on strengthening the parenting skills, knowledge and confidence of Canadians to ensure the best possible start for all of our children. For more information, visit www.investinkids.ca.

About Get Set for Life

Get Set for Life is a national public education campaign created by CBC Television, Invest in Kids, *Canadian Living* and *Coup de pouce* magazines, in collaboration with Health Canada.

Get Set for Life is generously supported by Unilever's Lipton and Sunlight brands.

About Unilever Canada

Unilever is one of the world's largest consumer products companies with annual sales of approximately (US)\$47 billion in 2002. It produces and markets a wide range of foods and home and personal care products. Unilever operates in 88 countries around the globe and employs approximately 258,000 people.

In Canada, Unilever sales were C\$1.6 billion in 2002. It employs over 2,300 people across Canada. Unilever is best known in Canada by brands such as becel, Lipton, Red Rose, Slim-Fast, Hellmann's, Knorr, Breyers, Popsicle, Bertolli, Sunlight, AXE, Vaseline, Vim, Q-Tips, Dove, Suave and Degree.

- 30 -

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