

AIDS 2006 Toronto - Youth Programme Backgrounder



Young people have not known a world without AIDS. According to the United Nations Population Fund, 10 million youth, ages 15-24, are living with HIV. Every day, an estimated 6,000 youth are infected with the virus. In fact close to 50 per cent of all new infections occur among young people.

The AIDS 2006 Youth Programme supports the meaningful participation, integration and inclusion of young people throughout all levels of the conference, including planning and development. The Youth Programme will ensure access and meaningful participation on panels, in skills building workshops, forums, non-abstract sessions, abstract sessions, as moderators, presenters, delegates and ensure the visibility of youth throughout the Conference, Cultural Programme and Global Village.

The International AIDS Conference Organisers define youth as 16-25 years old. Throughout this backgrounder when referring to 'youth' and 'young people' the Conference definition is used.

Increased Youth Participation in the International AIDS Conference

AIDS 2006 is a landmark Conference for young people with unprecedented levels of youth participation throughout all levels of the Conference, on planning committees, as delegates, presenters and participants. For AIDS 2006 the Conference Organisers committed to ensuring greater participation from marginalized communities and took steps to ensure greater accessibility.

To increase youth participation for AIDS 2006, Conference Organisers drastically lowered registration fees and expanded the youth age range to 16-25.

Increased numbers of Youth Scholarships

AIDS 2006 there have been more scholarships awarded to young people than ever before at an International AIDS Conference, with 118 international scholarship recipients, 239 Canadian scholarship recipients, and 27 Youth Programme scholarships for a total of **384 young people who are being supported by the Conference to attend**. For AIDS 2004 Bangkok, 100 youth were awarded Conference scholarships.

Youth Delegates

It is estimated that there are over 1000 youth delegates at AIDS 2006.

History of youth participation in the International AIDS Conference:

- An estimated 50 youth at AIDS 2000 in Durban, South Africa
- An estimated 200 youth at AIDS 2002 in Barcelona, Spain
- An estimated 450 youth at AIDS 2004 in Bangkok, Thailand

Youth-Focused Sessions and Presenters

Over **40 young people** will be presenting in abstract sessions, poster presentations, skills building workshops and/or will be moderating at AIDS 2006.

Session Details:

- 18 youth-specific sessions in the Conference Programme
- 40 Youth Pavilion activities in the Global Village
- Daily Orientation and Planning Breakfast Sessions in the Global Village

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- Youth Opening and Closing Session in the Global Village Session Halls

For more session details see the Programme-at-a-Glance: www.aids2006.org

AIDS 2006 Youth Highlights

AIDS 2006 Youth Site

The youth micro site within www.aids2006.org serves as a clearinghouse of information on all youth related activities leading up to and during AIDS 2006 for youth, adults and media at AIDS 2006. Featuring blogs, the AIDS 2006 Youth Mentors Online discussion boards, helpful resources and more, the AIDS 2006 Youth Site is a use of new technology to engage youth globally before, during and after Conference. Check it out at: youth.aids2006.org

Youth Pre-Conference, August 10th -12th 2006

The Youth Pre-conference will prepare young people for meaningful and active participation at AIDS 2006 Toronto with a 2½ day workshop, held at the University of Toronto campus. At the Pre-conference youth will have an opportunity to network and build capacity and skills in preparation for AIDS 2006. In addition to providing youth delegates with a technical update, the Youth Pre-conference workshop will support delegates by developing specific advocacy skills for participating in the main conference.

Youth Leadership Forum, John Basset Theater, MTCC, August 13th 2006 10:15 -11:45

The High-Level Youth Leadership Forum “**From Rhetoric to Action**” on, which features esteemed global leaders Dr. Peter Piot, First Lady of Honduras Xiomara Castro de Zelaya, The Honourable Minister Josee Verner, Canadian Minister of International Cooperation and moderated by Ilana Sod from MTV Mexico.

AIDS 2006 Youth Opening and Reception, August 12 2006, Olympic Spirit Toronto, 35 E. Dundas St. 19:00 – 23:00 Invite Only Event

Delegates of all ages are welcomed and encouraged to attend the AIDS 2006 Youth Opening Reception presented by Levi's. Young delegates, adult allies and supporters, global leaders and all conference delegates acknowledge the participation of youth in the International AIDS Conference and the impact that young people have on the global response to HIV/AIDS. Honoured guest speakers include:

- Alicia Keys, Keep a Child Alive Ambassador
- Dr. Peter Piot, UNAIDS Executive Director
- DJ Tiesto, Dance4Life Ambassador

Youth Plenary Speaker, Kerril McKay, August 17 2006

Kerril McKay is a UNICEF Ambassador from Jamaica who will speak about ‘Youth and the Future’ for Thursday’s plenary. For Kerril’s bio go to:
<http://www.aids2006.org/PAG/PSession.aspx?SessionID=655>

Youth Pavilion in the Global Village, August 13-18 2006

The Youth Pavilion within the Global Village is a youth-focused space for meetings, forums and evening sessions. It is a space to highlight and showcase youth achievements, facilitate networking opportunities via dialogue between youth and

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adults, provide a youth media hub and lounge and continue the momentum from the Youth Pre-conference. Daily sessions are held throughout the conference within the Youth Pavilion to prepare young delegates to participate in the conference, create advocacy action plans and record and report lessons learned back to their communities. They will also include daily summaries from the Youth Rapporteur Team. **The Youth Pavilion Programme is available at youth.aids2006.org**

The Pavilion will showcase youth work on HIV/AIDS issues and support youth delegates at the conference. Pavilion exhibits will demonstrate that young people—the population most affected by the epidemic—are actively working toward solutions. It will also give a voice to youth delegates and organizations, providing support and space for presentations and workshops.

Youth-Adult Commitments Desk

The Youth Adult Commitments Desk is an unprecedented initiative to hold delegates accountable to commitments and promises made in previous international declarations as well as commitments made during the Toronto Conference. Adult delegates are encouraged to show their support for the young people in the global HIV/AIDS epidemic by making a commitment at the **Youth-Adult Commitments Desk at the Youth Pavilion** such as:

“Over the next year I will work to ensure that young people’s voices are included in national HIV/AIDS programme and policy decisions in my home country” -*Minister of Health*

“I will work towards having young people represented within the governance structure of my NGO by 2007” -*NGO Executive Director*

“My organization will support two young people to attend the next International AIDS Conference in Mexico.” -*International Development Agency*

The Youth-Adult Commitments Desk will provide adult conference participants an opportunity to articulate how they will work in partnership with youth to improve the situation of youth-focused HIV/AIDS programmes, policies, etc. Commitments made will be tied to outcomes and will be time specific. These commitments will be uploaded daily on the AIDS 2006 Youth Site and will be followed up post-conference via existing global youth networks.

Youth Pocketbook Guide to Navigating International AIDS Conferences

All young delegates will receive a copy of *Youth Pocketbook Guide to Navigating Conferences* at the Youth Pavilion. The *Pocketbook* was created by the AIDS 2006 Youth Programme in partnership with the United Nations Association in Canada to support young people’s efforts at the conference to raise and influence important issues that affect their lives and the lives of the peers and communities.

Download a copy at: <http://youth.aids2006.org>

Youth Programme Organisers

The Youth Programme is housed and coordinated by staff at the AIDS 2006 Toronto Local Host Secretariat. To guide and support the AIDS 2006 Youth Programme, the AIDS 2006 Youth Advisory Committee was formed, and is a formal part of the

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Conference governance structure. Represented on the AIDS 2006 Youth Advisory Committee are 22 youth and 2 adults from 13 countries. The Youth Programme is supported by the Government of Canada, MAC AIDS Fund, Levi's, and MTV International.

Six taskforces with over 100 youth and adult members were formed plan and implement all aspects of the AIDS 2006 Youth Programme and Toronto YouthForce. The task force members are from over 60 different organizations and represent over 10 different countries. For a detailed list of the members see:
<http://youth.aids2006.org/en/about.html>

Toronto Youth Force

The Youth Programme has formed a partnership with the Toronto YouthForce, The YouthForce is a wide-ranging coalition of non-governmental and international organizations, coordinated by Family Health International, the Global Youth Coalition on HIV/AIDS, TakingITGlobal, and Advocates for Youth who organize around each International AIDS Conference.

The Toronto YouthForce promotes and facilitates meaningful youth participation and youth-adult partnerships to raise the visibility of youth HIV/AIDS issues before, during, and after the Toronto XVI International AIDS Conference through concrete action.

The YouthForce works in close partnership with the AIDS 2006 Youth Programme, and is supported by UNFPA, UNAIDS, UNICEF, the Summit Foundation, UNESCO, CIDA, MAC AIDS Fund, and Levi's.