



## NEWS RELEASE/INTERVIEW OPPORTUNITY FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### Trauma resulting from unhealthy relationships is easier to prevent than to treat

#### *Childhood problems, such as bullying, are precursors to dating violence*

(TORONTO, Ontario -- October 7, 2002) -- Education for children and adolescents about forming healthy relationships should be a public health priority in order to prevent many societal problems including substance abuse, unsafe sex, and relationship violence, says Dr. David Wolfe. Wolfe has been appointed the first holder of the RBC Investments Chair in Children's Mental Health and Developmental Psychopathology at the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH). RBC Investments through the RBC Foundation funded the Chair, jointly held with the University of Toronto.

Childhood problems such as bullying are precursors to dating violence in adolescents, and spousal and child abuse in adulthood. When we see the ensuing crisis situations, we rush to treat the effects of the harm. Prevention, historically, hasn't had the same urgency. "Trauma is preventable. We are not doing enough in that area. Funding generally goes to treating the *effects* of trauma rather than its *prevention*," says Wolfe.

With the creation of the RBC Investments Chair in Children's Mental Health and Developmental Psychopathology, CAMH and RBC Investments are taking steps toward ensuring that *prevention* becomes a more significant focus in children's mental health.

When children act aggressively or bully their peers, we usually respond with severe consequences such as suspension. "We wait for them to do something wrong, then punish them," says Wolfe. "But these things happen far too often to catch only the bad guys. When it comes to physical safety issues such as not smoking or wearing seatbelts, comprehensive public health promotion approaches involving education and supportive public policies are in place. We need to take the same approach, including widespread education on forming healthy relationships."

Wolfe will be conducting research at CAMH on universal prevention initiatives that promote positive children's mental health, including developing curricula for elementary and high schools that advances safety and violence prevention, healthy relationships and harm reduction.

Wolfe joins CAMH from the University of Western Ontario where his work focused on the effects of child abuse and neglect and prevention with high-risk children and youth. He was formerly chair of the United Nations Sub-Committee on Child Abuse in Peacetime and Chair, Violence and Traumatic Stress Review Committee, US National Institute of Mental Health.

The Centre for Addiction and Mental Health is the largest mental health and addiction facility in Canada. CAMH is fully affiliated with the University of Toronto and the World Health Organization.

RBC Investments is the global wealth management division of Royal Bank of Canada (TSX, NYSE: RY), which uses the initials RBC as a prefix for its businesses and operating subsidiaries and operates under the master brand name of RBC Financial Group. Royal Bank of Canada is Canada's largest financial institution as measured by market capitalization and assets, and is one of North America's leading diversified financial services companies. It provides personal and commercial banking, wealth management services, insurance, corporate and investment banking, and transaction processing services on a global basis. The company employs 60,000 people who serve more than 12 million personal, business and public sector customers through offices in North America and some 30 countries around the world. For more information, please visit [www.rbc.com](http://www.rbc.com).

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT:

Jean Geary, Centre for Addiction and Mental Health Foundation  
416) 535-8501, extension 4395

Graeme Harris, RBC Investments  
(416) 955-2734

NOTE TO EDITORS

World Mental Health Day is Thursday October 10th, and the theme is **The Effects of Trauma and Violence in Children and Adolescents**. Dr. David Wolfe is available for interview and could discuss local and global trauma. He could also discuss the ways in which parents can help youth form healthy relationships and avoid unsafe sex, substance abuse and violent relationships.