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For immediate release

New Tools Launched To Encourage Media Literacy and Support National Media Education Week

Ottawa, October 5, 2006 – Media Awareness Network (MNet) and the Canadian Teachers' Federation (CTF) today launched new tools to promote media education and support Canada's first National Media Education Week. The new tools include an extensive Web site, a media education blog and professional development materials for educators.

The purpose of National Media Education Week, to be held November 19 to 24, 2006, is to encourage the integration and the practice of media education in Canadian homes, schools and communities.

"National Media Education Week is designed to put the spotlight on media literacy and the essential role it can play in educating children and youth," said Michelle Scarborough, MNet Executive Director. "Media are powerful forces in the lives of youth, and the new tools we launch today will highlight ways parents, teachers and kids can get directly involved in a dialogue about media."

"Media education is a forward-thinking strategy for engaging students to be thoughtful and informed citizens," said CTF President Winston Carter. "The week is a call to action to educators, parents and community groups, government and media industries to work together to widely integrate media education in Canadian homes and schools."

MNet and the CTF are working with the Association for Media Literacy, Canadian Association of Media Education Organizations, Concerned Children's Advertisers, Historica, provincial teachers' associations, La Quinzaine le l'Éducation-Médias – now in its seventh year, and various education and community groups to develop and promote a wide range of media education programs and professional development opportunities for the week.

The new tools launched today to support young people's media literacy:

1. National Media Education Week Web site <www.mediaeducationweek.ca> offers a great introduction to media education. In addition to providing a list of activities taking place during the week, the site also gives practical tips and tools for parents, teachers and community groups to help children and youth become media literate.
2. *Talk Media*, is a new media literacy blog on MNet's award winning Web site <www.media-awareness.ca>. The blog will be a source of commentary and dialogue on the latest media news, trends and resources.
3. *Media Education: Make It Happen!* program is a series of free downloadable resources to help educators understand and facilitate media literacy in their classrooms. The program consists of a booklet, PowerPoint workshop, and a facilitator's guide with handouts.

In coming weeks, MNet will launch MyMedia – a national video podcasting contest for students. Young people will be encouraged to critically understand the nature, techniques and impacts of media messages and productions, by creating video podcasts on media representation. Also, a national Public Service Announcement campaign will be produced with the generous support of CHUM Television and Rethink Advertising. The nationally televised and print campaign will promote the importance of media literacy as an essential skill for young people.

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About Media Awareness Network

MNet is a non-profit Canadian organization whose mission is to support and encourage media and Internet education, and its widest possible integration into Canadian schools, homes and communities. Its aim is to help children and youth to develop an informed and critical understanding of the nature of the media, the techniques used in creating media products and the media's role and influence within society. MNet is sustained by the generous support of its sponsors and partners, who include: Bell Canada • CHUM Television • Microsoft Canada • Rogers Yahoo! Hi-Speed Internet • TELUS • CTV Inc. • Canadian Recording Industry Association • National Film Board of Canada • AOL Canada Inc.

About the Canadian Teachers' Federation

The Canadian Teachers' Federation is the national unified voice of over 215,000 teachers across Canada.

For more information, visit www.mediaeducationweek.ca, or
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