



in respect.

c/o The Society for Safe and Caring Schools and Communities  
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# News Release

March 16, 2005

## **Government representatives help launch initiative**

Hon. Anne McLellan, Hon. Gene Zwozdesky and Hon. Gary Mar joined partners of the *Meeting the Intercultural Challenge in Schools: Respect for Faith and Diversity* initiative to launch a new awareness project called, “I believe in respect.”

The initiative Steering Committee was represented by Chair Stephanie Bishop (United Nations Association of Canada), and committee members Jim Logan (Edmonton Interfaith Centre), and Dr. Vicki Mather (The Society for Safe and Caring Schools and Communities). Faith leaders, educators, community members and students joined dignitaries at the event today at MacEwan College.

The purpose of the project is to encourage respect for faith and diversity in schools and communities. The project does not advocate for a particular faith – in fact, the objective is to encourage understanding of the different faiths of the world, and to promote interfaith harmony.

The project website features resources for teachers, information for students and teachers, a lively multi-media production, and links to interfaith organizations. In addition, bright posters will be distributed to schools across the province helping to promote understanding and respect.

“Schools are environments of enlightenment and learning,” comments Steering Committee Chair Stephanie Bishop. “It’s a wonderful opportunity to help broaden horizons and enhance understanding of other faiths, cultures and traditions.”

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The materials promote messages of respect, acceptance, understanding and cooperation.

“It all starts with awareness,” comments Stephanie. “Finding out more about each other helps to break down barriers and misconceptions.”

The project was initiated by The Society for Safe and Caring Schools and Communities, the United Nations Association of Canada Edmonton Branch, and the Interfaith Centre for Education and Action, through funding by Canadian Heritage (Government of Canada).

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For more information, visit [www.ibelievein.ca](http://www.ibelievein.ca)

For media interviews with members of the Steering Committee, contact Sue Heuman, Focus Communications, 732-7213.