

future;

- To develop a sense of community and belonging among the children in order to nurture self-esteem and personal development.

Policy

To this end, in cooperation with local NGO's, educational and health organizations and professionals as well as local governments and ministries, Canada should:

- Pilot a project of this nature in Canada to study its effectiveness.
- Support the funding necessary to establish such educational centers throughout Latin America.
- Encourage and facilitate collaboration of local educational and health organizations and professionals to develop suitable materials and resources for the education of street youth.
- Encourage national governments to develop incentives for educators and health professionals to bring their expertise to this sector.
- Help to develop co-op programs for street children who have received training from the educational centers.

HEALTH

Background

While efforts have been made at meeting basic health needs for people in the Latin American region, most specifically in the form of vaccinations and modern medicines, there has been a lack of the required education necessary for young people to understand their bodies and to be capable of taking control of their health. Lack of health education has dramatically affected the incidences of unplanned pregnancies among Latin American girls and has contributed to the increasing number of young people with HIV and other STDs. By denying young people the proper education that needs to be coupled with health measures, children and youth are ill informed about their own bodies and are therefore not equipped to deal with their ever changing physical and mental health. As a result, children move into adulthood uncomfortable discussing health problems, particularly in the areas of sexuality and psychology. New strategies are necessary to ensure that health needs are being met along with the educational component that is required to nurture healthy, strong young minds, able to comprehend changes in their bodies and how to properly maintain their health and emotional well being.

Policy Goal

The goal of this policy is to improve health education in schools and health centers so that youth and children will receive the knowledge and information they need to maintain their physical and emotional health throughout their lives.