



**MEDIA RELEASE**  
**January 29, 2010**

Karen Branscombe, Superintendent of School District 2 is excited to announce that School District 2 continues to support an innovative community program called **Roots of Empathy** with the addition of a ninth school, Evergreen Park.

Roots of Empathy has had a very positive impact on classrooms across the district. Instructors, classroom teachers, and students have expressed how rewarding the experience with the program has been. The program designed to build caring, peaceful and civil societies through the development of empathy in children and adults. At the heart of the program is a neighbourhood infant (age 2-4 months) and parent who visit a classroom once a month with a certified instructor. The program focuses on raising levels of empathy, resulting in more respectful and caring relationships and reduced levels of bullying and aggression.

One instructor commented on how her class assumed ownership of the ROE baby and displayed exemplary behaviour during her visits. The impact of the program is expressed through the words of students involved:

Roots of Empathy:

"can teach the world that everyone has feelings and deserves to be treated with love and care."

"teaches the world that if you bully people you are hurting yourself too."

"can teach us to be good parents."

"can teach the world that it is really hard to own a baby and it can teach youth how to take care of a baby."

"teaches us that all people have different feelings."

"can help the world become a wonderful place to live."

The success of the program is due to the commitment of administrators, teachers, and certified instructors; instructors have generously been provided by Horizon Health, the Moncton Zone, Crandall University, and School District 2.

Last year the following eight schools embarked on their journey to have their students involved:

Arnold H. McLeod	Forest Glen
Magnetic Hill	Riverside Consolidated
West Riverview	Beaverbrook
Port Elgin Regional	Shediac Cape

The development of the program locally has been made possible through the collaborative effort of School District 2, the United Way of GMSNB, the Community Foundation of Southeast New Brunswick, Horizon Health Network, the Moncton Zone, and many community agencies committed to developing healthy, safe communities.

Next fall, School District 2 hopes to continue to support the success and growth of such a wonderful program. They look forward to meeting new families eager to have their infant involved in such a rewarding experience. Parents interested in participating whose infants are born during the summer of 2010 can contact Ruth MacDonald at the pre-natal clinic of the Moncton Hospital (857-5498). Contact Tina Landry, Transition to School Coordinator, 856-3222.

**“We are District 2 – Providing Quality Education”**