



For Immediate Release  
March 5, 2008

## **Dhalla Empowers Youth in Brampton**

Brampton -In response to the growing acts of violence committed by youth in Brampton, Dr. Ruby Dhalla, Member of Parliament Brampton Springdale has created the Brampton-Springdale Youth Advisory Council to empower youth to actively participate in designing and developing solutions for issues that confront them.

Dozens of Bramptonians, students, parents, trustees, teachers, principals and community members gathered this weekend at St. Marguerite D'Youville high school to support Dhalla's new initiative, contributing their ideas and vision for a safer community.

"Youth are our future of our city and community. We must ensure youth are empowered and have a voice in making the change they want to see happen. The youth advisory council will give students the opportunity to have their voice heard and be active members in designing and developing solutions for issues that face them in their schools and in the community" says Dhalla.

After an hour of discussions the participants at the first BSYAC information session were divided into smaller groups and asked to present their strategies on addressing at risk youth. Many parents and youth called for greater investment in after school activities, programs to involve parents in the day to day lives of youth at school as well as initiatives to create a safe environment for youth to talk about crime and other challenges encountered by students.

As one of the youngest Members of Parliament in Canada, Dhalla is a passionate advocate for youth. She has created the BSYAC as a non-partisan platform that will provide youth the opportunity to develop solutions to violence for youth, by youth. The council aims to give students a platform to speak openly and directly with educators, elected officials and community members to address issues such drugs, gangs and bullying in schools. In addition BSYAC will work to establish awareness campaigns to engage youth in tackling violent crime and the

rehabilitation of young criminals in the community.

"The support of parents, teachers and community members is needed to encourage students to become active citizens of Brampton. I am personally challenging youth and residents across Brampton to become engaged and empowered citizens. The first step they can take is by joining the BSAYC council" says Dhalla.

The BSYAC will be holding another meeting in a few weeks. Dr. Dhalla looks forward to working with the youth and community members to build a stronger, safer Brampton Springdale community. Youth from the ages of 12-19 years of age who are interested in joining the Brampton-Springdale Youth Advisory Council can complete the application at [www.rubydhalla.ca](http://www.rubydhalla.ca) or email [dhallr@parl.gc.ca](mailto:dhallr@parl.gc.ca) for any further questions.

- 30 -

Contact:

Candice Deib  
Office of Ruby Dhalla  
613-995-4843