

## Karin Akins

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**From:** Ami Thakkar  
**Sent:** Thursday, December 22, 2005 2:05 PM  
**To:** Argentina - Susana Casaurang; Brazil - Maria Do Carmo Krehan; Canada - Joanne McQuiggan ; Chile - Victor Caro; Colombia - Liliana Gonzalez; Czech - Anna Onucová ; Finland - Helina Perttu ; Hungary - Agnes Zsok; Hungary - Hayo de Vries; Mexico - Mónica Hernández; Netherlands - Monica Kiezenbrink; Peru - Julio Moscoso; Philippines - Elsa Ravelo ; Poland - Arek Brzezinski; Russia - Victoria Davrukova; SKorea - Jiin Choi (Eva); SKorea - Yejun Choi (Noel); South Africa - Lumka Tetani; Thailand - Srisak Thaiarry; Turkey - Maggie Pinar; UK - Sophie Wood ; US - Catherine Brockette  
**Cc:** Alan Williams; Susan Pezzullo; Kim Ascoli; Karin Akins; Michelle Szechenyi; Kathy Lane  
**Subject:** December 2005 Email

*Dear Partners,*

*As the year comes to a close, we want to take this opportunity to thank you for your tireless work over the past 12 months. This was a great year for Make a Connection, and much of that has to do with your outstanding contribution and commitment to delivering quality programs for young people. Our warmest wishes go out to you and your families for a happy and restful holiday season. We very much look forward to working with you in 2006.*

*Below you will find a few updates for this month:*

- 1) **New projects:** We are happy to announce that the Chile, Colombia and Venezuela projects, as well as the 2<sup>nd</sup> phase of Hungary were all officially launched in November–December.
- 2) **December Report:** Kindly remember that your December reports are due by **January 31**. If you plan to submit the report in advance, please let your Regional Manager know as they can start the review process earlier.
- 3) **Outcomes Measurement:** Brandeis University has been working with IYF Partners since our annual meeting to ensure that by the end of January, data are collected from all youth who participated in the prospective baseline surveys. This will allow Brandeis to analyze in February whether and what kinds of changes occurred for those youth who participated in the MAC projects in 2005. In addition, many projects will be collecting follow up data on youth, 3 months after they completed the project and if those data are received in time, they, too will be included in Brandeis final outcomes report which will be finalized in June 2006.

Along with the prospective studies, retrospective data have been collected or are in the process of being collected in Thailand, Hungary, South Africa and Turkey. In Mexico and the Czech Republic where Brandeis is doing in-depth studies, retrospective studies are underway as well. These data on youth who participated in the project will be supplemented by prospective data, focus group information and interviews with local stakeholders. For these two studies Brandeis will help us understand the organizational and social context in which those two projects were implemented and how these may or may not have influenced the outcomes achieved.

On the other question which we hope to answer through the OMS is whether some project types or features appear to have different outcomes than others. For example, what can we learn from the 2005 studies about the required amount of time a youth needs to be exposed to the intervention (e.g. the project) in order to have positive outcomes? What can we learn about the relative benefit of working through creative expression to build a set of life skills? What can we learn about the differences in the types of youth targeted by the projects in terms of what positive change?

As we receive the preliminary reports from Brandeis we will share them with you to get your input. We look forward to a year of inquiry with you about what these data mean and how we can use them to improve our effectiveness in developing youths' capacities.

- 4) **Communications Guidelines:** We are now in the process of revising the Communications Guidelines. The new Guidelines – available during the first quarter of 2006 – will provide you with an opportunity to update and refresh your project's identity. The Guidelines will also include information related to the new strategic direction of [www.makeaconnection.org](http://www.makeaconnection.org).
- 5) **Project Posters:** Nokia has shipped to all the partners the posters that were created for the Make a Connection 5<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Dinner event in Helsinki. The posters were mailed to the attention of the Executive Directors. Keep a look out for them!

- 6) **Skype:** For more cost-effective communication, we'd encourage you to check out **skype** ([www.skype.com](http://www.skype.com)). You can make free calls to anyone who is in the network and use it for conferencing. There is no charge for signing up. The Make a Connection Team at IYF all have user names. You can search for us by our last names.

*Best wishes,  
Make a Connection Team*