



***Free The Children/RBC “We Create Change” Penny Drive Raises \$1.4 Million,
Providing 56,000 People With Clean Water For Life***

*Elementary School Students Pull Wagons Filled with Pennies Up Bay Street
to Celebrate Canada’s Largest Youth-Led Penny Drive*

TORONTO, ONTARIO – (June 27, 2013) – To mark the end of the school year, Free The Children and RBC celebrated the incredible fundraising effort of hundreds of thousands of youth and their schools through the [“We Create Change”](#) penny drive, today announcing the final total, which outweighs approximately 64 elephants and more than five empty Boeing 747’s. Young people across the country raised **140 million pennies** (\$1.4 million), providing 56,000 people with clean water for life. All pennies collected were in support of Free The Children’s year-long [Water Initiative](#) to provide a permanent source of clean water to people in developing countries.

As Canada’s Largest Youth-Led Penny Drive comes to a close, a caravan of elementary school students pulled 50 red wagons filled with pennies up Bay Street in Toronto today. RBC president and CEO Gord Nixon and co-founder of Free The Children Marc Kielburger were there to welcome the students and their penny wagons into the bank’s Toronto main branch and to congratulate and celebrate their amazing fundraising drive.

“It’s great to be part of something that is truly creating change and I would like to thank all the students and schools who participated,” said Gord Nixon, president and CEO, RBC. “Our long-term commitment with Free the Children supports two very important issues - financial literacy and access to clean water. Today’s results demonstrate how a large-scale, positive impact can be made when we work together — no matter how small or simple those acts may seem.”

Students at more than 3,000 schools across Canada participated in the “We Create Change” penny drive over the past school year. They emptied their piggy banks, held school-wide penny drives, canvassed neighbourhoods, family and friends, and set up collection jars in community centres and workplaces. Individual donors, businesses and organizations also collected pennies for this campaign. Special Free The Children/RBC penny bags were provided to all participants. When full, each bag held \$25 in pennies – enough to provide one person with clean water for life.

“We are so incredibly humbled by the amount of change Canada’s youth were able to achieve this year, and we can’t thank RBC enough for opening up their branches to accept the more than 56,000 penny bags that were dropped off throughout the year,” said Marc Kielburger, co-founder of Free The Children.” On average, 80 percent of illnesses in the developing world can be linked to poor water and sanitation. Thanks to the incredible efforts of youth across Canada, the “We Create Change” penny drive will provide 56,000 people in our developing countries, clean water for life.”

The final day to drop off designated Free The Children/RBC \$25 penny bags at RBC branches across the country is Saturday, June 29, 2013. Next year’s We Create Change campaign will focus on a new coin drive to support education in Free The Children’s developing communities overseas. The campaign will also include tools and resources focused on financial literacy for teachers here in Canada to use and educate their students right in the classroom.

Pennies collected through We Create Change, in conjunction with the proceeds from sales of [Me to We’s Water Rafiki Friend Chain](#), online donations, and [We Walk 4Water](#), has enabled Free The Children to reach its year-long Water Initiative goal of providing 100,000 people around the world with permanent sources of clean water.

About Free The Children

Free The Children is an international charity and educational partner. Founded in 1995 by international activist Craig Kielburger, Free The Children believes in a world where young people are free to achieve their fullest potential, and empowers youth to remove barriers that prevent them from being active local and global citizens. The organization's domestic programs—which includes [We Day](#), Free The Children's signature youth empowerment event—educate, engage and empower 1.7 million young people across North America, the UK and around the world to become engaged global citizens. Its international projects have brought more than 650 schools and school rooms to youth and provided clean water and sanitation, health care and food security to one million people around the world, freeing children and their families from the cycle of poverty.

The organization has received the World's Children's Prize for the Rights of the Child, the Human Rights Award from the World Association of Non-Governmental Organizations, and has formed successful partnerships with leading school boards and Oprah's Angel Network. For more information, visit www.freethechildren.com.

About RBC and Youth

RBC supports a diverse range of youth-focused initiatives across Canada, through sponsorships, donations and employee volunteer activities. Through long-term commitments with Free The Children, RBC supports We Day events across Canada, the We Act program and We Create Change and is the exclusive financial services sponsor of all Free The Children initiatives. In addition, RBC seeks to provide young people with the financial understanding and foundation to achieve secure financial futures by offering free financial advice and tools to students through the RBC Advice Centre and the RBC Financial Advice for Students website. For more information, visit www.rbcadvicecentre.com.

RBC supports a broad range of community initiatives through donations, sponsorships and employee volunteer activities. In 2012, we contributed more than \$95 million to causes worldwide, including donations and community investments of more than \$64 million and \$31 million in sponsorships.

- 30 -

For more information, please contact:

Kate Yurincich, RBC, 416 974-1031, kate.yurincich@rbc.com

Tamara Kaftalovich, Free The Children, 416 888-8536, tamara@freethechildren.com