

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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**Summit to Launch International Research Initiative on Youth, Technology, and Learning**  
*Efforts to focus on the new generation of tech-savvy learners*

**New York, NY:** They've been called the Internet Generation, the "always connected," and the Power Users. They are teens who have grown up with computers, the Internet, and cell phones, and are using these technologies to communicate and access information anytime, anywhere. But what impact is this profound technological revolution having on young people around the world? How is it changing the ways they think and learn? What implications will these changes have for their education and future employment?

Leaders from the industry, education, and research communities will provide some answers at the kickoff summit for an international study focused on how youth around the world are using technology and influencing the direction of a global information society. Speakers at the event, to be held at the United Nations Headquarters, New York City, December 12-13, 2004, will present their research, hypotheses, and forecasts on the impact that growing numbers of technically-talented youth around the world, so-called "power users," will have on the future of education, work, and society at large.

"We are seeing young people, from about the age of eight, already proficient at using many forms of technology," said Joyce Malyn-Smith, a project director at Education Development Center, a host for the summit. "They are already accustomed to using the Internet to obtain information, using cell phones and text and instant messaging to contact anyone anytime, and using video games, PDAs, iPods and other technologies routinely. This knowledge and ability is leading to profound changes in the ways young people interact, solve problems, and approach tasks, and our summit is a first step toward understanding what these changes mean for our society," Malyn-Smith said.

"Technology is a powerful tool for development," said Amir A. Dossal, Executive Director of the United Nations Fund for International Partnerships. "We welcome this initiative and hope it will spearhead new ideas and action in achieving the Millennium Development Goals," he said.

Among those releasing research at the summit, will be:

**Dr. Lone Dirckink-Holmfeld, Aalborg University, Denmark,** will speak on whether our educational institutions are ready to meet the challenges of the digital generation and what we need to learn from power users to design new learning environments to guide their learning.

**Dr. Daphne Bavelier and C. Shawn Green of the University of Rochester,** will present research on ways that intensive, long term experiences with technology shape the brain and how we learn.

**Dr. Eric Klopfer and Susan Yoon, Massachusetts Institute of Technology,** will talk about developing games and simulations for power users, and his work with youth, using scientific tools and techniques.

Other attendees include John Gage, VP and Chief Researcher of Sun Microsystems, Inc., David Saedi, CEO of Certiport, Rob Foshay, VP of Plato Learning, Inc., Patrick Gaston, President of Verizon Foundation, Megan Stewart, Director of Global Education, Macromedia, Inc., and Cheryl Scott Williams, VP of Education, Corporation for Public Broadcasting. Participants will discuss and make recommendations regarding the future impact on society of today's power users, their importance in building a skilled and qualified workforce, the revolution in cell phone use, and the impact of these tech-savvy youth on educational product development.

The summit event will be hosted by Janet Whitla, President, Education Development Center, Inc. in collaboration with the United Nations Fund for International Partnerships.

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***Education Development Center, Inc. (EDC)** is an international non-profit organization that manages 325 projects in 50 countries to advance learning and healthy development for individuals of all ages. The summit is a project of EDC's **Education, Employment, and Community Programs'** Workforce and Human Development Group, which builds inclusive public-private partnerships, creates education-to-employment systems, and supports information communication technology (ICT) fluency for all learners.*

***The United Nations Fund for International Partnerships (UNFIP)** promotes new United Nations partnerships and alliances worldwide. Established by Secretary-General Kofi Annan in March 1998, UNFIP is an autonomous trust fund set up to serve as the interface between the United Nations system and the United Nations Foundation (UNF), the public charity responsible for administering, over a period of 15 years, Ted Turner's US\$1 billion contribution in support of United Nations causes. Over the years, UNFIP has expanded its functions to provide a "one-stop" service for partnership opportunities with the UN family.*