



In September 2008, a new European project called HEROES (Health & Road Safety: Volunteering heroes) selected by the European Commission and the EAHC (Executive Agency for Health and Consumers) was launched. The aim of the HEROES project is to develop a series of cross-fertilized best practices at a European level involving 13 organizations / universities / research institutes from 11 Member States of the European Union (Belgium, France, Bulgaria, Poland, Spain, Greece, Luxembourg, Portugal, Germany, Cyprus and The Netherlands). The strategic goal of the HEROES project is to bring together youth organizations active in the field of preventive health and / or road safety through prevention amongst teenagers and young adults, as well as universities and research institutes working with young adults, students and/or educators. During the years that the HEROES project will be funded, a virtual network of volunteers, students and educators across Europe around the theme of “health topics and road safety cross-fertilization” will be created.

Indeed, participating partners will have created 13 new awareness campaigns incorporating elements of best practices targeting young people in the areas of health and road safety. Within this framework, partners will train new volunteers, publicize the project and then pilot the new campaign in their own country. These newly implemented campaigns will fundamentally draw upon elements of best practice from existing European campaigns, whilst promoting their own volunteers and students as real Heroes. Using the effective peer-to-peer education tool, the HEROES project raises awareness amongst young people on issues relating to both health and road safety simultaneously.

After the pilot projects have been completed, detailed guidelines will be available regarding how the campaign was created and how it was implemented (including volunteer training and communication). This information will be available to other associations throughout Europe on the HEROES website, allowing them to incorporate elements of best practice into their own awareness campaigns.

HEROES promotes the idea that adopting a responsible and mature attitude, an attitude young people so often want to show to their friends, is an attitude that can be applied to many different areas which include love (HIV / AIDS), health (alcohol, drugs) and road safety. These areas, although separate in their own right, are linked together when considering safety issues

in everyday life.