

Health education

"Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world."
Nelson Mandela, South Africa (1918-)

For successful prevention and control of the cardiovascular disease epidemic, changes to policy, legislation and taxation are not enough. These interventions will not be effective if there is no public understanding, support and demand for them. Some areas lie beyond legislation – for example, the choice of food for families, the amount of salt added in cooking, whether or not to smoke – and here health education is essential to promote healthy choices.

Schools provide an ideal venue for health education. They can teach about risk factors, refusal skills, and the strategies of the tobacco and food industries. For example, young people can analyse how tobacco industry promotion attempts to manipulate them by equating smoking with growing up, freedom and being cool.

Increasing knowledge, and changing beliefs, attitudes and intentions, on their own are not enough to change behaviour. School programmes must also lead by example, by making healthy food available, providing exercise facilities, prohibiting tobacco use at all school facilities and events, and helping students and staff lose weight and quit smoking. Ideally, these activities should be part of a coordinated school health programme, reinforced by community-wide efforts.

The WHO Global School Health Initiative is designed to strengthen international, national

World Heart Day

World Heart Federation event

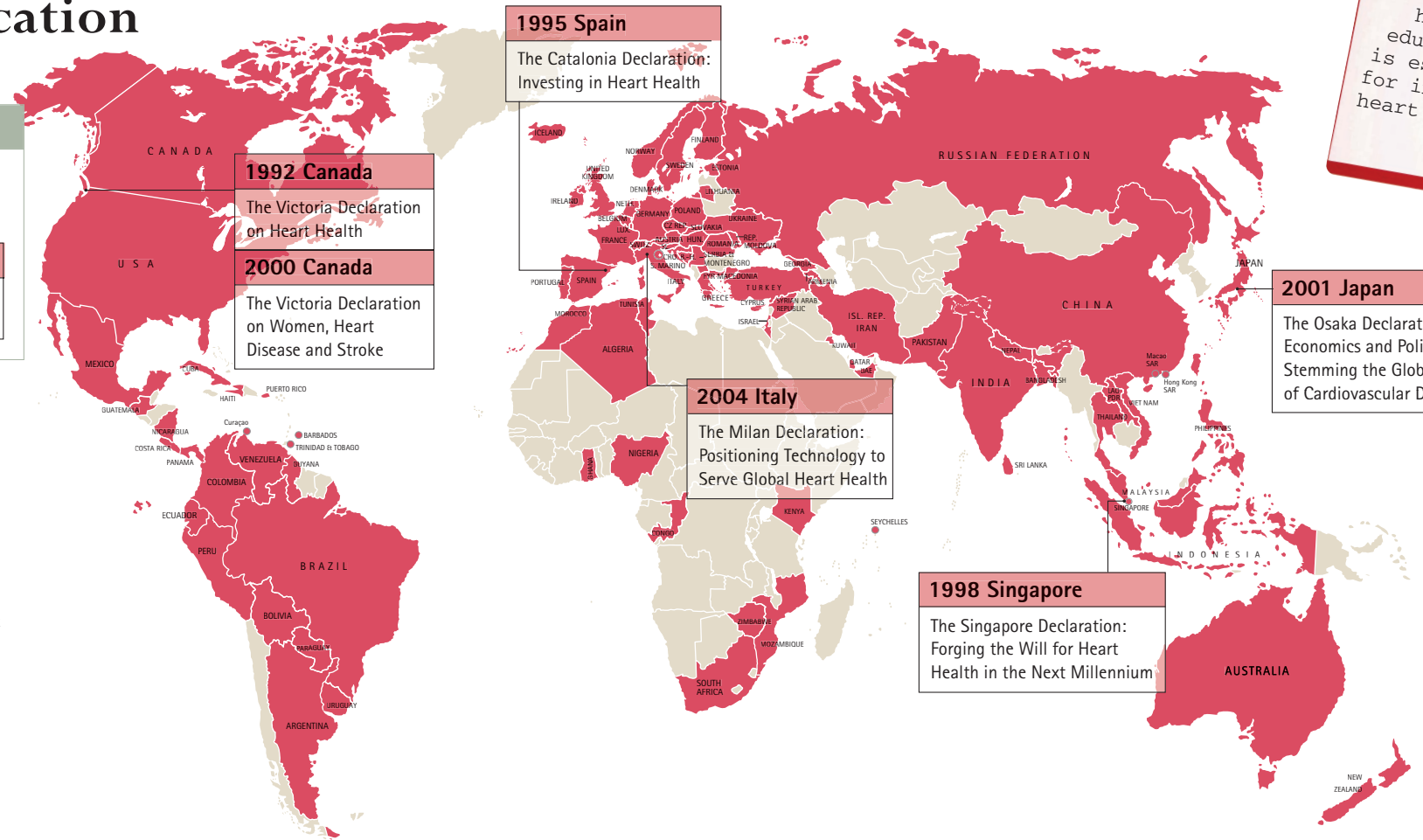
participating countries and territories 2003

Heart Health Declarations

See Milestones pp76-81 for further details

and local support for effective school health programmes or "health-promoting schools". Guidelines have been developed on various factors that affect health, such as tobacco, diet and physical activity.

The WHO Global School-based Student Health Survey is aimed at adolescents aged 13 to 15 years, and covers nine risk or protective factors. Survey results will provide information on trends over time, which is useful for formulation of risk reduction policies.



Lifelong health education is essential for improving heart health.

World Heart Day Themes

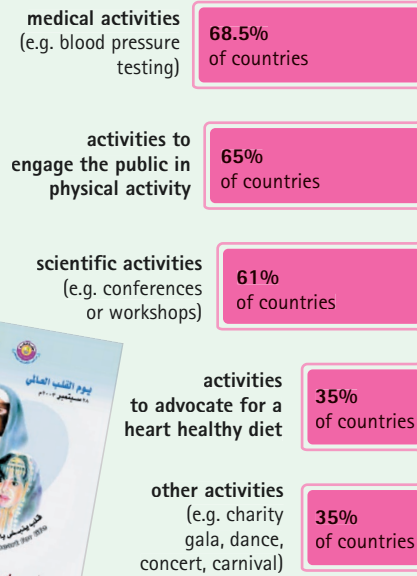
- 2000 Physical Activity
- 2001 A Heart for Life
- 2002 Nutrition and Physical Activity



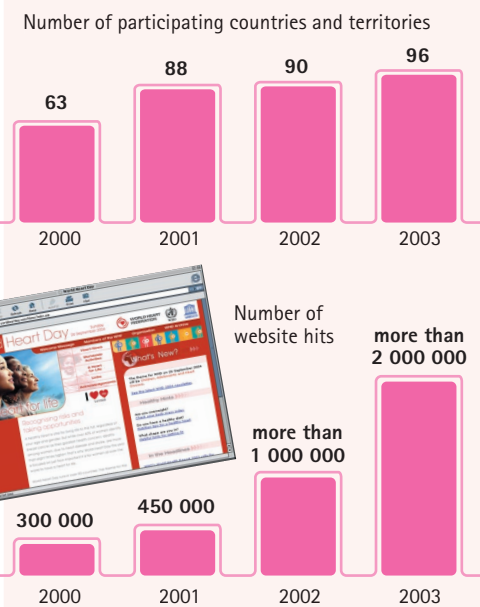
- 2003 Women, Heart Disease and Stroke
- 2004 Children, Adolescents and Heart Disease
- 2005 Obesity



World Heart Day Activities 2001



Evaluation of World Heart Days 2000-2003



Giving up smoking: International Quit and Win

