Benefits of joining RRFSS:

1) Longest continuous running local health survey in Canada: Health organizations joining RRFSS will benefit from the experience and established infrastructure of the longest running health surveillance system in Canada called the Rapid Risk Factor Surveillance System (RRFSS).

2) Credibility: RRFSS is a partner with the Institute for Social Research (ISR) at York University, the largest university-based survey research centre in Canada with an in-house call centre to collect the RRFSS health related survey data. Since RRFSS began in 2001 it has become one of the most recognized and respected local health data sources in Ontario. RRFSS data has been used by many provincial health organizations such as MOHLTC, PHO and Cancer Care Ontario as well the majority of Ontario Public Health Units.

3) Rapid: RRFSS collects annual health survey data in three (four month) data collection cycles and datasets are distributed within eight weeks of collecting data for each cycle. Plus, survey questions can be added or deleted to each cycle allowing for 'rapid' data collection and response to health topics or emerging issues.

4) Cost savings by collaboration: Because RRFSS operates as a collaborative; many of the costs associated with survey design and data collection are spread out among the members. This collaboration makes the overall cost of a RRFSS survey significantly lower than having an independent health survey conducted by ISR.

5) Leaders in survey methodology: ISR continues to be leaders in the field of survey sample design and methodology and RRFSS now offers, in addition to the traditional land line telephone survey, two new data collection options: a web survey and a cell phone survey. With these new options, RRFSS can now be conducted as a completely multi-mode survey.

6) Budget flexibility: There are many cost options to choose from with RRFSS depending on data needs and budget. Sample size can be as small or large as needed and can be based on any geographic area. Interview length can also be selected from a large range of options. For example, the approximate annual cost for a 15 minute interview of 1,200 interviews, is $48,500. However, a member could also choose to have 720 interviews at 10 minutes per interview for $24,500. Custom surveys based on individual budgets are also available.

7) Reduced core questions: The number of core questions (i.e., those that all organizations must ask) has been reduced to only three socio-demographic modules: age of respondent, gender of respondent and age of children. These questions take up less than one minute of survey time, allowing members with smaller budgets to conduct shorter surveys on specific modules of interest.

8) Customizable surveys and questions: RRFSS has a growing inventory of over 300 modules (sets of questions) available to choose from to collect data on various health-related topics. In addition to asking any existing RRFSS modules, members can develop new modules or revise existing questions in modules at any time during the year, including 'themed' or emerging issue modules. Modules can be chosen with confidence knowing that all of the survey questions in RRFSS go through pretesting by ISR and review.

9) Allows for sharing and comparing data: RRFSS member organizations are able to easily request and share data with each other because of the collaborative nature of RRFSS. The process is far less formal and time consuming than the 'RRFSS External Data Request' procedure for non-RRFSS member organizations.

10) Three membership periods each year to join RRFSS:
RRFSS contracts generally run for one calendar year (i.e., January 1st to December 31st). However, there are three time periods when an organization can join RRFSS based on the start of each of the three (four month) data collection cycles: January, May and September. Multi-year contracts are also available. If you have any questions about membership you can contact Lynne Russell, the RRFSS Coordinator, at: lynnerussell@rrfss.ca