

# Partnership Possibilities through Child and Family Centres: Public Health and Early Childhood Education



Summer Institute on Early Childhood  
Development

Wednesday June 1, 2011



# Outline

- Public Health 101
- The Partnership Mandate
- Our Mutual Goals
- Partnership Opportunities
- Best Start Child and Family Centres
- Challenges and Opportunities



# Definition of Health

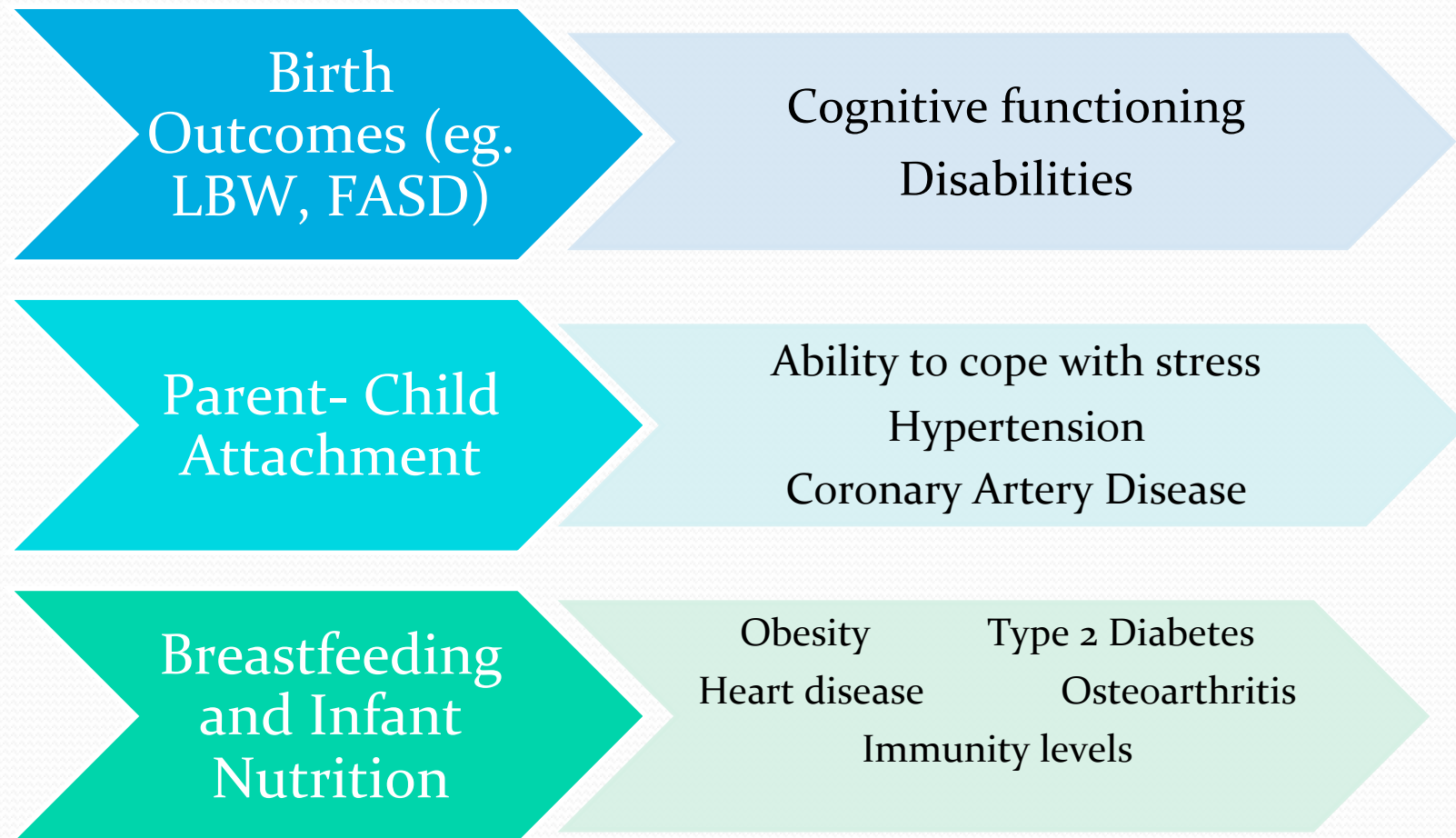
- The World Health Organization (WHO) defined health in its broader sense in 1946 as "a state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity"
- Ottawa Charter for Health Promotion furthered that health is not just a state, but also "a resource for everyday life, not the objective of living. Health is a positive concept emphasizing social and personal resources, as well as physical capacities."[8]



# Determinants of Health

- The Standards address the factors that play a role in determining the health status of individuals, families and the population as a whole
- Determinants of health include:
  - Income and social status
  - Social support networks
  - Education and literacy
  - Employment/working conditions
  - Social and physical environments
  - Personal health practices and coping skills
  - **Healthy child development**
  - Biology and genetic endowment
  - Health services
  - Gender
  - Culture
  - Language

# Child Health as a Determinant of Life long Health



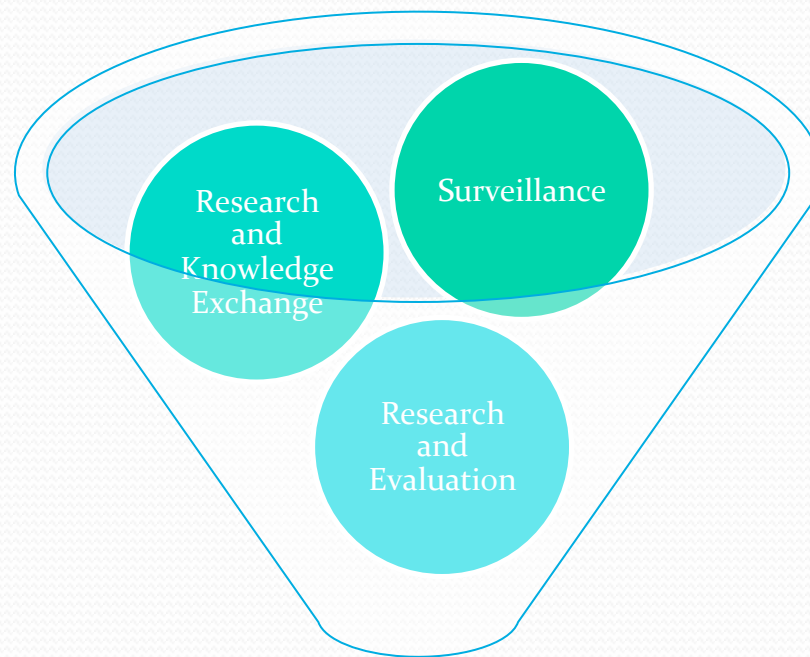


# Ontario Public Health Mandate

## Ontario Public Health Standards:

- Pursuant to Section 7 of the Health Protection and Promotion Act
- Guidelines for the provision of mandatory health programs and services
- Establish requirements for fundamental public health programs and services that include:
  - Assessment and surveillance
  - Health promotion and policy development
  - Disease and injury prevention
  - Health protection

# Foundational Standard



Needs-based Planning  
Outcome Evaluation



# OPHS and Children

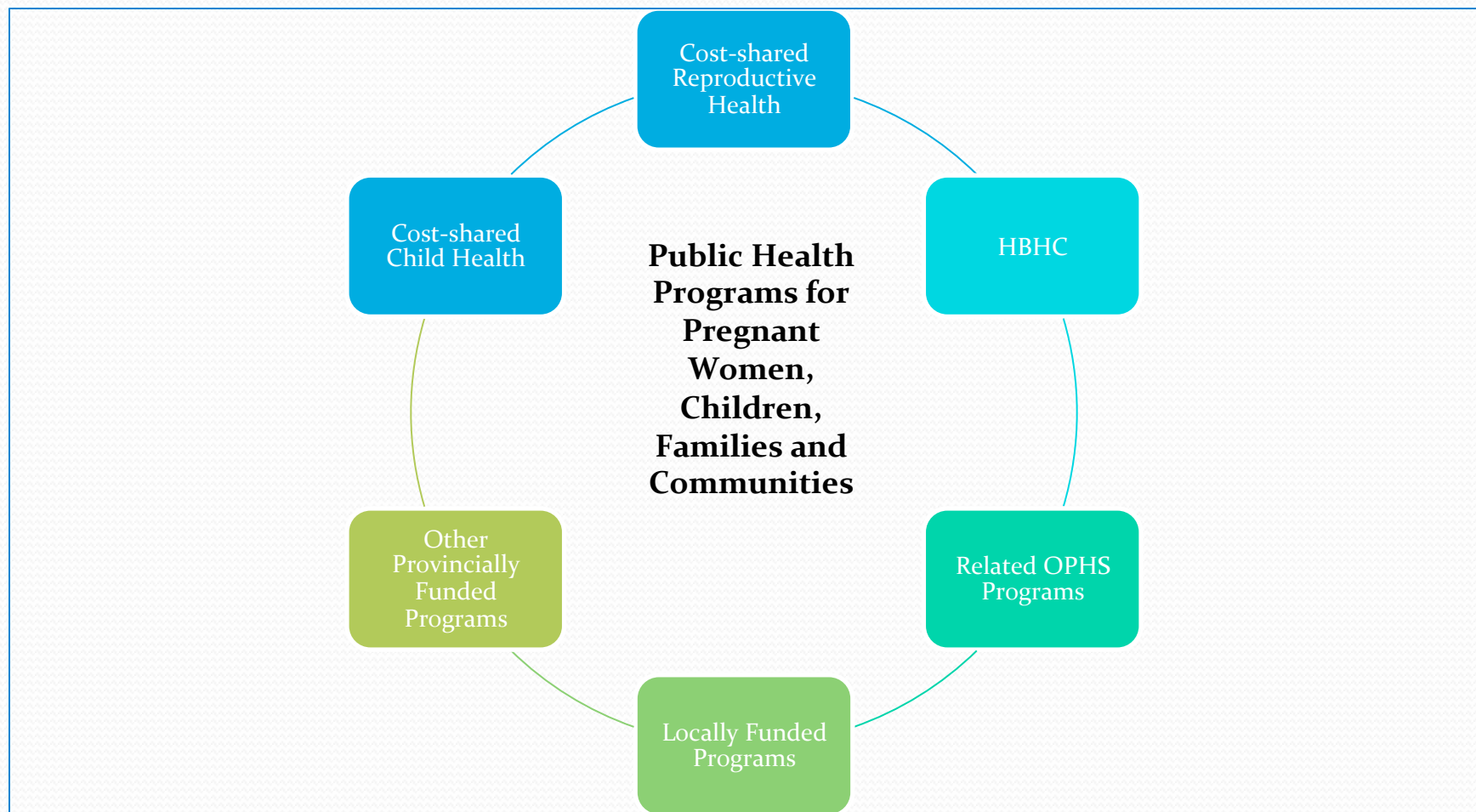
Standards that address reproductive and/or child health include:

- Foundational Standards
- Chronic disease prevention
- Prevention of injury and substance misuse
- **Reproductive health**
- **Child health**
- Infectious diseases prevention and control
- Rabies prevention and control
- Sexual health, sexually transmitted infections, and blood-borne infections
- Tuberculosis prevention and control
- Vaccine preventable diseases
- Food safety
- Safe water
- Health hazard prevention and management
- Public health emergency preparedness



# Family Health Programs

## HBHC and so much more.....





# Reproductive Health

**Goal:** to enable individuals and families to achieve optimal preconception health, experience a healthy pregnancy, have the healthiest newborn(s) possible and to be prepared for parenthood

**Requirements in the areas of:**

- Preconception health
- Healthy pregnancies
- Reproductive health outcomes
- Preparation for parenting
  
- Parental mental health



# Reproductive Health Program Requirements

- Assessment and surveillance
- Work with community partners to influence the development and implementation of healthy policies and the creation or enhancement of supportive environments
- Increase public awareness
- Collaborate with community partners to provide prenatal programs, services & supports
- Provide advice and information to link people with community programs and services
- Collaborate with community partners to outreach to priority populations
- Provide Healthy Babies Healthy Children (as per Protocol)



# Child Health

**Goal:** to enable all children to attain and sustain optimal health and development potential

**Requirements in the areas of:**

- Positive parenting
- Breastfeeding
- Healthy family dynamics
- Healthy eating, healthy weights, and physical activity
- Growth and development
- Oral health
  
- Parental and child mental health



# Child Health Program Requirements

- Assessment and surveillance
- Work with community partners to influence the development and implementation of healthy policies and the creation or enhancement of supportive environments
- Increase public awareness
- Collaborate with community partners to provide parenting programs, services and supports
- Link people to community programs and services
- Collaborate with community partners to outreach to priority populations
- Facilitate access and support for families to complete screening tools to monitor their child's health & development
- Provide community dental services that include:
  - Conducting oral screening
  - providing of the Children in Need of Treatment (CINOT) program
  - providing essential clinical preventive oral health services
  - Reviewing drinking water quality where fluoride is added
- Provide Healthy Babies Healthy Children (as per Protocol)



# Healthy Babies Healthy Children

- Funding through the Ministry of Children and Youth Services
- Embedded in the OPHS
- HBHC protocol identifies the minimum expectations for program delivery
- Prenatal to age 6 years
- Universal entry into program with more intense service and support for at risk/high risk pregnant women and families
- Basic program components:
  - Screening
  - Assessment
  - Blended home visiting
  - Linkage to community resources and services
  - Service co-ordination



# Local implementation

- Standards and protocols identify the minimum requirements for health units
- Interpret standards and design programs to meet local needs
- Considerable variation in the programs and services provided with Reproductive Health and Child Health Standards at a local level
- Recent HBHC funding pressures has resulted in service reductions as identified by each Health Unit
- Some health units are also lead agencies for PSL, IHP and BLV programs and/or other child development programs



# Partnership

An arrangement where parties agree to cooperate to advance their **mutual goals\***

\*Wikipedia





# ECE and FRP Partnership

- Canadian Association of Family Resource Programs (FRP Canada)
- “Family is the Foundation: Why Family Support and Early Childhood Education Must Be a Collaborative Effort” (2011)
- Policy Recommendation: to build an integrated system through **partnerships**:
  - Develop partnerships to avoid duplication
  - Nurture mutually respectful relationships
  - Encourage collaboration
  - Recognize value to both informal and formal partnerships



# ELECT Statement of Principles

1. Early child development sets the foundation for lifelong learning, behaviour and health
2. **Partnerships with families and communities strengthen the ability of early childhood setting to meet the needs of young children**
3. Respect for diversity, equity and inclusion are prerequisites for honouring children's rights, optimal development and learning
4. A planned curriculum supports early learning
5. Play is a means to early learning that capitalize's natural curiosity and exuberance
6. Knowledgeable, responsive early child hood professionals are essential.



# ELECT & Partnerships

Partnerships with families and communities strengthen the ability of early childhood settings to meet the needs of young children

- Link with communities to expand opportunities for children and their families
- Connect families to community resources and services as needed



# Public Health Principles

- Need
- Impact
- Capacity
- **Partnership and collaboration:**
  - Promote community capacity building by fostering partnerships and collaboration with community partners
  - The quality and scope of local partnerships shall be an essential indicator of success for boards of health



# Public Health & Partnerships

Child Health Standard:

The Board of Health shall work with community partners to:

- Influence the development and implementation of healthy policies and the creation of enhancement of supportive environments
- Provide parenting programs, services and supports
- Outreach to priority populations to link them with information programs and services
- Facilitate access and support for families to complete screening tools to monitor their child's health and development



# Ontario Vision for Children

An Ontario where all children and youth have the best opportunity to succeed and reach their full potential\*

\* Ministry of Children and Youth Services



## “Pascal” Vision

Our best future is one in which all children are healthy and secure; emotionally and socially competent; eager, confident, and successful learners; and respectful of the diversity of their peers\*

\* *With Our Best Future in Mind* Report (Pascal)



# Our Mutual Goals

## Early Childhood Education

- Care and learning are inseparable concepts. Since all quality early childhood settings provide both care and education, a caring, nurturing environment that supports learning and early development is an essential component of a framework for early learning.

## Public Health

- To enable individuals and families to achieve optimal preconception health, experience a healthy pregnancy, have the healthiest newborn possible and be prepared for parenthood
- To enable all children to attain and sustain optimal health and developmental potential



# Partnership Opportunities

Referral and service coordination for families

Shared training & professional development

Co-located programs & services

Joint programs & services

Integrated planning & policy development



# Referral & Co-ordination

- Early identification
  - ECE
    - identify potential delays – The Continuum of Development
    - Support to parents
  - PH
    - support access to screening tools – Nipissing, etc
    - Identification of appropriate referral
- Children with special needs
  - Referral and linkages
  - Service co-ordination



# Training & Development

- Healthy Measures
  - Increasing the awareness of child care providers (family and professional) about the impact that their own body image has on the body image of the children that they are caring for
- Rainbow Fun
  - Tools for increasing physical activity among young children
- Speech and Language
  - Direct therapy + ongoing support = better outcome



# Co-located Programs

- Programs for children:
  - SLP or CDA interventions
  - Hearing screening clinics
  - Early identification screening
- Programs for the entire family:
  - Breastfeeding and nutrition counseling
  - Parenting education – individual and/or group











# Joint Programs

- Co-facilitated parent education programs
  - Nobody's Perfect
- Collaborative screening initiatives
- Best Start Child and Family Resource Centres

# Public Health & the Early Learning



# Best Start Child and Family Centres

BSCFC will provide families with	ECE	Public Health Role
Prenatal and postnatal information and support		
Parenting and family support programming		
Nutrition and nutrition counselling		
Early identification and intervention services		
Links to special needs treatment and community resources		



# Planning & Policy

- Best Start Networks
- Shared outcome frameworks (e.g. Children's report cards, EDI)
- Leadership from the top that supports working together
- Addressing systemic barriers to working together:
  - Physical space
  - Policies and procedures
  - Shared resources



# “With Our Best Future in Mind”

## Recommendations – ECE & PH Contributions

#1

Create continuum of early learning, child care and family supports

- Holistic approach to child and family
- ECE – early learning, child care
- Public health - family support

#4

An integrated network of Best Start Child and Family Centres

- Supports access to service for children and families
- Who delivers is less important than where and what is available for children and families

#8

Local Early Years Service Plans

- Ensure effective use of limited resources
- Supports our mandates to work with community partners

# “With Our Best Future in Mind”

## Recommendations – ECE and PH Contributions

#12

Consistent early identification and intervention protocol

- Identified in ELECT as critical
- Public health role identified in OPHS

#18

Consolidated integrated accountability mechanism

- Supports integrated planning, monitoring and accountability that focuses on overall outcomes for the child



# Challenges

- Clarifying roles and responsibilities
- Setting aside our “turfs”
- Being open to doing things in a new way
- Putting families first
- Limited funding and resources
- Multiple accountabilities and co-ordination
  - at the Provincial level: MOHLTC, MOHP&S, MCYS, Med
  - At the local level
- Effectively measuring outcomes



# Opportunities

- For local communities to plan, work, and monitor impacts of community services for pregnant women, children 0 to 12 years, and their families
- For funding challenged programs to leverage resources
- For pregnant women, children 0 to 12 years and their families to access and receive services in a more effective manner
- For children to achieve their full potential

# Early Childhood Education and Public Health

Together we  
can do more for  
children and  
families

