



Promote the Ontario Prenatal Education Program Directory to Future Parents!

Prenatal education matters! Promote the Ontario Prenatal Education Program Directory to future parents on your website, through social media, on waiting room screens or in person with the new promotional materials developed by Best Start:

- The [bilingual postcard](#).
- The [bilingual flyer](#).
- The horizontal website banner in [English](#) or [French](#).
- The square website banner in [English](#) and [French](#).

And, as always... Don't forget to update your listing regularly!

Events



Webinar - Creating Breastfeeding Knowledgeable and Supportive Outpatient Healthcare Systems

Healthcare provider support for breastfeeding plays an important role in breastfeeding initiation and duration rates. Outpatient healthcare systems have the building blocks to create reliable and knowledgeable safety nets for breastfeeding dyads, as well as the means to collaborate with other community outpatient breastfeeding supporters. In this webinar, taking place **June 19, 2019 at 11 am EST**, the [Institute for the Advancement of Breastfeeding and Lactation Education \(IABLE\)](#), supported by [the Academy of Breastfeeding Medicine](#), will explore an essential component in developing knowledgeable and supportive health care systems.

[Learn more.](#)

Webinar - Formula Tip Sheets and Video

Best Start by Health Nexus is excited to assist with showcasing the new resources: Formula Tip Sheets and Video. Join us for an introduction webinar on **June 25, 2019 at noon!** The speakers will be Laura Atkinson, Registered Dietitian at York Region Public



Health, and Yolande Lawson, Health Promotion Consultant at Best Start by Health Nexus

[Learn more.](#)



Southwestern Ontario Maternal, Newborn, Child and Youth Network

South West Maternal Newborn Child Youth Network Annual Maternal Newborn Conference

Taking place October 9th, 2019 in London, ON, the 32nd Annual MNCYN Maternal Newborn Conference topic is "Embracing and Supporting Every Pregnancy". Hold the date!

[Learn more.](#)



Perinatal Mental Health Conference: Promoting Wellness, Extending Our Reach

Taking place October 23, 2019 in Burlington, this learning and networking event is for multidisciplinary practitioners who care for pregnant and postpartum families. Speakers like Dr. Simone Vigod, Dr. Ryan Van Lieshout, Dr. Lori Ross, Stephanie George, IBCLC, and Dr. Vivian Polak will share their expertise in providing perinatal mental health care to priority populations, including families reflecting indigenous heritage, newcomers to Canada, and LGBTQ2+ parents. In addition, those with lived experiences from these priority populations will give their accounts of navigating the challenges of living with a perinatal mood disorder.

[Learn more.](#)

News

Thank Lucy Wills.

Today, the recommendations are that every woman of reproductive age get at least 400 milligrams of folic acid, a B vitamin, every day. These recommendation come from the groundbreaking work of scientist Lucy Wills. In the 1920s, her work in India led to the discovery of the substance. May 10th would have been her 131st birthday, and it was [celebrated with a Google Doodle](#).

[Learn more.](#)



Updated Consensus Statement on Delivery of Optimal Maternity Care

An updated [Society of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists of Canada \(SOGC\)](#) Consensus Statement aims to improve obstetrical and neonatal care by ensuring that all pregnant women have access to the resources they need to give birth safely and as close to their communities as possible. The statement outlines standards of care for all levels of birthing facilities, endorses the adoption of standardized definitions of levels of care, and supports ongoing training and quality improvement programs in all institutions.

Read [the news release](#) and [the whole statement](#).

US Preventive Services Task Force Issues Recommendations on Interventions to Prevent Perinatal Depression

The [US Preventive Services Task Force \(USPSTF\)](#) reviewed the evidence on the benefits and harms of preventive interventions for perinatal depression in pregnant or postpartum women or their children. They found convincing evidence that counseling interventions, such as cognitive behavioral therapy and interpersonal therapy, are effective in preventing perinatal depression, and therefore recommend that clinicians provide or refer pregnant and postpartum persons who are at increased risk of perinatal depression to counseling interventions.

Read [the statement](#) and [the evidence report](#).



Opinion: Why it's Time to Start Tackling our Hidden Drinking Problem

It's been 45 years since researchers revealed the risks of drinking during pregnancy. But as Vanessa Hrvatin reports, rates of Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder are three times higher than previously believed — just as more women are drinking, and drinking more, than ever before. In the first of a three-part series, Postmedia's Michelle Lang Fellow explores the challenges of eradicating one of the most common — preventable — developmental disorders and what's at stake if we fail.

[Learn more.](#)

Opinion : Indigenous Parents Describe Scrutiny, Mistrust of Social Workers

Parents [...] told CBC about their mistrust of hospitals and child welfare agencies, based on what they believe were unjust or culturally insensitive actions. Many parents grew up in foster care and fear losing their own children to the system. The province recently updated child-welfare legislation, giving Indigenous communities more of a say in how to protect children and families in need, with an eye to keeping families together.

[Learn more.](#)

New resources

Prescription Opioid Use

Recently released by Best Start by Health Nexus, *Prescription Opioid Use* is a guide aiming to equip service providers and health care professionals with information that supports a harm reduction approach to prescription opioid use of individuals who are parents, are pregnant or thinking about becoming parents.

[Learn more.](#)



Updated Newborn Screening Ontario Pamphlets and video

[Newborn Screening Ontario](#) has updated a series of resources to help parents learn about the importance of newborn screening. These resources include a pamphlet and a video, both available in multiple languages. Note that you can order printed copies of the pamphlet through Service Ontario.

[Learn more.](#)

Webinar Recording: Partner Abuse: How Can a Restraining Order Help?

Review or refresh what you know about Restraining Orders: when you can get one for a family abuse or violence situation in Ontario, and how they are similar and different from Peace Bonds. This webinar is part of the [Family Law Education for Women \(FLEW\)](#) series, co-presented by [METRAC](#)'s Legal Director, Tamar Witelson, and family law lawyer Malerie Rose of Rose

[Learn more.](#)



Effects of Cannabis Exposure in Pregnancy and Breastfeeding

This is an evidence Brief by [Public Health Ontario](#). There is limited and inconsistent evidence on the effects of cannabis exposure during pregnancy and breastfeeding on infant, child and youth health outcomes. Although evidence is limited, clinical guidelines for cannabis use during pregnancy provide consistent recommendations for pregnant women to abstain, although one guideline recommended women to abstain or reduce use.

[Learn more.](#)

Making an Informed Decision

Making an Informed Decision – A guide for healthcare providers to support families in making health-related decisions for a child is a resource that equips healthcare providers with information and tools that support parents, guardians, caregivers, and families when making health-related decisions for a child in their care. Informed decisions may relate to screening, testing, treatment, or medical care. It includes a 5-step framework and 4 supporting tools.



[Learn more.](#)

New Videos by IABLE

The [Institute for the Advancement of Breastfeeding and Lactation Education \(IABLE\)](#) recently released 3 new videos. Currently available to their members on their [website](#), they'll be released [on Youtube](#) very soon.

- Pump Flange Video: Looking for an online resource for fitting pump breast shields? This video was made for new mothers struggling to determine proper pump flange size.
 - Sandwich Hold and Asymmetric Latch Video: We all know that the most common reason for sore, cracked nipples is a shallow latch. This short video explains the essence of a deep trauma-free latch. Share it with the mothers you work with!
 - Rolling Out The Nipple Video: Flat nipples often get a bad rap. This 1-minute video demonstrates the simple technique of rolling out the nipple, for an easier latch.
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Education Made Just for Parents of Multiples

Provide important targeted information to parents who are expecting more than one baby! InJoy's new multi-format Understanding Your Multiples curriculum allows you to teach about multiples in a variety of settings including classroom, antepartum unit, and at home with online learning.

[Learn more.](#)



Best Start's bilingual [Prenatal Education Key Messages for Ontario](#) website contains messages to give to future parents, supporting evidence, resources, links and references on 25 prenatal topics. To ensure that you use only the most recent version when handing out PDFs to your clients, or when discussing the key messages topics, make sure to visit the website regularly and to register to receive updates notifications!

Recent Studies

The Vaginal Microbiome and Preterm Birth

The incidence of preterm birth exceeds 10% worldwide, and women of African ancestry disproportionately bear the burden of risk in North America. In the present study, data from approximately 12,000 samples of the integrative Human Microbiome Project were analyzed, in a cohort of women predominantly of African ancestry. Women who delivered preterm exhibited significant differences in their vaginal microbiome, as well as in proinflammatory cytokines in vaginal fluid. These findings highlight new opportunities for assessment of the risk of preterm birth.

Read [the study](#) and [the discussion](#).

Higher Maternal Diet Quality during Pregnancy and Lactation Is Associated with Lower Infant Weight-For-Length, Body Fat Percent, and Fat Mass in Early Postnatal Life

To examine associations between maternal diet quality during pregnancy and lactation with offspring growth and body composition from birth to six months, maternal diet quality was assessed during pregnancy, and infant weight and body fat indexes were measured at one and three months postpartum in a cohort of 354 fully breastfeeding mother–infant dyads. Maternal diet quality during pregnancy and lactation was inversely associated with infant relative weight and adiposity in early postnatal life. Additional research is needed to explore whether associations persist across the life course.

Read [the study](#) and [the discussion](#).



By the way...

The beloved booklet [Healthy Eating for a Healthy Baby](#) is back on the Best Start website! Available in English, French and 8 other languages, it provides information for pregnant women on nutrition in pregnancy. *The English version is also available for sale in printed format at <http://foodandhealthtoday.com/store>.*

Severe Acute Maternal Morbidity in Twin Compared With Singleton Pregnancies

To investigate the association between twin pregnancy and severe acute maternal morbidity, overall and by timing (before, during or after delivery) and underlying causal condition, 2,500 women with severe acute maternal morbidity occurring from 22 weeks of gestation and up to 42 days postpartum were followed. This study revealed that, compared with women with singleton pregnancies, women with twin pregnancies have a fourfold increased risk for severe maternal complications both before and after delivery. About one fifth of the association between twin pregnancy and intrapartum or postpartum severe acute maternal morbidity may be mediated by cesarean delivery.

Read [the study](#) and [the discussion](#).

Exposure to Maternal Depressive Symptoms in Fetal Life or Childhood and Offspring Brain Development: A Population-Based Imaging Study

To examine associations of exposure to maternal depressive symptoms at different developmental stages from fetal life to preadolescence with child brain development, the association of maternal depressive symptoms with child brain development in 3,469 mother-child pairs was examined using neuroimaging. In this study, maternal depressive symptoms 2 months after birth were consistently associated with differences in child brain development assessed up to 10 years later. However, depressive symptoms assessed prenatally or later in childhood were not. These results suggest that the postnatal period is a window of vulnerability for adversities such as maternal depressive symptoms.

Read [the study](#) and [the discussion](#).

Omega-3 Fatty Acid Addition During Pregnancy

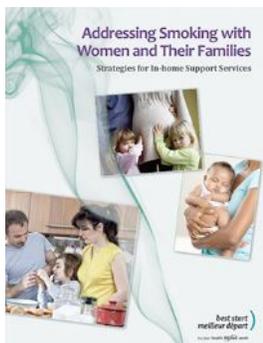
To assess the effects of omega-3 LCPUFA, as supplements or as dietary additions, during pregnancy on maternal, perinatal, and neonatal outcomes and longer-term outcomes for mother and child, a literature review was performed, including 70 RCTs. Overall, preterm birth < 37 weeks and early preterm birth < 34 weeks were reduced in women receiving omega-3 LCPUFA compared with no omega-3. There was also a possibly reduced risk of perinatal death and of neonatal care admission, a reduced risk of LBW babies; and possibly a small increased risk of LGA babies with omega-3 LCPUFA. Omega-3 LCPUFA supplementation during pregnancy is an effective strategy for reducing the incidence of preterm birth, although it probably increases the incidence of post-term pregnancies.

Read [the study](#).

Association of Maternal Cigarette Smoking and Smoking Cessation With Preterm Birth

To assess the probability of preterm birth among expectant mothers who smoked cigarettes before pregnancy and quit smoking at the start or during pregnancy, a cross-sectional study analyzed information from 25 233 503 expectant mothers who delivered live neonates and had known prepregnancy and trimester-specific cigarette smoking frequency. Cigarette smoking cessation throughout pregnancy, after the first trimester, after the second trimester, and during the third trimester irrespective of first and second trimester smoking was determined, along with the probability of preterm birth (<37 weeks' gestation). The probability of preterm birth decreased more the earlier smoking cessation occurred in pregnancy. This suggests that quitting smoking—and quitting early in pregnancy—is associated with reduced risk of preterm birth even for high-frequency cigarette smokers.

Read [the study](#) and [the discussion](#).



How to best support future mothers and their families to try to quit smoking?

Visit [Best Start resources](#) on this very topic, and in particular the [Addressing Smoking with Women and Their Families – Strategies for In-home Support Services](#) manual.

The Effects of Squatting While Pregnant on Pelvic Dimensions: A Computational Simulation to Understand Childbirth

Using a previously developed computational model of the female pelvis, authors aimed to determine the effects of maternal positioning and pregnancy on pelvic alignment. Outcomes from this [computational simulation](#) suggest that maternal joint loading in an upright birthing position, such as squatting, could open the outlet of the birth canal and dynamic activities may generate greater pelvic mobility than the comparable static posture.

[Learn more](#).

Prenatal and Early Life Exposures to Ambient Air Pollution and Development

Residential proximity to major roadways, and prenatal exposures to particulate matter $<2.5 \mu\text{m}$ ($\text{PM}_{2.5}$) and ozone (O_3) are linked to poor fetal outcomes but their relationship with childhood development is unclear. These authors investigated whether proximity to major roadways, or prenatal and early-life exposures to $\text{PM}_{2.5}$ and O_3 increase the risk of early developmental delays in 4089 singletons and 1016 twins born between 2008 and 2010. In this prospective cohort study, proximity to major roadway and prenatal/early-life exposures to $\text{PM}_{2.5}$ and O_3 were associated with developmental delays. While awaiting larger studies with personal air pollution assessment, efforts to minimize air [pollution exposures](#) during critical developmental windows may be warranted.

[Learn more](#), and [read the discussion](#).

Long Commutes to Work during Pregnancy and Infant Health at Birth

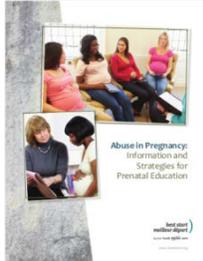
Examining the health impact of long commutes to work during pregnancy on fetuses and infants at birth, the authors found that among long-distance commuters, increasing the maternal travel distance during pregnancy by 10 miles is associated with increases in the probabilities of low birth weight and intrauterine growth restriction by 0.9 and 0.6 percentage points, respectively. In addition to the maternal stress induced by long commutes being one potential biological mechanism, it looks like maternal long commutes during pregnancy are also associated with under-utilization of prenatal care.

[Learn more](#), and [read the discussion](#).

Breastfeeding Avoidance Following Psychological Intimate Partner Violence During Pregnancy: A Cohort Study and Multivariate Analysis

To evaluate if the experience of psychological intimate partner violence (IPV) adversely affects breastfeeding rates, a total of 779 consecutive mothers receiving antenatal care were studied for breastfeeding avoidance defined as lack of breastfeeding or pumping of breast milk to feed the new baby in the immediate post-partum period. In this cohort, a psychological IPV, reported by 21.0% increased the odds of breastfeeding avoidance, even adjusting for the presence of obstetric complications. This suggests that mothers with psychological IPV avoid breastfeeding.

[Learn more.](#)



By the way...

The booklet [Abuse in Pregnancy: Information and Strategies for the Prenatal Educator](#) provides information on identifying potential situations of abuse and provides strategies and resources for supporting the woman through the situation. Information is provided about risk factors for abuse in pregnancy, the impact of abuse on women and children, screening for abuse, disclosure and legal issues.

Maternal Nut Intake in Pregnancy and Child Neuropsychological Development up to 8 Years Old: A Population-Based Cohort Study in Spain

To analyze the association of maternal nut intake during pregnancy with child neuropsychological outcomes, 2208 mother–child pairs were followed during pregnancy (first and third trimesters), birth, 1.5, 5 and 8 years. The resulting data indicate that nut intake during early pregnancy is associated with long-term child neuropsychological development. Future cohort studies and randomized clinical trials are needed to confirm this association pattern in order to further extend nutrition guidelines among pregnant women.

[Learn more](#) and [read the discussion](#).

Development and validation of the Body Understanding Measure for Pregnancy Scale (BUMPS) and its role in antenatal attachment.

Existing research on body satisfaction in pregnancy is limited by the use of measures that are not designed for pregnancy. This study reports the development and validation of the newly developed Body Understanding Measure for Pregnancy scale (BUMPs) in 613 pregnant women across two independent samples. It also confirmed that more positive body satisfaction in pregnancy was related to: (a) better relationship quality; (b) lower depression and anxiety; (c) higher levels of interoception, specifically body listening, and body trusting. Finally, the BUMPs score was the strongest predictor of antenatal attachment when compared against depression, anxiety, gestational age, and relationship satisfaction.

[Learn more](#) and [read the discussion](#).

Incidence of Syncope During Pregnancy: Temporal Trends and Outcomes

We examined temporal trends, timing, and frequency, as well as adverse neonatal and maternal outcomes occurring in the first year postpartum among women experiencing syncope during pregnancy in 481 930 pregnancies, 4667 of which had an episode of syncope. Results suggest that pregnant women with syncope, especially when the syncopal event occurs during the first trimester, may be at a higher risk of adverse pregnancy outcomes as well as an increased incidence of cardiac arrhythmia and syncope postpartum.

[Learn more](#) and [read the discussion](#).



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Stay connected!

- **Click4HP** is an international dialogue on health promotion. Participants exchange views on issues and ideas, provide leads to resources, and ask questions about health promotion.
- **The Maternal Newborn and Child Health Promotion (MNCHP) Network** - A province-wide electronic forum for service providers working to promote preconception, prenatal and child health.
- **Ontario Prenatal Education Network** - A space where professionals can share information and resources, ask questions and collaborate with peers on topics related to prenatal education.
- **Health Promotion Today** - Our blog keeps you informed of news and topics related to health promotion.
- **The Best Start Aboriginal Sharing Circle (BSASC) Network** is a distribution list designed for service providers working with Indigenous Peoples in areas of preconception, prenatal and child health. The network is a forum to share news, ideas, questions and best practices.

En français:

Restez branché!

- Le **Bulletin de santé maternelle et infantile** est un bulletin électronique mensuel à l'intention des fournisseurs de services œuvrant dans le domaine de la promotion de la santé maternelle et infantile.
- **Promotion de la santé aujourd'hui** – Notre blogue sur lequel on partage des nouvelles et réflexions liées à la promotion de la santé.

