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The MNCHP Bulletin is an electronic bulletin that highlights current trends, new resources and initiatives, upcoming events and more in the preconception, prenatal and early childhood fields. Our primary focus is the province of Ontario, Canada but the bulletin also includes news and resources from around the world. Wherever possible, we include resources that are available for free.

**Please note that the Best Start Resource Centre does not endorse or recommend any events, training, resources, services, research or publications of other organizations.*

In this issue:

[I. News & Views](#)

- Bold Move in the UK in a Crackdown on Child Obesity
- New Journal: The Journal of Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Risk & Prevention
- Key Health Inequalities in Canada. A National Portrait
- New Unicef Report Calls for Action on Breastfeeding

[II. Recent Reports & Research](#)

- Work Activity of Families with Children in Canada, 2005 to 2015
- New Guidelines : Obesity and Reproduction
- Association of Exposure to Formula in the Hospital and Subsequent Infant Feeding Practices With Gut Microbiota and Risk of Overweight in the First Year of Life
- Association Between Intimate Partner Violence and Breastfeeding Duration: Results From the 2004-2014 Pregnancy Risk Assessment Monitoring System

[III. Current Initiatives](#)

- Campaign: Clean Air at Home: Small Steps Make a Big Difference
- Nurturing Care for Early Childhood Development Framework

- Raising the Bar for Children's Rights

[IV. Upcoming Events](#)

- OPHA Fall Forum: Cannabis & Public Health
- Save the Date: Mental Health Through the FASD Lifespan
- Ophea Conference

[V. Resources](#)

- Navigating the Challenges of Blended Families
- Building Capacity for Intersectoral Action on Kids: Data Indicators for Children and Indigenous Children
- Children Learn Through Play

I. News & Views



Bold Move in the UK in a Crackdown on Child Obesity

As part of the [UK Government's child obesity strategy](#), a series of measures will be included in a proposal, aiming to reduce:

- Sweets and chocolates from supermarket check-outs.
- Stores offering two-for-one deals on junk food.
- Adverts promoting foods high in sugar and salt.
- Use of cartoon characters to promote junk food.
- Bar retailers selling energy drinks to under-16s.

Learn more [here](#), or [here](#).

New Journal: The Journal of Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Risk & Prevention

The recent decade has fostered an amazing advancement in addiction research, yet we are still far from understanding the entire spectrum of consequences associated with fetal exposure to addictive substances and how to prevent them from happening. This new journal is designed to attract and showcase novel data regarding the most common teratogenic drug of abuse – alcohol.

The Journal of Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Risk & Prevention strives to serve as an international resource for scientific publications on the epidemiology, neurobiology, psychology and sociology of fetal alcohol toxicity. A strong emphasis will be placed on prevention and risk reduction.

Consult it [here](#).



Key Health Inequalities in Canada. A National Portrait

A joint publication of the [Public Health Agency of Canada](#) and the [Pan-Canadian Public Health Network](#) (PHN) in collaboration with [Statistics Canada](#), the [Canadian Institute for Health Information](#), and the [First Nations Information Governance Centre](#), this report provides a detailed statistical portrait of inequalities in social determinants of health and health outcomes across a range of population groups in Canada. It examines inequalities in health outcomes (such as life expectancy and mortality, mental illness, disability, and oral health), and health determinants (including both daily living conditions such as core housing need and drivers such as early childhood development and household food insecurity), and is complemented by an online, interactive database, the Health Inequalities Data Tool, which was released in April of 2017.

Consult it [here](#) (also available in [French](#)), and check the additional materials [here](#) (in French [here](#)).



New Unicef Report Calls for Action on Breastfeeding

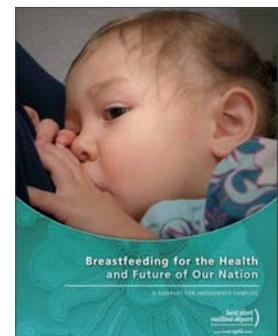
A report from [Unicef](#) published in May 2018 shares analysis on global breastfeeding practices and makes recommendations for governments, the private sector, civil society and communities to increase breastfeeding rates. The report highlights breastfeeding as one of the most effective ways to protect maternal and child health. Improving breastfeeding rates around the world could save the lives of more than 820,000 children under age 5 every year, and prevent 20,000 maternal deaths from breast cancer. Despite this, breastfeeding rates worldwide remain low, particularly in high-income countries – more than 1 in 5 babies in high-income countries are never breastfed, compared to 1 in 25 in low- and middle-income countries. The report's recommendations include implementing the Baby Friendly Initiative in hospitals, strengthening links between health services and communities to ensure continued breastfeeding support, and developing supportive parental leave policies in the private sector.

Access the report [here](#).

Did you know?

The booklet *Breastfeeding for the Health and Future of Our Nation* was created by the Best Start Resource Centre to support Aboriginal women with the art of breastfeeding. The Medicine Wheel is used to symbolize the balance needed to support breastfeeding women.

It is available in print in [English](#), and in PDF in [English](#), [Cree](#) and [Ojibway](#).



II. Recent Reports & Research

Work Activity of Families with Children in Canada, 2005 to 2015

The work activity patterns of Canadian parents are diverse, and reflect economic circumstances, family obligations, work-life balance choices and many other factors. This study examines changes in the work activity of parents aged 25 to 54 from 2005 to 2015. The decade was marked by a global recession, significant fluctuations in commodity prices, as well as the decline of manufacturing and the growth of service industries, all of which may have affected the work activity of families across Canada. This study revealed interesting facts such as:

- Couple parents, especially those of young children, are less likely to work full time, year-round, than other couples: In 2015, about a quarter of couples with at least one child under the age of 6 both worked full time, full year. When the youngest child was between 6 and 17, the proportion increased to 37%.
- Overall, these proportions changed little from 2005 to 2015. However, they declined significantly for certain types of families with children, including couples with less education and recent immigrant families.

Read the [summary](#) (in French [here](#)) and the [full report](#) (In French [here](#)).

New Guidelines : Obesity and Reproduction

To provide a comprehensive review of the impact of obesity on fertility, fertility treatments, and both short and long-term maternal fetal outcomes, and develop evidence-based recommendations for the delivery of fertility care to women with obesity, published literature was reviewed through searches of MEDLINE and CINAHL using appropriate vocabulary and key words.

21 evidence based recommendations, specifically evaluating the impact of obesity on natural fertility, fertility treatments, and maternal-fetal outcomes are formulated here. Strategies to lose weight and BMI cut-offs are also addressed.

[Access the article](#)

Association of Exposure to Formula in the Hospital and Subsequent Infant Feeding Practices With Gut Microbiota and Risk of Overweight in the First Year of Life.

The effect of neonatal and infant feeding practices on childhood obesity is unclear. The gut microbiome is strongly influenced by feeding practices and has been linked to obesity. To characterize the association between breastfeeding, microbiota, and risk of overweight during infancy, accounting for the type and timing of supplementary feeding, a subset of 1087 infants from the prospective CHILD pregnancy cohort and their mothers were recruited. Feeding was reported by mothers and documented from hospital records. Fecal microbiota at 3 to 4 months (from 996 infants) and/or 12 months (from 821 infants) were characterized by 16S ribosomal RNA sequencing. Infants with a weight for length exceeding the 85th percentile were considered to be at risk for overweight. Results suggest that breastfeeding may be protective against overweight, and gut microbiota may contribute to this effect. Formula feeding appears to stimulate changes in microbiota that are associated with overweight, whereas other complementary foods do not. Subtle microbiota differences emerge after brief exposure to formula in the hospital. These results identify important areas for future research and distinguish early infancy as a critical period when transient gut dysbiosis may lead to increased risk of overweight.

[Access the article.](#)

Association Between Intimate Partner Violence and Breastfeeding Duration: Results From the 2004-2014 Pregnancy Risk Assessment Monitoring System

Intimate partner violence is a major public health problem that disproportionately affects women. Current literature investigating the relationship between intimate partner violence and breastfeeding is inconsistent. To investigate the relationship between physical intimate partner violence that occurs in the preconception or prenatal period and any breastfeeding duration, data from the retrospective, cross-sectional 2004-2014 Pregnancy Risk Assessment Monitoring System were analyzed (N = 195,264). The outcome, breastfeeding duration, was categorized as never breastfed, breastfed 8 weeks or less, and breastfed more than 8 weeks. Approximately 6% of survey respondents reported preconception and/or prenatal intimate partner violence, and 36.3% of women reported never breastfeeding. The odds of discontinuing breastfeeding before 8 weeks were 18% higher among women who reported experiencing abuse 12 months before pregnancy compared with women who did not report intimate partner violence. All other estimates showed an overlapping 95% confidence interval. These results suggest that, though breastfeeding is essential in improving maternal and child health, women in abusive relationships may face additional barriers to breastfeeding. Further research is needed to better understand the impact of violence on breastfeeding behaviors to inform healthcare practices and interventions.

[Access the article.](#)

III. Current Initiatives



Campaign: Clean Air at Home: Small Steps Make a Big Difference

Clean Air at Home: Small Steps Make a Big Difference is a targeted, community-based social marketing campaign that aims to reduce young families' exposures to environmental contaminants at home such as mould, dust, fumes from toxic cleaners and tobacco smoke.

York Region's Public Health and Housing Services Branches partnered to pilot this campaign, using an interpersonal approach that challenged tenants from social housing complexes to take five steps over five weeks to clean the air at home for their children's health. Tenants, public health and housing partners participated in campaign planning and implementation to increase buy-in and trust. Eventually, almost three in four participants changed some of their behaviors and almost one half reported performing all five of the behaviors being promoted!

Learn more [here](#).

Did you know?

Earlier this year the Best Start Resource Centre has offered a webinar about how to discuss environmental safety in prenatal classes. You can watch this webinar recording in [English](#) or [French](#).



All our webinar recordings are available for free [here](#).



Nurturing Care for Early Childhood Development Framework

Investing in early childhood development is 1) one of the best investments a country can make to boost economic growth, promote peaceful and sustainable societies, and eliminate extreme poverty and inequality 2) necessary to uphold the right of every child to survive and thrive. To this effect, the [Nurturing Care Framework](#) was developed by WHO, UNICEF and the World Bank, in collaboration with the Partnership for Maternal, Newborn & Child Health, the Early Childhood Development Action Network and many other partners. It provides an evidence-based road map for action and outlines how policies and services can support parents, families, other caregivers and communities in providing nurturing care for young children. It calls for attention to be paid to communities where children are most at risk of being left behind.

Learn more [here](#).



Raising the Bar for Children's Rights

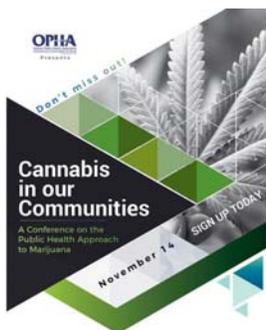
Canada will submit its 5th/6th report on children rights in Canada in July 2018. It is more than 25 years since federal and provincial governments ratified the **Convention on the Rights of Child**, but implementation has been weak. Now children are paying the price: research shows that children in Canada are doing less well than in countries where the Convention is consistently implemented. So clearly it's time for Canada to take serious action.

What can you do?

- Get informed: As a first step, the Canadian Coalition for the Rights of Children has reviewed a few basic rights for children aged 0-18. Learn more [here](#).
- Join the discussion: On November 21-22, 2018, you can [join the conversation in Ottawa](#). Your feedback will inform dialogue with government leaders and provide input into the international review process.
- Ask questions: For more information about the review and how you can contribute to make progress in Canada,

please [email](#) the Canadian Coalition for the Rights of Children.

IV. Upcoming Events



OPHA Fall Forum: Cannabis & Public Health

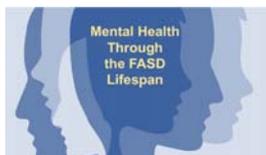
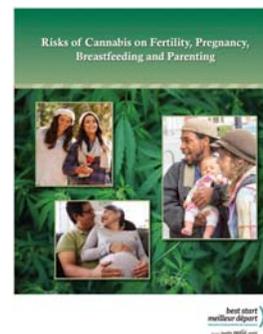
Ontario is currently preparing for the legalization of recreational cannabis. What will this look like for public health and the communities they serve? Join us at The Ontario Public Health Association's 2018 Fall Forum on November 14, 2018 at the Chesnut Conference Centre in Toronto, as we explore the changes and open up dialogue about what we will need to know.

Learn more [here](#).

Did you know?

The Best Start Resource Centre has developed a booklet for people thinking about becoming parents, who are pregnant, or who are new parents. It provides information about the effects of cannabis on fertility, pregnancy, breastfeeding, on children and adolescents when their mothers used cannabis during pregnancy and on parenting. This resource summarizes the current knowledge about the effects of cannabis.

Available in [print](#) and [PDF](#) (also available in French [in print](#) and [PDF](#)).



Save the Date: Mental Health Through the FASD Lifespan

Presented by [Citizen Advocacy Ottawa Fetal Alcohol Resource Program](#), the 2nd Annual Eastern Ontario FASD Symposium, will be held in Ottawa Nov. 2 and 3, 2018. Save the date!

This year's symposium will focus on Mental Health Across the FASD Lifespan. Recognized Psychologist Dr. Brenda Knight from BC is a keynote speaker. Brenda's work is highly valued for its focus on both the needs of the individual and the whole family in terms of mental health and the complexities of FASD.

Full agenda and location details to follow. Learn more [here](#).



Ophea Conference

Join OPHEA in **Alliston October 11-12, 2018** for two full days of active learning! Packed with invaluable experiences, the Ophea conference provides teachers, administrators, health and physical education consultants, public health professionals and community leaders the opportunity to learn, build new skills, participate in interactive workshops, network and have fun! It will present educators from across the field with essential information, teaching tools, and new insights on ways to support the healthy, active living of children and youth.

[Register before June 29th to save!](#) (In French [here](#))

V. Resources



Navigating the Challenges of Blended Families

In 2016, one in ten children in Canada aged zero to 14 were living in a stepfamily. What does this mean for families? It means that more of them are restructuring, changing and growing. Parenting is challenging at the best of times, but stepparents face unique challenges. To help them, the resource **Building Your Stepfamily** was updated by [the BC Council for Families](#). This booklet explains the dynamics of building a stepfamily and offers ideas and suggestions for combining households, including information about traditions, values and money management.

Learn more [here](#), and get your copy [here](#) (Save 25% until July 1st!).

Building Capacity for Intersectoral Action on Kids: Data Indicators for Children and Indigenous Children

The Canadian Institute of Child Health's developed new resources in collaboration with the Canadian Council on the Social Determinants of Health (ccsdh.ca) and the Public Health Agency of Canada: *Building Capacity for Intersectoral Action on Kids: Data Indicators for Children and Indigenous Children* are now available online, in both English and French.

These resources consolidate approximately 400 data indicators on the health, social and economic conditions of children aged 0 to 5 and their families, including modules focusing on Indigenous children. There are also expert vetted examples of intersectoral initiatives that have used data to inform their development. These concrete innovative examples show how data have been used to address the needs of children. This data will be helpful to anyone working with children, or designing interventions to improve their health and well-being and the conditions in which they grow and develop.

Access these resources [here](#) (also available [in French](#))



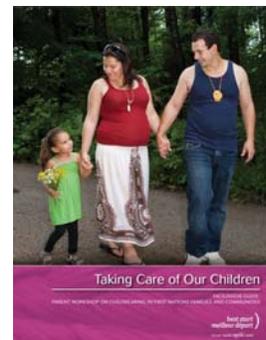
Children Learn Through Play

When children play, they're learning with their bodies by touching, seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting and moving. Every day, there's something new to discover. Play also helps them to build social skills, language skills and more! The new resource from CMAS, Children Learn Through Play, is [available here](#) in 15 languages!

Planning a Parenting Workshop for First Nations Families and Communities?

Check out the Best Start Resource Centre's [Indigenous Child Development](#) website page! In particular, the online guide *Taking Care of Our Children* was developed to help facilitators provide a parent workshop about childrearing in First Nations families. It includes information about the roles and responsibilities within First Nations families and communities related to childrearing, and contemporary and traditional parenting styles and approaches. It also shares information about ceremonies, guiding children, responding to the needs and behaviours of children, ensuring safety and security, managing stress, etc.

Available in [PDF](#).



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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 Indigenous Sharing Circle \(BSASC\) Network](#) is a distribution list designed for service providers working with Aboriginal 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.

