Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care  
Health Promotion Division  
Presentation to the Association of Local Public Health Agencies (aPHa)  
February 2014
Purpose

- Overview of The Healthy Kids Community Challenge
- Other updates
Background

• Ontario launched a cross government Healthy Kids Strategy that seeks to look at the whole child through healthy child and youth development. The Healthy Kids Strategy has 4 key principles:

  1. **Focus on healthy kids**: Strategies that target risk factors for unhealthy weights – including improving nutrition and physical activity – will benefit all children.
  2. **Focus on positive health messages**
  3. **Recognize that healthy kids live in healthy families, schools and community**: Strategies will focus not just on children but on parents and the broader community.
  4. **Support health equality**: Support population level interventions and interventions tailored to reach vulnerable populations most at risk

• There are three pillars to Ontario’s Healthy Kids Strategy

  1. **A Healthy Start**: Supporting pregnancy and early years
  2. **Healthy Food**: Food and proper nutrition contribute to healthy
  3. **Healthy Active Communities**: creating healthy environments.
Background

- The Ontario government has already taken to implement the Healthy Kids Strategy including:
  - Supporting new mothers to breast feed (known to be a protective factor in the promotion of healthy weights among children).
  - Providing more kids with healthy snacks and meals in school.
  - Consulting with industry and health sector leaders to introduce menu labelling legislation and address the marketing of unhealthy food and beverages aimed at kids.

- In addition, the province announced a coordinated, community driven approach to develop healthy communities for kids based on EPODE, which is recognized as a WHO best practice in overweight and obesity prevention.
Healthy Kids Community Challenge
Program Launch

On January 24, 2014 Premier Kathleen Wynne and Minister Deb Matthews announced The Healthy Kids Community Challenge at the Wellesley Community Centre amongst a group of stakeholders and media. Sudbury, Tecumseh and Oakville also held local events and communicated virtually with the Premier.

"If we want our children to reach their full potential, we need to give them the best possible start in life. That is why we will support community-based programs that promote healthy living. We want to make sure we put our young people on the path to lifelong health and success."
— Kathleen Wynne, Premier of Ontario

"An important part of our Action Plan is investing in health promotion. The Healthy Kids Community Challenge is an important initiative to promote healthy living amongst children and youth through friendly competition. It will ultimately inspire more people to lead healthier and more active lives."
— Deb Matthews, Minister of Health and Long-Term Care
Program Overview

• The Challenge is a community-led, multi-sectoral program where community partners work together to implement activities to promote healthy weights for kids.

• Communities will apply to receive funding and supports from MOHLTC to develop and implement policies and programs aimed at preventing childhood overweight and obesity.

• Community policies and programs will be themed based - focusing on one positive healthy behaviour at a time:
  o Themes will focus on the risk or protective factors that lead to childhood overweight and obesity - healthy eating, physical activity and adequate sleep.

• Communities will adapt the themes to address the unique needs of the families and children in their communities.
Program Overview

- MOHLTC will support selected communities with:
  - **Funding** to support the development and implementation of community action plans.
    - Up to $1.5 million over 4 years
  - **Training and support** to develop and implement local action plans.
  - Providing **evidence based** advice, tactics and tools to support community activities.
  - Identifying **social marketing themes**: One consistent topic to be the focus of all community-led activities every 9 months.
  - **Evaluation** Support.
Program Overview – What makes it unique?

- **Innovation:** Ontario is the first North American jurisdiction to implement a program based on the EPODE methodology.

- **Partnerships:** Childhood obesity is a complex, multi-faceted issue requiring multi-sectoral partnerships at all stages of policy/program planning, development and implementation.

- **Community Support:** Both a bottom-up and a top-down approach – communities use market-researched, evidence-based themes and supports provided by the Ministry, and leverage existing programming and expertise to address the unique needs of their local families.

- **Clear Positive Message:** Social marketing approach focuses on one theme at a time and the entire community drives towards that theme. Messaging will focus on healthy kids, not just healthy weights.

- **Aboriginal Component:** As Aboriginal communities are disproportionately afflicted with childhood overweight and obesity, The Challenge will be promoted in these communities.

- **Evaluation:** Outcomes will be measured. Lessons learned can be applied province-wide.
Role of Public Health

• It is expected that Public Health Units will play a key leadership role in the application process, as well as in the planning and implementation of initiatives in selected communities.

• Possible role for PHUs:
  • Host the Project Manager
  • Leverage existing partners and recruit new ones
  • Provide expertise/knowledge (e.g., community data, existing programs and policies, gaps/needs)
  • If selected, provide leadership on the local multi-sectoral steering committee to plan and implement Theme-Based Action Plans
  • Leverage existing initiatives
  • Monitoring and evaluation support
Program Overview – Expected Outcomes

- Reduced childhood overweight and obesity.

- Improved healthy behaviours among children and youth related to healthy eating, physical activity and adequate sleep.

- Community collaboration and coordination on child and youth obesity prevention and reduction, including the public, private and not-for-profit sectors.

- Advanced research and evidence on approaches and the interventions that support healthy weights in Ontario.
When a theme has been announced, the following chart shows examples of activities that partners could implement in support of the theme.

**Example Theme:**

**Healthy Eating - Healthy Breakfast**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Partner</th>
<th>Strategies (as developed by community partnership and outlined in the Action Plan)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Schools</td>
<td>Policy requiring healthy breakfasts in school cafeterias (Policy, Program, Environmental Supports)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Recreation Centres</td>
<td>Importance of healthy breakfast integrated into all rec center programming (Education/Awareness)</td>
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<td>Parents</td>
<td>Workplaces include information on the importance of a healthy breakfast in monthly newsletters (Education/Awareness)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Private Partner</td>
<td>Food retailers have healthy breakfast displays and food demos (Education/Awareness)</td>
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<td>Public Health</td>
<td>Create nutrition education and awareness providing breakfast-specific, age-appropriate presentations in schools.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Primary Care Providers</td>
<td>Emphasize the importance of a healthy breakfast with parents and kids in medical appointments. Increase access to healthy breakfast by working with families to reduce barriers and get information (Education/Awareness)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Community/Children and Youth Serving Organizations</td>
<td>Organize walk to school events with healthy breakfast (Awareness/Program) Target breakfast clubs to low SES communities (Environmental Supports/Program)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Application Template and Community Tools

www.ontario/healthykids

- **Application Template**
- **Application Background and Guidelines**
  - Provides an overview of the program and details to guide applicants through filling out the application template
- **FAQs**
- **Project Manager Guidance Document**
  - Overview of the roles and reasonability of the Project Manager to help communities identify potential leaders
- **Partnership Commitment Charter**
  - Outlines the roles, responsibilities and expectation of potential private partners
- **Matt Story**
  - Mock up of a news article for communities to modify and use for local publications/newsletters to inform potential partners about the program
- **Power point presentation**
  - Modifiable power point presentation to help communities explain The Challenge to potential partners
- **Brochure**
  - High level snapshot of the program to help communities inform potential partners
Selection Process

- All eligible applications will be scored and ranked based on evidence of:
  - community delivery capacity
  - community need
  - commitment of multi-sectoral partnerships.

- Communities will be selected to reflect Ontario’s cultural and geographical diversity

- Selected communities will be announced Spring 2014.
Timelines

- **Call for Applications:** January 24, 2014
- **Application deadline:** March 14, 2014
- **Communities announced:** Spring 2014
- **First Social Marketing Theme Announced:** Spring 2014
Ontario.ca/healthy kids

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