To: Mayor and Members
Board of Health

From: Elizabeth Richardson
Medical Officer of Health
Public Health Services

Telephone: (905) 546-2424 x3501
Facsimile: (905) 546-4075
E-mail: erichard@hamilton.ca

Date: October 2, 2006

Re: Early Child Development Initiative Funding – Family Health Division Report - PH06043 (City Wide)

Council Direction: N/A

Information:

Background

In September 2000, the First Ministers reached an agreement on funding for the early years, the child developmental period up to age six. Funding was to be applied against any or all of four key action areas:

- Promote healthy pregnancy, birth and infancy
- Improve parenting and family supports
- Strengthen early childhood development, learning, and care
- Strengthen community supports

The Government of Canada subsequently announced a funding contribution to the provinces, with approximately $843 million to be transferred to Ontario over five years. On May 10, 2001, in response to the First Ministers' agreement, Ontario's Early Years Plan was announced. The plan identified a range of universal and targeted services and supports, including the establishment of a provincial system of locally based Early Years Centres. As part of this plan, the Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care funded local Boards of Health to deliver a number of Early Child Development (ECD) projects.
Public Health and Community Services received provincial funding for the implementation of two Early Child Development projects from 2002 - 2006:

1. Injury and Family Abuse Prevention Initiative:
   - Universal Safety Education
   - Positive Parenting Strategies for at Risk Populations

2. Healthy Pregnancy and Child Development Initiative
   - Promotion of Breastfeeding to the Teen Population
   - Postpartum Depression

This report provides a summary of selected accomplishments to date of the provincially funded ECD projects. As funding for these projects ends on December 31, 2006 this report identifies funding transition plans for some of the key initiatives.

City of Hamilton ECD Projects 2004-2006

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Pregnancy and Child Development</th>
<th>Injury &amp; Family Abuse Prevention</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Staffing &amp; Wages</td>
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<tr>
<td>Operating Costs</td>
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<td>Total Budget</td>
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<td>Public Health Nurse</td>
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<tr>
<td>Home Management (Community Services)</td>
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<td>1.0 FTE</td>
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<tr>
<td>Program Secretary</td>
<td>1.0 FTE</td>
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Healthy Pregnancy and Child Development

Teen Breastfeeding Promotion:
This initiative includes one-on-one breastfeeding support and teaching from a lactation consultant to adolescent mothers at St Martins Manor and Gracehaven. The Lactation Consultant also does some group teaching, particularly teen prenatal classes. This strategy includes the distribution of breast pumps and supportive supplies to adolescents to reduce the risk of early cessation of breastfeeding. Education of community partners to raise awareness of teen growth and development issues and breastfeeding strategies has occurred. In addition, it has supported the establishment of a breastfeeding clinic at the Wesley Ontario Early Years Centre site targeting young women, many from the multicultural community.

Postpartum Mood Disorder (PPMD):
This initiative focused on enhancing community capacity to identify and support women experiencing Post Partum Depression. Specific strategies include the distribution of Mother Reach\(^1\) education materials through the Let’s Grow mail out, hospitals, and

\(^1\) Mother Reach Oxford County has developed copyrighted materials which PHS purchases through the ECD budget. [http://www.helpformom.ca/index.html](http://www.helpformom.ca/index.html)
physician’s offices and community agencies. Based on recommendations from the results of an ECD-supported Post Partum Depression research study, the Edinburgh Postnatal Depression Scale (EPDS) is now being used by public health nurses (PHN) as a screening tool. Community partners are also beginning to use the EPDS. Public Health Services and community partner agency staff have attended two workshops designed to increase their skill and knowledge, which were funded through this strategy. Through the community networks established under this initiative, the Perinatal Mental Health Coalition was formed. This network meets to identify gaps in programming for families related to PPMD. The network also advocates for improved service integration of education and services.

**Injury and Family Abuse Prevention**

**Universal Safety:**
This initiative is focused on educating parents and community partners regarding injury prevention in the 0-6 years population. Specific activities include: child and home safety workshops at OEYCs; vouchers for safety gates and booster seats; and distribution of home safety kits. A booster seat educational campaign augmented by the distribution of booster seat vouchers for low income families is ongoing. Community prevention campaigns include: “Be Aware, Be There” (choking and suffocation prevention), home safety, poisoning prevention, and “Safe Sleep” (Sudden Infant Death Syndrome prevention).

**Incredible Years Groups:**
The program is designed to promote emotional and social competence and prevent/reduce aggressive, defiant, oppositional, and impulsive behaviours in young children 3 to 6 years old. The program emphasizes parenting skills known to promote children’s social competence and reduce behaviour problems such as: how to play with children, helping children learn, effective praise and use of incentives, effective limit-setting and strategies to handle misbehaviour. This 12 session program is provided in partnership with local Ontario Early Years Centres and Chedoke Child & Family at area Ontario Early Years Centres. Child care is provided by Early Years Centre staff. Research has shown that this program decreases harsh discipline of children, decreases aggression, and increases social competence in children.

**Beyond the Basics Groups:**
This 10 session program, developed in Toronto, implements play based learning for adults using games and interactive activities. It is designed to provide participants with fun ways of learning how to be a more effective parent. This parenting group for families who have children ages birth to six, was specifically designed for parents who have mental health concerns, or whose children have been (or are at risk of being) apprehended by child welfare agencies. Each session is facilitated by a Public Health Nurse and a community partner. Assistance with transportation, child care, and a nutritious snack are provided to reduce barriers to participation.

**Fathers Programs:**
Two fathers groups are facilitated by a male PHN in partnership with community agency staff. The long term goal of this new program is to reduce child abuse and enhance child development by supporting positive parenting strategies and to empower fathers to
take a more active role in parenting. A group for adolescent fathers is held weekly at Gracehaven. A group for fathers from the multicultural community runs Saturday morning at the West Hamilton OEYC on Queen Street North. Other prenatal and postpartum programs have been enhanced with resources specifically for fathers. Special event programming for children and fathers with a literacy focus is ongoing.

Positive Parenting for At-risk Population:
This initiative targets programs developed to reduce barriers and bridge identified service gaps including child socialization and parent education. These include Multicultural Prenatal Classes held at Wesley, Children’s Corner Multicultural Drop-in facilitated daily by Social Service Home Management Workers at Riverdale Community Centre, and OEYCs in the community as well as Multicultural Mother Goose sessions facilitated by Family Home Visitors.

Family Abuse and Violence Awareness:
This is a series of initiatives to increase parents, staff and community partners knowledge of parenting strategies to reduce the incidence of child abuse and children exposed to family violence. These include the Period of Purple Crying parent education resources on prevention of shaken baby syndrome inserted into Let’s Grow mail outs. Making a Difference in Child Abuse Prevention three day workshops on understanding and identifying child abuse and Family Violence Awareness workshops are ongoing for staff and community partners. A major conference “Violence Hurts” addressing the affects of family violence on young children was held in partnership with Brant County Health Unit and local women’s shelters.

Community Collaboration Initiatives:
This initiative involved financial support of For Goodness Sake a program to promote skill development in Early Childhood Educators and parents in preventing and dealing with aggressive behaviour. This initiative also included the development and implementation of Hamilton’s annual School Readiness Calendar. The initiative also provided funds to print and disseminate the Kindergarten Parent Survey (KPS) which was distributed to parents of Kindergarten children to learn about experiences of families and preschool children. The KPS survey captured information on child health and development, child care experiences, family functioning, and neighbourhoods.

Bullying Prevention
A PHN from the Healthy Living Division with expertise in bullying prevention worked with staff from the Family Health Division to create eight “Come Grow with Me” inserts for “Lets Grow” packages distributed to families in Hamilton. With consumer input, additional program materials were created for PHNs in the Family Health Division to provide consistent evidence-based bullying prevention information. These activities directly support community-based initiatives led by the Hamilton Coalition Against Bullying.

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2 Inserts developed include: Attachment, Temperament, Pro-social Behaviour, Resilience, Sibling Rivalry, Television and Young Children, Media in Older Children, Importance of Fathers, and Developing Friendships.
Funding Transition Plans

- The Family Health Division received enhanced funding in the 2006 budget to cover the transition of ECD.
- Funding for the 1.0 FTE Home Management Worker will be provided by the Best Start Initiative (100% Provincial funding) beginning January 2007.
- Funding for the printed materials for increasing community awareness regarding postpartum depression will be provided through the Best Start Post Partum Mood Disorder Initiative (100%) beginning January 2007.

Elizabeth Richardson, MD, MHSc, FRCPC
Medical Officer of Health
Public Health Services