Healthy Start/Départ Santé for Families (HSFF):  
A Family Engagement Initiative to Support Parents and their Young Children in Making Healthy Changes

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Innovation Strategy Projects: Achieving

Healthier Weights in Canada’s Communities

Declaration: There is no potential conflict of interest and not associated with any industry.
In Collaboration With:

Association des Parents Fransaskois

UNIVERSITY OF SASKATCHEWAN

Department of Community Health and Epidemiology
College of Kinesiology
College of Pharmacy and Nutrition

Réseau Santé en français de la Saskatchewan

Active Kids Jeunes actifs

Healthy Together

saskatchewan prevention institute
our goal is healthy children

Saskatchewan Early Childhood Association

Government of Saskatchewan
Ministry of Health

CENTRE DE FORMATION MÉDICALE DU NOUVEAU-BRUNSWICK

in motion en mouvement
Physical Activity for Life

Saskatchewan Health Authority
Learning Objectives

- The participants will be able to describe the components of the HSFF program.

- The conference attendees will be able to integrate aspects of Healthy Start for Families in their relevant work with early years and families.

- To learn how to provide opportunities for healthy eating and physical activity for families.
Outline

- Introduction
- Purpose
- Background
  - History of Healthy Start
- Methods
- Results
- Conclusion
- Acknowledgements
- References
Introduction and Purpose

- **Childhood obesity**

- **Importance of family engagement**

- **Purpose**: The goal of our collaborative and community-participatory work was to design and implement a family engagement initiative to support parents with young children in being physically active and eating healthy as a family.
Background

• Population health interventions
• Family engagement
  • Multidisciplinary, Collaborative, Participatory, Co-creation, Ownership

Healthy Start/Départ Santé (HSDS)
  • A bilingual population health approach to improving healthy eating and physical activity in children attending early learning and childcare centres in Saskatchewan and New Brunswick.
  • Healthy Start is a grassroots, Saskatchewan-grown initiative
How it all began?

2006
• Wellness strategy for early years in Saskatchewan
  • Saskatoon in motion, Saskatoon Health Region
  • Réseau Santé en français de la Saskatchewan (RSFS)
  • University of Saskatchewan partners

2007 – 2011
• RSFS took the lead
• Translation of resources
• Engaging community and partners

2012
• Healthy Start / Départ Santé is born
Healthy Start Since 2012

Over 500 childcare centres and pre-Ks across SK and NB have been trained

Visited over 300 communities

Distributed over 400 Active Play Equipment Kits

Reached almost 13,000 children

Trained almost 2,400 educators and teachers

SlideCourtesy: HSDS Implementation Team
Healthy Start in 2018
Designed by Kavitha Ramachandran, U of S

HEALTHY START COMPREHENSIVE PROGRAM MODEL
Adapted Population Health Intervention and Ecological Model
Healthy Start for Families Initiative

{Workshop Delivery Mechanisms for parents and children together}
Methods

Guided by extensive literature review

- **Teams:** Community Health and Epidemiology; College of Kinesiology; College of Pharmacy and Nutrition and Kavitha Ramachandran
- Over **50 studies** included

- **25 Interviews and 4 Focus groups** (Kavitha’s PhD work)

- **15 Stakeholders** (community consultations with HSDS partners/collaborators)
  - Elder and Traditional Knowledge Keeper (Kavitha’s PhD work)

- HSDS Implementation team was also consulted
Results
Developed Healthy Start for Families (HSFF) Initiative

The Design and The Components of HSFF

- It took over a year to design and develop HSFF
- It consists of simple, fun-filled, child-friendly and interactive family activities
- Focusing on healthy eating, culturally relevant physical activities, games and physical literacy
- Delivered in three 90 minutes sessions.

- Community and Societal Levels: ELCCs, FRCs, Aboriginal Head Starts, Rural and Northern Communities
- Individual Level: Home environment/FUN-15 (Children and Families)
The goal is for the families who attend the sessions to receive information, skills and hands-on experiences to support them as they make healthy food and activity choices while building and strengthening relationships with each other.
Three HSFF Sessions

1. Message of the Day
2. Healthy Eating
3. Physical Literacy

Slide Courtesy: HSDS Implementation Team
Offered in a Variety of Real-world Settings

- Early Learning Childcare Centres (ELCC)
- Family Resource Centres & AHS
- Pre-kindergarten and Schools (Drs. Humbert’s and Froehlich Chow’s Team)
- Home Environment (FUN-15, developed by Kavitha Ramachandran)
1. The Implementation Team (Jan-April 2019)

- HSFF was pilot-tested in three childcare centres serving:
  - Immigrants’ and refugees’ children
  - Francophone children,
  - Non-Indigenous children in the core neighbourhood area

- Note: Three HSFF Workshops were offered in Saskatoon, Moose Jaw and Fort Qu'Appelle for 30 facilitators (ELCCs, FRCs, AHS). You can contact us to sign-up and register for workshops (HSDS) across SK.
2. Parent Engagement Intervention Focusing on Physical Activity (PA) and Physical Literacy (PL)

Drs. Humbert’s and Froehlich Chow’s Team (Jan-June 2019)

- Pilot-tested in one **Indigenous school setting**

- Details were presented elsewhere by Drs. Froehlich Chow and Humbert
Pilot Tests (Homes)
3a. Kavitha Ramachandran (Nov 2018-April 2019)

- FUN-15 was pilot-tested in six diverse home environments:
  - Targeted underserved families and children (0-5 yrs)
  - Immigrants and refugees families and children (newcomers)
  - Indigenous families (core neighbourhood area)
  - Non-Indigenous children and families
  - Rural area

Culturally Safe; Socially Inclusive; Building Relationships
FUN-15 Family Engagement Initiative Model
Components for Home Visiting – Pilot Project

Children’s and Family’s Health and Wellness
Through Supportive Community / External Environment

- Child-friendly Healthy Eating Activities
- Fun-filled Physical Activity & Literacy
- Positive Conversation
- Play with your kids!
- Cook with your kids!
- Engage in positive talk with your kids!
- Be a Healthy Influential Role Model

Draft by Ramachandran, K., 2018
Adaptations since Pilot Testing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Original Design</th>
<th>During Pilot Testing</th>
<th>Kids First Setting</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>▪ 60 – 90 minutes</td>
<td>4 Weekly sessions 60 – 90 minutes</td>
<td>4-8 Weekly sessions 15 – 30 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Cooking, Active Play and Positive Conversation – 15 minutes</td>
<td>Cooking, Active Play – 15 minutes</td>
<td>Choose either cooking OR active play</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Low-cost nutritious recipes ($8.00-$25.00 / meal/family)</td>
<td>Positive Conversation included throughout Daily to weekly health messaging (texts or videos)</td>
<td>Positive talk is incorporated throughout the activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ No APE kit</td>
<td>No weekly telephone contacts</td>
<td>Daily or weekly text messaging not a feasible option</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Daily health messaging (texts or videos)</td>
<td>Lack of time to participate in group activity or create peer self-support group(s)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Weekly telephone contacts</td>
<td>Urban and Rural areas of SK</td>
<td>Supported by Kids First Program, Saskatoon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Group activity (optional)</td>
<td>Self-funded / in-kind partial contributions by Food Bank (Loblaws gift card)</td>
<td>Pilot tested in Saskatoon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Peer self-support group (optional)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Adaptable as per the home-visiting community programming’s mandate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Urban and Rural areas of SK</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Kids First and Healthy Start

Self-funded and In-kind support
Active Play Time from FUN-15 Pilot Sessions
Incorporate positive talk into every session

VIDEOS

- In collaboration with Kids First Program (Saskatoon):
  - FUN-15 is currently getting pilot-tested in five diverse home environments targeting low income/underserved families.
  - Testing the feasibility of the home visiting intervention with existing program

- All three approaches were well received by parents, families and staff members of ELCCs, Schools and Homes.
Acknowledgements (FUN-15)

- Saskatoon Open Door Society
- Saskatoon Mothers’ Centre
- Lanigan ELCC
- Kids First Program, Saskatoon
- Saskatchewan Health Authority
- All Participants (Parents/Families, Children)
- University of Saskatchewan
- Supervisor and PhD Committee Members
Resources available for Facilitators and Families

Recipes for Cultures (e.g. Indigenous)
Move Family Guide for Infants and Toddlers
Message of the Posters and Many More......

[Illustration]: Vancouver, BC: Decoda Literacy
Resources available for Facilitators and Families

- Acknowledgements
- Healthy Eating Message of the Day
- Physical Literacy Message of the Day
- Recipe Guide and Sample Recipes
- Sample Ideas for Physical Activities
- Fundamental Movement Skills

**Healthy Eating**

1. Family Style Meals
2. Feeding Relationship (DOR)
3. Positive Mealtime Conversation
4. Offer a Variety of Foods
5. Healthy Fats and Foods to Limit
6. Child Safety at Mealtimes
7. Reading Labels
8. Budget Friendly Menu Planning
9. Garden and Exploring Together
To address such a complex and multifactorial health issue such as childhood obesity the actions should be collaborative, multifaceted and intersectoral.

Involving and supporting families is a key component of success toward improving health outcomes for young children.

The findings from this work could also inform both policy and public health practice to increase physical activity and healthy eating.

Without multilevel collaborations and partnerships, this extensive work for HSFF wouldn’t have been possible.

• Foundation RWJ. Early care and education policies and programs to support healthy eating and physical activity: Best practices and changes over time. 2017:1-17.


• Carman K et al., Patient and Family Engagement: A framework for understanding the elements and developing interventions and policies. This was originally developed by The International Association for Public Participation in 2014.

• B.C. Ministry of Healthy Living and Sport. (2010). Leap BC early learning practitioners resource; Food flair: Vancouver, BC: Decoda Literacy
Acknowledgments

- All Funders
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- Collaborators and Partners
- Stakeholders
- Steering Committee Members
- Participants (Families and Children)
- The Healthy Together
- Early Learning Childcare Centres (ELCCs)
- Family Resource Centres (FRCs)
- Schools
- Our Large Research SK and NB Team
- HSDS Implementation Team
- Kids First Program, SHA
- Supervisor, Dr. Anne Leis
- PhD Committee Members
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