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----- I. NEWS & VIEWS -----

ONTARIO

PROVINCES' SCHOOL NUTRITION POLICIES ARE 'DISAPPOINTING', SAYS HEALTH ADVOCACY GROUP

A health advocacy group released a school nutrition policy report card on October 3, 2007. Not a single province scored an A, and three provinces (Prince Edward Island, Ontario, and Saskatchewan) received a failing grade. The objective of the report, produced by the Centre for Science in the Public Interest, was to assess the extent to which provincial school nutrition standards actually set out expectations for school foods.

<http://www.cbc.ca/cp/health/071003/x10039A.html>

CANADA

HEALTH CANADA EXPECTED TO ADVISE AGAINST COUGH AND COLD REMEDIES FOR INFANTS

CBC News announced that Health Canada is expected to issue an advisory warning that people should not give over-the-counter cold and cough medications to children under the age of 2 and that labels should be adjusted to reflect the concerns.

<http://www.cbc.ca/health/story/2007/10/10/cough-warning.html?ref=rss>

KRAFT'S CHOCOLATE RECALLED IN CANADA, U.S., FOR POSSIBLE SALMONELLA CONTAMINATION

Kraft Foods announced a recall of its Baker's white chocolate baking squares sold in the 170-gram size with the UPC code 0 66188 00860 3 and the best before dates of 08 AL 04 and 08 MA 19 because of possible salmonella contamination.

<http://www.cbc.ca/canada/story/2007/10/04/squares-salmonella.html?ref=rss>

STARBUCKS PLASTIC CUPS FOR CHILDREN RECALLED IN CANADA, U.S., FOR CHOKING HAZARD

Seattle-based Starbucks recalled 270,000 plastic cups sold in Canada and the U.S. because they pose a safety danger to young children. The recall applies to four styles of 300-millilitre cups (red ladybug, green turtle, pink bunny and yellow chick) sold at Starbucks stores from May 2006 through August 2007. The company warned that the protruding face can break off and leave small parts and sharp edges that children could choke on or cut themselves. Starbucks has learned of seven reports of cups breaking, including two incidents of choking, but no injuries have been reported. Consumers should take the cup from young children and return it to Starbucks for a refund.

<http://www.cbc.ca/consumer/story/2007/10/10/starbucks-recall.html?ref=rss>

INTERNATIONAL

NEW RECOMMENDATIONS CAUSE DEBATE: FISH CONSUMPTION DURING PREGNANCY

A U.S. group of obstetricians and nutritionists, in partnership with the National Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies Coalition (HMHB), noted that the benefits of fish consumption for pregnant women outweigh the concerns about risks posed by trace amounts of mercury. These recommendations challenge the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) advisory, creating confusion for pregnant women. Other experts raise concerns about the coalition's recommendations, noting that the documented public health risks should be mentioned and that there are other sources of essential omega-3 fatty acids without the risk of contaminants. Health Canada suggests pregnant women and breastfeeding

mothers should eat no more than 5.3 ounces (150 grams) per month of certain types of predator fish including tuna, shark, and escolar.

<http://www.theglobeandmail.com/servlet/story/LAC.20071006.PREGNANT06/TPStory/National>

----- II. RECENT REPORTS AND RESEARCH RESULTS -----

ONTARIO

STUDY: BIRTH OUTCOMES BY NEIGHBOURHOOD INCOME AND RECENT IMMIGRATION IN TORONTO

The study, "Birth outcomes by neighbourhood income and recent immigration in Toronto", examined 143,030 singleton live births to mothers between April 1996 and March 2001. Neighbourhoods were divided into five income groups from the highest one-fifth to the lowest, based on the proportion of their population below Statistics Canada's low-income cut-off. The study found that recent immigrants to Toronto had approximately the same risk of having good birth outcomes regardless of where they lived in the city, which was in sharp contrast to the situation for longer-term residents. Among long-term residents, a lower neighbourhood income increased the risk of preterm birth and other negative birth outcomes. Although the study found that births to recent immigrant mothers were less likely to be preterm than longer-term residents, they were more likely to be low birth weight and full-term low birth weight. According to the research summary, the causes for low birth weight among recent immigrants and long-term residents of low-income neighbourhoods are likely different.

<http://www.statcan.ca/english/freepub/82-003-XIE/2006010/articles/birth/birth-en.pdf>

CANADA

CHILDREN NOT A OPTION FOR MANY BECAUSE OF WORK STRESS

"Report Five: Reducing Work-Life Conflict: What Works? What Doesn't?" is the fifth of a series of six reports of the National Study On Balancing Work, Family And Lifestyle, commissioned by Health Canada and conducted by Higgins, Duxbury, and Lyons (2007). Nearly 33,000 people were surveyed and 28% of Canadian respondents reported dealing with work stress by delaying having children, having fewer children, or deciding not to have children at all.

http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/ewh-semt/alt_formats/hecs-sesc/pdf/pubs/occup-travail/work-travail/balancing-equilibre/report-rapport_e.pdf

To view the four earlier reports see: <http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/publicat/work-travail/index.html>

TRENDS IN INFLUENZA VACCINATION IN CANADA

Although there have been increases in influenza vaccination rates across the country, the rates for high-risk groups such as the elderly, young children, and those with chronic medical conditions, still fall short of national targets.

<http://www.statcan.ca/english/freepub/82-003-XIE/2006010/articles/vaccination/flu-en.pdf>

INTERNATIONAL

LESS WEIGHT GAIN IN PREGNANCY SUGGESTED FOR OBESE WOMEN

This research (Kiel et al., 2007) examined the effect of gestational weight change on pregnancy outcomes in obese women. The findings of the research suggest that many obese women may have lower risk for adverse events in pregnancy if they gain little or no weight.

To view the abstract see: <http://www.greenjournal.org/cgi/content/abstract/110/4/752>

For more discussion about this issue see the teaching brief on medpage today:
<http://www.medpagetoday.com/OBGYN/Pregnancy/tb/6854>

1 IN 7 NEW MOTHERS DEPRESSED BEFORE, DURING, AND AFTER PREGNANCY

This study (Dietz et al., 2007), in the American Journal of Psychiatry, estimated the prevalence of diagnosed depression and treatment among women before, during, and after pregnancies ending in live births. Approximately 15% had depression identified during at least one pregnancy phase. Of these women, more than half had recurring indicators of depression and 93% obtained treatment. The authors suggest routine screening to uncover undetected depression.
<http://ajp.psychiatryonline.org/cgi/reprint/164/10/1515>

MOM'S LOW CHOLESTEROL LINKED TO PREEMIE BIRTHS

New research (Edison et al., 2007) published by Pediatrics suggests that very low cholesterol levels in pregnant women may harm the health of the fetus. Total serum cholesterol under 159 milligrams per decilitre (mg/dL) was associated with preterm delivery among otherwise low-risk white mothers in the pilot study population.

See abstract at: <http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/cgi/content/abstract/120/4/723>

BREASTFEEDING DOES NOT CONTRIBUTE TO CAVITIES

The authors of this study (Iida, Auinger, Billings, & Weitzman, 2007) assessed the potential association between breastfeeding and other factors with the risk for early childhood caries among young children in the United States, using the 1999-2002 National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey. The results indicated that breastfeeding and its duration were not associated with the risk for early childhood caries.

<http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/cgi/content/full/120/4/e944>

FIRST CIGARETTE CAN TURN CHILDREN INTO SMOKERS

The purpose of this study, by DiFranza et al. (2007) from the University of Massachusetts Medical School, was to identify characteristics that predict progression from the first inhalation of a cigarette to dependence. The researchers tracked the smoking habits of 217 sixth-graders recruited from 6 schools in Massachusetts between 2002 and 2006 who had reported having inhaled a cigarette at least once. The results indicated that once a teen had tried cigarettes, very little they did afterward impacted on whether they became addicted or not. The initial feeling of being "relaxed" after the first puff of a cigarette was the leading predictor of becoming dependent on cigarettes. Based on the results, the researchers advocated a ban on tobacco advertising to reduce teens' likelihood of experimenting with cigarettes and suggested that more be done to educate young people of the dangers of the first cigarette.

<http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/cgi/content/full/120/4/e974>

CHILDREN'S TV VIEWING TIED TO BEHAVIOURAL PROBLEMS

The researchers (Mistry, Minkovitz, Strobino, & Borzekowski, 2007) analyzed data collected from the results of surveys of 2,702 families enrolled in a national study between 1996 and 1998, followed the children over time from 2.5 to 5.5 years of age, and measured the effects of changing levels of TV watching. Children who watched two or more hours of television daily at 2.5 and 5.5 years of age were more likely to suffer from sleep, attention, and aggressive behaviour problems, and had more difficulties dealing with others. The researchers also found that children with televisions in their bedrooms were more likely to have sleeping problems. Those children who reduced television watching between the two ages did not have a greater likelihood of social or behavioural problems.

View the abstract at: <http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/cgi/content/abstract/120/4/762>

PARENTS MAY UNDERESTIMATE CHILDREN'S DIFFICULTIES FALLING ASLEEP

The authors of this study (Fricke-Oerkermann et al., 2007) conducted a questionnaire to 832 children and their parents three times on an annual basis, with the goal of providing information on prevalence and difficulties of initiating and maintaining sleep in childhood. The results indicated that about 30% to 40% of the children had problems falling asleep at the first assessment, and 60% of those children continued to have difficulties initiating sleep one year later. Children described significantly more difficulties initiating and maintaining sleep than what their parents reported on their behalf.

See abstract at: <http://www.journalsleep.org/ViewAbstract.aspx?citationid=3364>

EARLY EXPOSURE TO DDT MAY RAISE RISK OF BREAST CANCER

Cohn, Wolff, Cirillo, and Sholtz (2007) investigated whether DDT exposure in young women during the period of peak DDT use (1959 to 1967) predicts breast cancer. Women under the age of 14 who were exposed to high levels of DDT were five times more likely to develop breast cancer later in life than women with lower exposures. Exposure after adolescence did not increase risk. The authors noted that many U.S. women who were heavily exposed to DDT in childhood have not yet reached the age of 50 and ``the public health significance of DDT exposure in early life may be large`` (Cohn et al., 2007, p. 1406).

<http://www.ehponline.org/members/2007/10260/10260.pdf>

RANDOMIZED COMPARISON OF 3 METHODS TO SCREEN FOR DOMESTIC VIOLENCE IN FAMILY PRACTICE

According to a study by Chen et al. (2007) reported in Annals of Family Medicine, of three methods to screen for domestic violence in the primary care setting, a patient self-administered domestic violence screening was as effective as a medical staff or physician interview in terms of disclosure, comfort, and time spent screening.

<http://www.annfammed.org/cgi/reprint/5/5/430>

----- III. CURRENT INITIATIVES -----

FETAL ALCOHOL SPECTRUM DISORDER MODULE 1: PREVENTING AND ADDRESSING ALCOHOL USE IN PREGNANCY

MDcme.ca in conjunction with the Public Health Agency of Canada and its partner organizations announced the availability of a free online course accredited by the College of Family Physicians of Canada that provides information on clinical practices related to assessing and influencing alcohol use in pregnancy.

http://www.mdcme.ca/templates/CMECourse_info.asp?id=66

For other courses of interest see: <http://www.mdcme.ca/zerve.asp?id=6>

PREVNet: A NEW INITIATIVE TO ``PROMOTE RELATIONSHIPS AND ELIMINATE VIOLENCE``

The Promoting Relationships and Eliminating Violence Network (PREVNet) is a coalition of Canadians concerned about bullying. The primary goal of PREVNet is to translate and exchange knowledge about bullying to enhance awareness, to provide assessment and intervention tools, and to promote policy related to the problems of bullying.

<http://prevnet.ca/AboutUs/tabid/92/Default.aspx>

----- IV. UPCOMING EVENTS -----

ONTARIO

ADVANCING BEST PRACTICES FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH

Date: October 16, 2007

Location: Crowne Plaza Hotel, 101 Lyon Street North, Ottawa

The Centres of Excellence for Children's Well-Being are presenting a one-day showcase featuring the collaborative work of the Centres of Excellence including resources that are relevant and available to support children, youth, and families.

<http://www.excellence-jeunesenfants.ca/home.asp?lang=EN>

MATERNAL HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

Date: October 18-20, 2007

Location: Courtyard Marriott Hotel Downtown Toronto, Ontario

The Association for Research on Mothering (ARM) is hosting its 11th annual conference.

For further information visit: <http://www.yorku.ca/arm/MaternalHealth.html>

COMPLEXITIES AND DIVERSITIES: CREATING CHANGE IN A GLOBAL CONTEXT

Date: October 18-20, 2007

Location: Hilton Hotel, 300 King St., London

The Nursing Network on Violence Against Women International conference will provide a forum for researchers, practitioners, and policy makers to: engage in dialogue about international research, practice innovations, and policy initiatives that address the issue of violence against women and children from varied standpoints; and to reflect on the ways in which complexities and diversities can be addressed in research and practice with women and children who have experienced violence.

<http://www.nnvawi.org/>

REACHING IN...REACHING OUT: RESILIENCE TRAINING WORKSHOP

Date: October 22-26, 2007

Location: Ottawa

Reaching In...Reaching Out is an evidence-based skills training program designed to help adults help young children develop a resilient view about life's inevitable stresses and challenges. Young children develop resilience by watching adults model resilient strategies in everyday situations. The training is based on an adaptation of the world renowned Penn Resilience Project (University of Pennsylvania).

<http://www.reachinginreachingout.ca/update.htm>

ELIJAH'S KITE

Date: October 23, 2007

Location: Glenn Gould Studio, Canada Broadcasting Centre, 250 Front Street West, Toronto

PREVNet and Tapestry present an original Canadian opera for children on the complex issues of bullying with a reception to follow.

<http://prevnet.ca/Home/tabid/36/Default.aspx>

23rd ANNUAL INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON YOUNG CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS AND THEIR FAMILIES

Date: October 25-28, 2007

Location: Sheraton on the Falls, 5875 Falls Avenue, Niagara Falls

Conference sessions and workshops are designed to cover a wide range of vital issues facing those who work with young children with special needs and their families.

http://www.dec-sped.org/conference/about_the_conference.html

FASD IN OUR SCHOOLS: FETAL ALCOHOL SPECTRUM DISORDER CONFERENCE

Date: October 25-26, 2007

Location: Holiday Inn, 601 Scottsdale Dr., Guelph

Workshop topics will include: providing information regarding teamwork and strategies to work with FASD students; understanding why adolescents with FASD do the things they do, and discussing strategies to help in a high school setting (Bridges School Program in Manitoba).

http://www.fasat.ca/What_s_new/Conference_Registration/conference_registration.html

BREASTFEEDING POTPOURRI: A DAY WITH MARSHA WALKER

Date: October 26, 2007

Location: Lamplighter Inn, 591 Wellington Rd., London

This conference will be of interest to all healthcare professionals providing care to mothers and their breastfeeding babies.

www.county.oxford.on.ca/Portals/_county/3817/breastfeeding.pdf

CAN'T NOT WON'T: A ONE DAY CONFERENCE ON FASD

Date: October 30, 2007

Location: Glenway Country Club, 470 Crossland Gate, Newmarket

FASD Coalition of York Region presents a one-day conference on Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder. Learn how FASD manifests at various ages, where to have children diagnosed, and how to support children/youth at home, school, and work.

http://www.ctn-simcoeyork.ca/resources/FASD_Conference_Flyer.pdf

CANADA

THE MANY FACES OF CHILDHOOD WELL-BEING: THE EARLY YEARS (2 TO 6)

Date: November 30, 2007

Location: Coast Terrace Inn, 4440 Gateway Boulevard NW, Edmonton

This symposium, hosted by the Alberta Centre for Child, Family and Community Research, will share information about current evidence in the preschool years and how development can be supported through families, communities, screening, and follow-up services.

<http://www.research4children.com/admin/contentx/default.cfm?PageId=7957>

----- V. RESOURCES -----

CANADIAN COMMUNITY HEALTH SURVEY: NUTRIENT INTAKES FROM FOOD, 2004

Statistics Canada and Health Canada released a compendium of tables on nutrient intakes from food based on the Canadian Community Health Survey (CCHS), Cycle 2.2 on nutrition. This survey collected information in 2004 from over 35,000 respondents of all ages residing in private households in all 10 provinces. The CCHS 2.2 is the first national nutrition survey conducted by the Canadian government in over 30 years.

http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fn-an/alt_formats/hpfb-dgpsa/pdf/pubs/cchs-escv_vol1_e.pdf

WEB-BASED TOOL "MY FOOD GUIDE ONLINE" AVAILABLE TO PRINT IN 12 LANGUAGES

My Food Guide Online is an interactive web-based tool that allows the user to personalize information found in Canada's Food Guide. The personalized food guides can be printed in twelve languages.

http://www.healthycanadians.gc.ca/index_e.html

MULTIPLE INTERVENTION PROGRAM TOOL KIT

This tool kit is designed to: (1) support public health staff and managers to strengthen multiple intervention program (MIP) design and evaluation, through the use of an interactive tool; and (2) provide public and community health practitioners with resources to support a strategic, coordinated, resource-effective approach to comprehensive programming.

http://www.miptoolkit.com/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=14&Itemid=1