

CHAMPLAIN HEALTHY SCHOOL-AGED CHILDREN SUMMIT

MONDAY, OCT 15, 2007 9:00 A.M. – 4:30 P.M.
HAMPTON INN & CONVENTION CENTRE, OTTAWA



THE CHAMPLAIN
CARDIOVASCULAR DISEASE
PREVENTION NETWORK



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STROKE
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Summit Report: Executive Summary

The **Champlain Healthy School-aged Children Summit** brought together leaders from the nine Champlain School Boards, four public health units, the recreation sector, health care settings, and the community. Over 80 delegates from across the Champlain District gathered at the Hampton Inn in Ottawa on October 15, 2007 as a first step towards a united vision for addressing childhood obesity in our community. The day-long event offered the opportunity to initiate discussions, share successes, identify potential areas for collaboration, and begin the action planning process.

Summit Goals and Objectives

Purpose: To begin planning for unified actions in the Champlain District that will improve physical activity and eating behaviours of children and youth.

Objectives:

1. To provide an overview of knowledge gained from the International Conference on Physical Activity and Obesity in Children (June 2007), as well as recently conducted local research;
2. To begin to establish a collaborative vision for improving the physical activity and eating behaviours of children and youth in the Champlain District;
3. To provide an opportunity to identify common priorities and plan for collaborative action that addresses obesity in children and youth; and,
4. To learn in conversation with each other what action is being taken, what successes are being experienced and how to leverage them.

Getting to the Workshop

The Summit was organized by the Champlain Healthy School-aged Children committee, a working group of the Champlain Cardiovascular Disease Prevention Network (CCPN). The committee includes representatives from the Heart and Stroke Foundation of Ontario (HSFO), the University of Ottawa Heart Institute, the four regional health units (Eastern Ontario, Renfrew County, City of Ottawa, and Leeds, Grenville & Lanark), and the Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario.

An Advisory Committee made up of partners from education and recreation also contributed their expertise to the planning of this event.

The Summit was co-hosted by HSFO as part of a province-wide initiative to support communities across Ontario in implementing the knowledge emerging from the International Conference on Childhood Obesity, held June 2007 in Toronto.

Summit Program

The morning program featured various presentations from local experts on the issue of childhood obesity, the most current scientific evidence and recommendations, as well as the successes and potential areas for collaboration that we can leverage from within the Champlain District.

The afternoon allowed delegates the opportunity to engage in conversation through two small group activities. Delegates were divided into breakout groups and invited to share their ideas and perspectives around questions that would guide planning activities for a regional action plan to address childhood obesity. The intent of the first activity was to work towards a collaborative vision; the intent of the second activity was to begin planning for collaborative action.

Key Findings

A Vision for the Champlain District

It is clear from the discussions held in the afternoon that there is a common understanding of the need to address the issue of childhood obesity in our schools, in our communities, and in our homes. ***"The time to act is now."***

In creating a vision for the Champlain District both challenges and solutions were identified. The challenges highlighted by delegates included: how our society and environment foster unhealthy behaviours; the lack of progressive policies and standards to support physical activity and healthy eating; the lack of appreciation for the significance of the issue; the disconnect in parental perceptions of children's level of physical activity and healthy eating; and the lack of an existing method for coordinating the collective expertise in our region to take unified action to address childhood obesity.

Priority Areas of Collaboration

The following is a summary of **recommended actions**:

1. Develop a strategy and action plan for the Champlain District.
2. Establish the leadership and infrastructure to support implementation of the strategic plan.
3. Create progressive, supportive school policies across the 9 Champlain School Boards.
4. Develop an evaluation tool for tracking our progress.
5. Develop a regional communications campaign to promote healthy eating and physical activity.
6. Advocate for political / government support (financial and/or a commitment to policy change).
7. Explore innovative funding / resource avenues for the region.
8. Create a "community of practice" to enhance sharing of successes and best practices.
9. Encourage and provide opportunities for skills development.

Conclusion and Post-Summit Action

This one-day Summit offered the opportunity for educators, administrators, public health professionals, health care specialists, community service providers, and researchers to learn more about the issue of childhood obesity and exchange ideas on how to begin to address the issue collaboratively within the Champlain District.

It was expressed numerous times throughout day, by presenters and by delegates, that the commitment and readiness to mobilize on this issue exists within our region. There is clearly an impetus for action and a strong desire to translate the positive momentum of the day's discussions into an actionable plan for the region.

The Champlain Healthy School-aged Children committee will build on the relationships formed at the Summit and play a leadership role in moving this agenda forward. The CCPN is committed to catalyzing the vision and actions identified at the Summit into a regional strategy to support collective action to address obesity in the children and youth of the Champlain District.

More Information

Visit www.ccpnetwork.ca for a complete report of Summit proceedings and other information.