Healthy Communities
An Approach to Action on Health Determinants in Canada

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OHCC Mission

To create innovative solutions to meet community challenges and build strong, equitable and sustainable communities through education, engagement and collaboration.
OHCC Services

OHCC provides services in English and French to community organizations, coalitions and networks that are engaged in local or regional Healthy Communities initiatives.

- consultations
- learning activities
- educational resources
- communication services for over 600 members
- projects
Our Mission

FoodNet Ontario is a province-wide network of organizations and individuals working together to create sustainable local food systems and achieve (community) food security in communities across Ontario.

Learn More

Our Vision

FoodNet Ontario will help communities across Ontario develop sustainable local food systems by facilitating communication and cooperation, and encouraging a wide range of participants in the food system to work together to develop effective programs and policies.
Purpose: to advance and exchange knowledge across four Canadian provinces of Healthy Communities initiatives that address cancer and chronic disease prevention through research, policy and practice.
The Healthy Communities Approach:
A Framework for Action on the Determinants of Health

CORE VALUE
Capacity Building and Empowerment (Individuals, Organizations, Communities)

Key Building Blocks of the Healthy Communities Approach

- Community/Citizen Engagement
- Multi-Sectoral Collaboration
- Political Commitment
- Healthy Public Policy
- Asset-Based Community Development

Integrated Action on the Determinants of Health

- Income and Social Status
- Social Support Networks
- Education and Literacy
- Employment/Working Conditions
- Social Environments
- Physical Environments
- Personal Health Practices and Coping Skills
- Healthy Child Development
- Biology and Genetic Endowment
- Health Services
- Gender
- Culture

Examples of Outcomes

- Individual
  - Skills/Behaviours
  - Social Participation
  - Lifestyle
  - Knowledge
  - Health Status
- Organization
  - Participation
  - Skills Development
  - Critical Knowledge
  - Communication
  - Recognition
  - Provision/Access to Services
- Community
  - Governance
  - Social
  - Economy
  - Environment
  - Culture
  - Resilience
  - Healthy Public Policy
  - Social Inclusion
- Regional/Provincial/National
  - Governance
  - Legislation
  - Programs
  - Healthy Public Policies

Developed collaboratively by Ontario Healthy Communities Coalition, BC Healthy Communities, Réseau Québécois de Villes et Villages en Santé, Mouvement Académie Des Communautés en Santé du Nouveau-Brunswick
Products

Research
- Literature review
- Provincial Network Profiles
- Community Survey
- 16 community case studies

Policy
- Framework for policy analysis
- Guide to Policy Development
- Policy on Official Languages

Practice
- Healthy Communities Framework
- Criteria for effective practice
- Workshops and presentations
- Website: www.chc-csc.ca
Some Findings

...people with low levels of participation or community engagement see themselves as being in less good physical and mental health than people with high levels of participation...

...several researchers stress the importance of offering cross-sectoral training and development opportunities so that the people who get involved in project activities can develop the skills they need to be full participants in the process...

Implementation of any coordinated action that factors in the wide range of health determinants is unquestionably a long-term undertaking.

...95% of the initiatives studied had begun with a strategic community vision exercise

...Healthy Communities initiatives have intermediate and direct outcomes at the individual, organizational and community levels
British Columbia
• Prince George
• Gold River
• Kelowna
• Surrey

New Brunswick
• la Fédération des jeunes francophones du NB
• Paquetville
• Bathurst North
• Saint-Jean

Quebec
• Gatineau
• Rivière-du-Loup
• Victoriaville
• Argenteuil

Ontario
• Mississauga
• Haliburton
• Haldimand-Norfolk
• Thunder Bay
## Actions Contributing to CDP

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<tr>
<th>Environment</th>
<th>Examples of Actions</th>
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| **Physical** | - pedestrian and bike infrastructure  
                - school travel routes  
                - preservation of natural environment  
                - community gardens |
| **Sociocultural** | - campaigns to raise awareness of diversity;  
                            - Social capital (community parties, lunches, walking clubs)  
                            - Youth center |
| **Economic**  | - Sliding-scale fees for recreational activities  
                            - Affordable healthy food (community gardens, local markets, etc.) |
| **Political** | - Development plans include active transportation  
                            - Healthy public policies (family, social development, athletic and recreational policies, etc.) |
Emergent Themes

- Our research shows that the Healthy Communities approach is effective for CDP initiatives.
- CDP initiatives benefit from upstream, holistic, integrated thinking that addresses determinants of health and common risk factors.
- Community engagement leads to synergy, creativity, motivation and commitment.
- Multi-media documentation of communities’ stories is an important tool for knowledge transfer.
Knowledge Exchange
Sustainability

- Partnership development has fostered sustainability at the local level
- Project partners are committed to continuing to work collaboratively, to disseminate project results and actively participate in a national Healthy Communities network.
For more information

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