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

CANADA

1. FEDERAL BUDGET 2009 (also available in French)

The Honourable Jim Flaherty, Minister of Finance, released the budget plan on January 27, 2009. The budget provides for expansions of the Working Income Tax Benefit and the Child Tax Benefit but fails to provide quality early learning and child care services (Ontario Coalition for Better Child Care, 2009, January 27), or to address the housing needs of “the homeless, most low-income Canadians without affordable housing, and aboriginal peoples living in cities and towns (Canadian Housing Renewal Association, 2009, January 27). Parentcentral.ca (Roseman, Mathieu, & Staffers, 2009, January 28) provides a breakdown of what Budget 2009 means for families.

English: <http://www.budget.gc.ca/2009/plan/bptoc-eng.asp>

French: <http://www.budget.gc.ca/2009/plan/bptoc-fra.asp>

Ontario Coalition for Better Child Care: <http://www.childcareontario.org/?p=1053#more-1053>

Canadian Housing Renewal Association: <http://www.chra-achru.ca/english/view.asp?x=972&id=1508>

Breakdown for families: <http://www.parentcentral.ca/parent/article/578621>

2. CHILD CARE SEEN AS A LONG-TERM ECONOMIC FIX

This article provides an overview of how child care can be considered an economic fix. According to senior economist and Forbes Magazine columnist Thomas F. Cooley: “If you're a government looking to invest in something that gets results and stimulates the economy...invest in human capital, particularly of a very young age -- it yields huge returns and can be considered a long-term fix for the economy” (Hambrook, 2009, January 22).

<http://timestranscript.canadaeast.com/search/article/547709>

3. PROMOTION OF NORMAL CHILDBIRTH BY SOCIETY OF OBSTETRICIANS AND GYNAECOLOGISTS OF CANADA AND OTHERS

(also available in French)

The Society of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists of Canada (SOGC) released a statement calling for the promotion of normal childbirth when labour and birth are progressing normally (CBC, 2008, January 28). This statement was also endorsed by the Canadian Association of Midwives, the Association of Women's Health, Obstetric and Neonatal Nurses of Canada, the College of Family Physicians of Canada, and the Society of Rural Physicians of Canada. Medical interventions that are on the rise include: (1) caesarean sections, (2) induction of labour before 41 weeks of pregnancy, and (3) use of forceps or vacuum assistance during delivery. According to the statement (2009), doctors should only resort to these interventions when there is a valid, evidence-based reason.

English: http://www.sogc.org/media/advisories-20090128_e.asp

French: http://www.sogc.org/media/advisories-20090128_f.asp

INTERNATIONAL

4. FACEBOOK FLACK REGARDING BREASTFEEDING MOTHERS – ACADEMY OF BREASTFEEDING MEDICINE

The Academy of Breastfeeding Medicine (2009, January 12) notes that the social networking website, “Facebook” should review its policy banning photographs of breastfeeding mothers: “Such a policy perpetuates the notion that breastfeeding is an unseemly bodily function best kept from public viewing, a misguided and antiquated concept that has no place in contemporary society. It further perpetuates the idea that formula feeding is normative when breastfeeding is, and should be considered, normative infant

and young child feeding. Health professionals widely acknowledge that breastfeeding is biologically unique and appropriate for the mother and infant” (Academy of Breastfeeding Medicine, 2009, January 12).

<http://www.bfmed.org/Media/Files/Documents/pdf/ABM%20Facebook%20PR%201-2009.pdf>

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

CANADA

5. TRACKING HOUSEHOLD DANGERS IN UTERO (also available in French)

This study (Maternal-Infant Research on Environmental Chemicals), a part of the Federal Government’s Chemicals Management Plan, aims to (1) measure the extent to which pregnant women and their infants are exposed to chemicals; (2) measure some of the beneficial elements in human breast milk; (3) assess what health risks, if any, are associated with the chemical levels measured, with a focus on heavy metals such as lead and mercury, and (4) create a data and biological specimen bank for further research on fetal growth, pregnancy, and health of mother and baby. Canadian scientists are recruiting hundreds of pregnant women for this landmark, \$6 million study.

English: http://www.mirec-canada.ca/site/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=46&Itemid=53&lang=en

French: http://www.mirec-canada.ca/site/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=46&Itemid=53&lang=fr

News release: <http://www.nationalpost.com/story.html?id=1161453>

6. MAKING EARLY CHILDHOOD COUNT

The authors (Hertzman & Williams, 2009) of this report discuss the approaches that can be used to monitor early childhood development. They note that a strong case has been built in support of the importance of early child development because health, emotional well-being, and life success have their roots in early childhood. According to the authors: “This has implications for all countries that are signatories to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child because each of these countries is responsible for providing children with the opportunities necessary to develop physical, cognitive, social and emotional capacities in early life”. They suggest that a coordinated system of statistics on early childhood development is the most desirable surveillance system approach.

<http://www.cmaj.ca/cgi/content/full/180/1/68?etoc>

INTERNATIONAL

7. FOSTERING LANGUAGE ACQUISITION IN CHILDCARE SETTINGS

In this article, the author reviews the research and existing theories on language development, focusing on how pre-schoolers’ social environment affects their ability to learn languages and their subsequent reading and writing skills. Because children from immigrant families and those with a low socio-economic status often have difficulty with language acquisition, this review looks in particular at language development initiatives for disadvantaged groups in daycare settings.

http://www.bernardvanleer.org/publication_store/publication_store_publications/fostering_language_acquisition_in_daycare_settings_what_does_the_research_tell_us/file

8. THE EFFECTS OF INFANT MEDIA USAGE: WHAT DO WE KNOW AND WHAT SHOULD WE LEARN?

This article (Beller, 2008) highlights that the rise of infant TV viewing began in the late 1990s and has become an increasingly common occurrence with over 90% of today’s children watching TV regularly

before the age of 2 years. This article reviews what is known about the effects of infant TV viewing on multiple domains of child development including language, cognition, and attentional capacity, as well as directions for future research.

Abstract: <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/18793294>

9. CHILDREN'S HEALTH STUDY BEGINS RECRUITMENT

The National Institutes of Health (NIH) announced (2009, January 13) that recruitment has begun for a massive study of children's health issues that will follow 100,000 children from before birth to age 21. According to Duane Alexander, M.D., Director of NIH's *Eunice Kennedy Shriver* National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD): "The principal benefit of a large scale, long-term study like the National Children's Study is that it will uncover important health information at virtually every phase of life...Initially, it will provide major insights into disorders of birth and infancy, such as preterm birth and its health consequences. Ultimately it will lead to a greater understanding of adult disorders, many of which are thought to be heavily influenced by early life exposures and events." (NIH News, 2009, January 13)

<http://www.nichd.nih.gov/about/org/od/ncs/>

News article: <http://www.nichd.nih.gov/news/releases/jan12-09-NCS-Recruiting.cfm>

10. BINGE-DRINKING DURING PREGNANCY INCREASES THE RISK OF PRETERM BIRTH

This study (O'Leary, Nassar, Kurinczuk, & Bower, 2009) investigated the relationship between prenatal alcohol exposure and fetal growth and preterm birth and estimated the effect of dose and timing of alcohol exposure in pregnancy. The findings indicate that alcohol intake at high levels, particularly binge-drinking in early pregnancy, is associated with increased risk of preterm birth even when drinking is ceased before the second trimester. The authors conclude that dose and timing of prenatal alcohol exposure appears to affect preterm delivery and should be considered in future research and health education.

Abstract: <http://www3.interscience.wiley.com/journal/121642223/abstract>

News article: <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/health/article-1124962/Binge-drinking-mothers-double-risk-having-premature-baby.html>

11. RECOVERY COACHES' EFFECTIVE IN REDUCING NUMBER OF BABIES EXPOSED TO DRUGS

This study (Ryan, Choi, Hong, Hernandez, & Larrison, 2008) evaluated the use of recovery coaches in child welfare for addressing substance exposure in infants. A total of 931 women who were chronic substance abusers, and who had lost temporary custody of their children to the Department of Family Services participated in the study. A total of 261 of these women were assigned to the control group, and 670 were assigned to the experimental group. Women in the experimental group received traditional services plus the services of a recovery coach and administrative records were used to indicate substance exposure at birth. The findings indicate that recovery coaches can significantly reduce the number of substance-exposed births as well as help reunite substance-involved families, saving state child-welfare systems millions of dollars in foster-care and other placement costs.

Abstract: [http://www.sciencedirect.com/science?_ob=ArticleURL&_udi=B6V7N-4V0VCOH-1&_user=10&_coverDate=11%2F30%2F2008&_rdoc=9&_fmt=high&_orig=browse&_srch=doc-info\(%23toc%235847%232008%23999679988%23730117%23FLA%23display%23Volume\)&_cdi=5847&_sort=d&_docanchor=&_ct=9&_acct=C000050221&_version=1&_urlVersion=0&_userid=10&md5=de654b280ceaf7e5657dbcfbecb1a98b](http://www.sciencedirect.com/science?_ob=ArticleURL&_udi=B6V7N-4V0VCOH-1&_user=10&_coverDate=11%2F30%2F2008&_rdoc=9&_fmt=high&_orig=browse&_srch=doc-info(%23toc%235847%232008%23999679988%23730117%23FLA%23display%23Volume)&_cdi=5847&_sort=d&_docanchor=&_ct=9&_acct=C000050221&_version=1&_urlVersion=0&_userid=10&md5=de654b280ceaf7e5657dbcfbecb1a98b)

News article:

<http://esciencenews.com/articles/2009/01/05/recovery.coaches.effective.reducing.number.babies.exposed.drugs>

12. BELIEFS ABOUT THE HEALTH EFFECTS OF "THIRDHAND" SMOKE AND HOME SMOKING BANS

"Thirdhand smoke is residual tobacco smoke contamination that remains after the cigarette is extinguished" (Winickoff, Friebely, Tanski, Sherrod, Matt, Hovell, & McMillen, 2009). This study assessed

the health beliefs of adults regarding thirdhand smoke exposure of children and whether smokers and non-smokers differ in those beliefs. A National random-digit-dial telephone survey was conducted from September to November 2005, assessing the level of agreement with statements that breathing air in a room today where people smoked yesterday can harm the health of children. The findings indicate that more nonsmokers (95.4%) agreed that secondhand smoke harms the health of children than smokers (84.1%). Nonsmokers were also more likely to agree (65.2%) that thirdhand smoke harms children than smokers (43.3%). Strict rules prohibiting smoking in the home were more prevalent among nonsmokers (88.4%) than smokers (26.7%). Beliefs about the health effects of thirdhand smoke were independently associated with home smoking bans. The authors conclude that this finding emphasizes that the belief that thirdhand smoke harms the health of children may be an important element in encouraging home smoking bans.

<http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/cgi/reprint/123/1/e74>

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

13. BABY-FRIENDLY INITIATIVE DESIGNATION OF GRAND RIVER HOSPITAL, KITCHENER, ON

Grand River Hospital in Kitchener, Ontario recently received its Baby-Friendly Initiative (BFI) designation by the World Health Organization and UNICEF (570 News, 2009, January 21). The external assessment took place in November and the hospital released the information after the official ceremony on January 21. With this designation, Canada now has a total of 26 BFI-designated facilities – 10 hospitals, 2 birthing centres, and 14 community health facilities.

http://www.570news.com/news/local/article.jsp?content=20090121_153723_38176

14. SMOKE-FREE ONTARIO – SMOKING IN CARS

As of January 21, 2009, the Smoke-Free Ontario Act (Government of Ontario, 2009) prohibits persons from smoking or having lighted tobacco in a motor vehicle if another person who is less than 16 years old is inside the vehicle. Any person – driver or passenger – in a motor vehicle, who is smoking while someone else under the age of 16 is present, will be committing an offence and can be fined up to \$250. The law applies to both moving and stationary vehicles and will apply to motor vehicles, regardless of whether any window, sunroof, rooftop, door, or other feature of the vehicle is open.

http://www.mhp.gov.on.ca/english/health/smoke_free/smoking_in_cars/factsheet.asp

15. ONTARIO'S CAMPAIGN FOR A SMOKE-FREE RIDE

“Campaign for a Smoke-Free Ride”, by the Ontario Lung Association with support from the Government of Ontario, is designed to give parents who smoke the information and support they need to give their children a healthy, smoke-free ride. This website provides information, tips for a smoke-free ride, an e-newsletter, a radio advertisement, and frequently asked questions and quick facts.

<http://smokefreeride.ca/>

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

This section lists events that have not been included in earlier editions of the MNCHP bulletin or listserv postings. For the details of these events and a complete list of events noted in previous MNCHP bulletins and postings, including contact information, links to organizations, and descriptions, see

<http://www.beststart.org/events/otherevents.php>

ONTARIO

16. HEALTH AND THE FAMILY MEAL: WILL DINNERS COME OUT OF THE BOX?

February 5, 2009: Toronto, ON
Hosted by: Ryerson University
http://www.ryerson.ca/news/events/General_Public/20090205_CafeScienti.html

17. WHO/UNICEF LACTATION MANAGEMENT COURSE, PRESENTED BY INFACCT CANADA/IBFAN
February 9-11, 2009: Toronto, ON
Hosted by: Infact Canada
<http://www.infactcanada.ca/Courses/20-HourTorontoFebruary.htm>

CANADA

18. MOTHERS IN MOTION
February 12, 2009: Edmonton, Alberta
Hosted by: Alberta Centre for Active Living and the Canadian Association for the Advancement of Women and Sport and Physical Activity
<http://www.centre4activeliving.ca/news/CAAWS.pdf>

19. WOMEN'S HEALTH RESEARCH NETWORK – RESEARCH METHODOLOGIES WORKSHOP
February 2, 2009: online or teleconference
Hosted by: Women's Health Research Network
Meeting Number: 924 111 643
Meeting Password: womenshealth
To join online:
<https://msfhr.webex.com/msfhr/j.php?ED=113523827&UID=0&PW=5df132475754001c435a5655001f02>
To join by phone: 866-469-3239

INTERNATIONAL

20. MOTHERING AND THE ENVIRONMENT – THE NATURAL, THE SOCIAL, AND THE BUILT
October 22-25, 2009: Toronto, ON
Hosted by: Association for Research on Mothering
Submissions are welcomed from scholars, students, activists, environmental agencies and workers, environmental educators, artists, mothers and others who work or conduct research in this area. Cross-cultural, historical, and comparative work is encouraged. A variety of types of submissions are encouraged including academic papers from all disciplines, workshops, creative submissions, performances, storytelling, visual arts, and other alternative formats. Please send a 250 word abstract and a 50 word bio by March 1, 2009 to arm@yorku.ca.
<http://www.yorku.ca/arm/mothenvironmentcfp.pdf>

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

21. EARLY CHILDHOOD LEARNING KNOWLEDGE CENTRE BULLETIN ON PROGRAM EVALUATION
(also available in French)

This bulletin of the Early Childhood Learning Knowledge Centre (ECLKC) (2009) highlights some of the strengths and limitations of four Canadian programs for improving early childhood learning and development. The first two articles assess the effectiveness of nurse home visitation on young mothers and the other two evaluate the effects of short-term parent training programs on the behaviour and attitudes of parents as well as their young children.

English: http://www.ccl-cca.ca/pdfs/ECLKC/bulletin/ECLKCVol4-1_EN.pdf
French : http://www.ccl-cca.ca/pdfs/ECLKC/bulletin/ECLKCVol4-1_FR.pdf

22. IMMUNISATION IN PREGNANCY GUIDELINES

The Society of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists of Canada (2008, December) released a clinical practice guideline about immunisation in pregnancy. According to SOGC (2008), immunisation programs are among the most cost-beneficial health interventions: "As women who are considering pregnancy or who are already pregnant present for health care consistently, obstetrical care providers are well placed to review their immunisation status and recommend vaccination strategies. This can significantly reduce the occurrence of preventable diseases, benefiting not only the patient and her infant but also the rest of the population".

<http://www.sogc.org/guidelines/documents/gui220CPG0812.pdf>

23. MULTIPLE APPROACHES TO FASD PREVENTION: CANADIAN PERSPECTIVES (also available in French)

This resource (Poole, 2008) describes what has been learned about prevention of FASD in the course of implementation of health promotion and prevention strategies across Canada. It includes an outline of a four-part framework for FASD prevention and promotion of women's and children's health which has been identified by a group of Canadian experts as they have developed and evaluated FASD prevention initiatives at the community, provincial/territorial and national levels. This prevention resource reflects a pan-Canadian vision for both preventing FASD and improving the outcomes for those who are already living with it.

English: <http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/fasd-etcaf/cp-pc-eng.php>

French: <http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/fasd-etcaf/cp-pc-fra.php>

24. NEW LOOK FOR EATRIGHT ONTARIO (also available in French)

EatRight Ontario was launched by Dietitians of Canada and the Ministry of Health Promotion to provide services providers and their clients with easy and reliable access to nutrition information. EatRight Ontario offers the people of Ontario more ways to connect with a Registered Dietitian and get trusted advice on food, nutrition and healthy eating at no cost.

English: <http://www.eatrightontario.ca/Doorway.aspx>

French: <http://www.eatrightontario.ca/fr/Default.aspx>

25. abc123 VIDEOS FOR PARENTS (also available in French)

The abc123 video podcasts (Government of Ontario, 2009) are designed to provide practical ideas for parents and caregivers to help their child learn.

English: <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/abc123/eng/podcast/>

French: <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/abc123/fre/podcast/index.html>

26. INUIT TUTTARVINGAT ANNUAL NEWSLETTER

The Ajunnginiq Centre of the National Aboriginal Health Organization wishes to announce that it has changed its name to "Inuit Tuttarvingat". As the Inuit Tuttarvingat, they will continue to promote the health of Inuit and their communities.

<http://www.naho.ca/inuit/e/whatsnew/index.php>

----- VI. FEATURED BEST START RESOURCES -----

27. YOUR CHILD IS WORTH IT! MAKING YOUR HOME SMOKE-FREE (also available in French)

This colour brochure (2002) promotes smoke-free environments for children and families.

English: <http://www.beststart.org/resources/tobacco/index.html>

French: <http://www.meilleurdepart.org/resources/tabagisme/index.html>

28. POPULATIONS AT HIGHER RISK: WHEN MAINSTREAM APPROACHES DON'T WORK

This resource (2006) was designed to help service providers consider strategies to reach populations that are at higher risk for maternal, newborn and child health concerns.

http://www.beststart.org/resources/howto/pdf/HowTOGuide_2c.pdf