

Document 1: Ottawa Public Health (OPH) infant and family health programming and services

- Postpartum screening: Screening of new mothers is completed upon discharge from hospital by nurses and midwives to identify families with identified risk.
- Telephone support:
 - a) Public Health Nurses (PHNs) contact by phone all consenting postpartum mothers, identified with risk, within 48 hours of hospital discharge to complete a maternal and infant health assessment. This includes an evaluation of health concerns which covers physical health problems, mental illness including postpartum mood and anxiety disorders, intimate partner violence, addictions, among other issues.
 - b) [The Ottawa Public Health Information Line \(OPHIL\)](#) provides information, advice and support, and referrals to families by a PHN on a variety of health topics. In 2014, OPHIL received over 2,000 calls where the main reason for the call was related to infant health, with close to 45% of calls being related to breastfeeding and infant feeding.
- Postpartum outreach: As part of the postpartum contact, a comprehensive information package is mailed to all new mothers to provide infant and child development resources, a description of local programs and contact information of community partners.
- Home visits by PHNs: OPH contacts families with identified risk to provide tailored interventions such as PPD screening, follow-up and referrals, growth and development screening of infants and also referral to specialized services as needed. OPH supports families experiencing challenges related to physical and mental health as well as social issues, with over 10,000 annual home visits by PHNs, OPH Social Workers and family visitors. Home visits have been shown to enhance maternal parenting practices, improve the quality of the child's home environment and further children's development, which leads to measurable and long-term benefits.ⁱ
- Baby Express Drop-ins: OPH collaborates with a number of local partners, including community resource centres and libraries, to offer [Baby Express Drop-ins](#), a service available 7 days a week, with locations across the city. At the Baby Express drop-ins, PHNs provide information, advice and support to parents of babies under one year of age. Supports provided relate to infant feeding, child development, and transition to parenthood. In 2014, PHNs provided over 5,300 consultations with

parents and caregivers.

- Online support: Earlier this year, OPH launched the [Parenting in Ottawa Portal website](#) (English and French) in collaboration with many community partners. This portal aims to be a one-stop, trusted source for local health and parenting information and services. The portal also includes the [Parenting in Ottawa Facebook pages](#) (English and French) which enable parents to engage with a PHN about health-related questions, and seek peer support from other parents. The Facebook pages have received over 8,000 'likes' (followers) since it was launched in November 2014.
- Peer support: OPH offers the [Ottawa Breastfeeding Buddies](#), a breastfeeding peer support program, which pairs new moms with an OPH Breastfeeding Buddy volunteer who has breastfed her child for six months or longer, and can share helpful tips, and her experience. A growing phenomenon is the peer support that is occurring through the Parenting in Ottawa online platforms.
- Partnerships: OPH will continue to work in collaboration with community health and social services providers in order to successfully reach all new families. For example, OPH and the [Champlain Maternal Newborn Regional Program \(CMNRP\)](#) work closely to connect and strengthen community-based service capacity related to prenatal and early childhood health. OPH is also partnering with St. Mary's Home and the Vanier Community Service Centre to increase breastfeeding rates among young, single mothers, and Haitian and West African francophone mothers. As well, OPH will continue to partner with agencies such as those involved in the Young Single Parent Network and local Community Health Centres to support families facing additional challenges as they transition to new parenting roles. Leveraging community partnerships will optimize OPH efforts aiming that families receive the right care at the right time.

¹ Ontario Public Health Standards, 2008. Child Health Guidance Document.

http://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/pro/programs/publichealth/oph_standards/docs/guidance/ChildHealth.pdf