



APHEO

Association of Public Health Epidemiologists in Ontario

"To advance and promote the discipline and professional practice of epidemiology in Ontario public health units."

www.apheo.ca

December 14, 2011

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Ms. Julie Mathien
Director, Early Learning and Child Development
Ministry of Children & Youth Services

Re: NutriSTEP® Screening Program in Ontario

Dear Ms. Julie Mathien,

As the Healthy Babies Health Children Program and the accompanying reporting tool, ISCIS, undergo program enhancements, the Association of Public Health Epidemiologists in Ontario (APHEO) would like to take this opportunity to encourage you to seriously consider adding the NutriSTEP® screening tool for both toddlers (18 months to age 3 years) and children ages 3-5 years to the suite of tools available in the ISCIS reporting environment.

APHEO is an organization of approximately 275 members; epidemiologists and analysts working within health units and other public health organizations across Ontario. Our members are engaged in supporting the implementation of the Foundational Standard of the Ontario Public Health Standards (OPHS), specifically population health assessment and surveillance. This includes data collection, analysis, interpretation and reporting to identify priority populations within our local communities to support local action.

NutriSTEP® can identify children in this priority population, as well as increase parental nutrition knowledge and awareness and change reported nutrition behaviour among all parents of preschoolers. NutriSTEP® questionnaires are for nutrition screening, however if there is uptake at the provincial level, as in New Brunswick, there is a real opportunity for NutriSTEP® to serve as a population health assessment tool in a population where we have significant data gaps.

Anne-Marie Holt – APHEO President
Manager of Epidemiology & Evaluation Services, Senior Epidemiologist
Haliburton, Kawartha, Pine Ridge District Health Unit
200 Rose Glen Road
Port Hope, Ontario, L1A 3V6
(905) 885-9100 ext. 215
aholt@hkpr.on.ca