



January 9, 2006

...because health matters!

Ms. Sylvia Graham  
External Development  
Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario  
401 Smyth Road  
Ottawa, ON K1H 8L1

Dear Ms. Graham:

On December 12, 2005, the Board of the Peterborough County-City Health Unit met and considered the recommendations of the Joint Statement on Physical Punishment of Children and Youth. Two motions were approved, as outlined below:

Motion #1:

That public awareness strategies be developed and implemented to communicate the risks associated with physical punishment of children. That a clear message be given to all parents and caregivers that hurting children and youth is not an acceptable or effective method of managing their behaviour.

Motion #2:

That parenting education programs be offered to all parents and caregivers to provide guidance with regard to dealing effectively with children's and youth's behaviour, the normal stages of child development, parent-child conflict, and other key issues.

A third motion, that children should be given the same protection from physical assault as that given to Canadian adults, through the repeal of Section 43 of the Criminal Code, was not supported. Although all Board members support initiatives to eliminate the physical punishment of children, several expressed concern about supporting a change in legislation that would make all physical punishment of children a criminal offence at this time. Specifically, a number of Board members had reservations about how an absolute prohibition would be interpreted by the court system, and what the implications would be for parents.

The Health Unit will initiate activities on the two approved motions early in 2006 in cooperation with community partners.

Yours truly,

*Madeline Pearson*

Deputy Reeve Madeline Pearson  
Chair, Board of Health for the  
Peterborough County-City Health Unit

Peterborough County-City Health Unit

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