

# 2015

Annual Report



## Year in Review



## Board of Health

The Board of Health is the Middlesex-London Health Unit's governing body and is directly accountable to Middlesex County and City of London residents for the cost-effective management and delivery of public health programs and services. The Board of Health consists of five Provincial Representatives, three Middlesex County Representatives and three City of London Representatives.



*2015 Middlesex-London Board of Health.*

*(Front row left to right) Trish Fulton, Provincial Representative; Kurtis Smith, County Representative; Ian Peer, Chair and Provincial Representative; Nancy Poole, Provincial Representative; Viola Poletes Montgomery, Provincial Representative*

*(Back row, left to right) Steven Turner, City of London Representative; Dr. Trevor Hunter, City of London Representative; Marcel Meyer, County Representative; Mark Studenny, Provincial Representative; Joanne Vanderheyden, County Representative; Jesse Helmer, Vice-Chair, City Representative*

## Message from Mr. Ian Peer, Chair of the Middlesex-London Board of Health

When it comes to living a healthy life there are many factors that can help achieve that goal. For many of us, the challenge is not to smoke, to be active or to eat healthy foods. Others face the significant challenges of addiction, chronic conditions or socioeconomic factors. The programs and services available through the Middlesex-London Health Unit are geared toward meeting needs where they exist in the community and supporting individuals from all walks of life to help them reach their full potential. For some, that may mean classes to help prepare them for the birth of a child, for others it may be a smoking cessation support group, or the investigation of a disease outbreak.

Through its work in 2015, the staff of the Middlesex London Health Unit helped many London and Middlesex County residents improve their health. As members of the Middlesex- London Board of Health, the municipal and provincial representatives, like myself, are accountable for the delivery of the public health programs and services required under the Ontario Public Health Standards. Through our work with Health Unit staff, we ensure the Health Unit's programs and services are delivered in an open and fiscally-responsible manner. We take our role seriously and do our best to ensure that taxpayer investments result in positive health outcomes and services are provided where they are needed most.

I know I speak for my colleagues on the Board when I say that I am proud of the work and accomplishments of our Health Unit staff. Through their work, they help improve and protect the health of our friends, our families and our neighbours. We are grateful for the skills, experience and passion they bring to their work every day and they give us confidence in the Middlesex-London Health Unit's ability to meet the needs of our community.

I hope you enjoy reading our 2015 Annual Report and that it reveals some of the Health Unit's important work being done in London and Middlesex County.

Sincerely,

Mr. Ian Peer  
Chair, Middlesex-London Board of Health

## Message from Dr. Christopher Mackie, Medical Officer of Health and CEO

There's a team of dedicated people whose goal is to improve the health and lives of those who live in London and Middlesex County. This group's work often has a direct impact on the lives of local residents, yet for the most part, few of these people have an idea what this team of professionals does.

That team is the Middlesex-London Health Unit and its staff includes professionals from diverse backgrounds, including public health nurses, dietitians, public health inspectors, health promoters, breastfeeding consultants, dental hygienists, family home visitors and a core group that supports the work they all do.

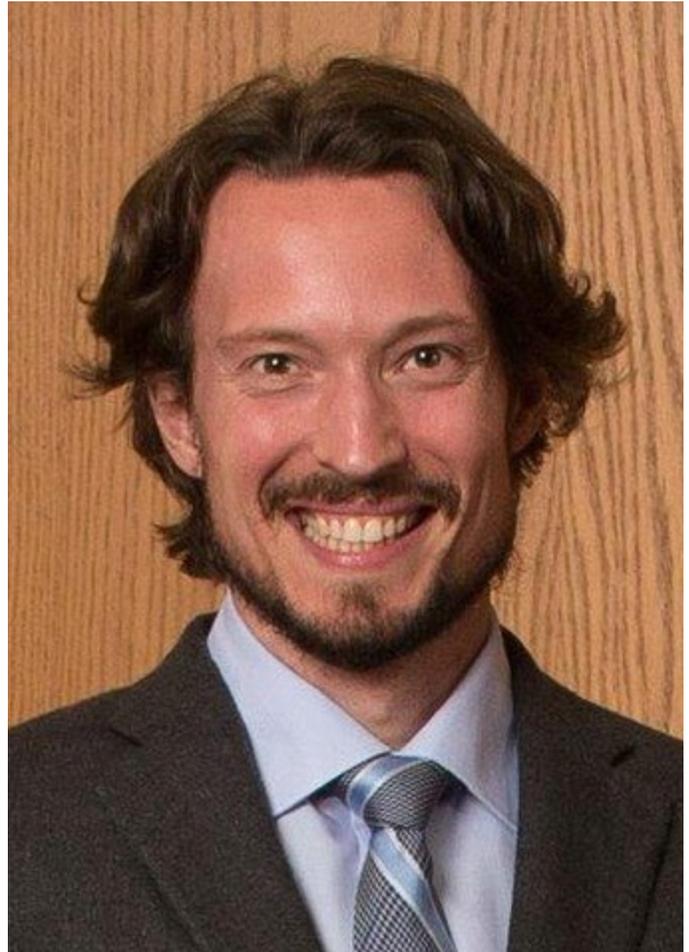
The work done by our staff, and the dedication, discipline and determination they bring to their jobs every day are the foundation upon which our community can build healthier lives.

For the last few years, the Health Unit has taken a renewed approach to its role in the community and refocused its efforts on making the greatest impact, while being responsible with public resources and building public trust and awareness.

This Annual Report provides an overview of our work, some highlights and achievements and shows some of the ways we were involved in the community in 2015. You will also find a summary of our funding sources and how we use those funds to provide our programs and services to the community. I hope you find this report to be both informative and insightful and that it gives you a glimpse into our work and that it encourages you to learn more about public health.

Sincerely,

Dr. Christopher Mackie  
*Medical Officer of Health and Chief Executive Officer  
Middlesex-London Health Unit*



## Strategic Plan - Introduction

The Middlesex-London Health Unit (MLHU) is the largest autonomous public health unit in Canada and has a strong track record of delivering high quality public health programs and services to the community.

In 2015, the Health Unit undertook a significant planning project to create a strategic plan that will guide its work for the next five years. This plan is the result of an extensive

collaborative process involving all MLHU staff. Through numerous consultations, surveys and feedback, the strategic directions set out in this plan would not have been possible without the commitment and engagement of staff and the Senior Leadership team. The Middlesex-London Board of Health also provided significant input in setting the vision and mission for the Health Unit at key points in the planning process.

*"Our goal is for all people in Middlesex-London to reach their potential. The Health Unit will help to make this happen by continuing to promote and protect the health of our community."*

Ian Peer, Chair of the Middlesex-London Board of Health

2015

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ANNUAL REPORT



## Enhancing our positive impact on the community

### OUR VISION:

People Reaching Their Potential

### OUR MISSION:

To promote and protect the health of our community

*"Together, we have set the foundation upon which we will build a stronger Middlesex-London Health Unit as we continue to develop as an organization in the years to come."*

Dr. Christopher Mackie, MD, MHSc, CCFP, FRCPC, Medical Officer of Health and CEO

### OUR VALUES:

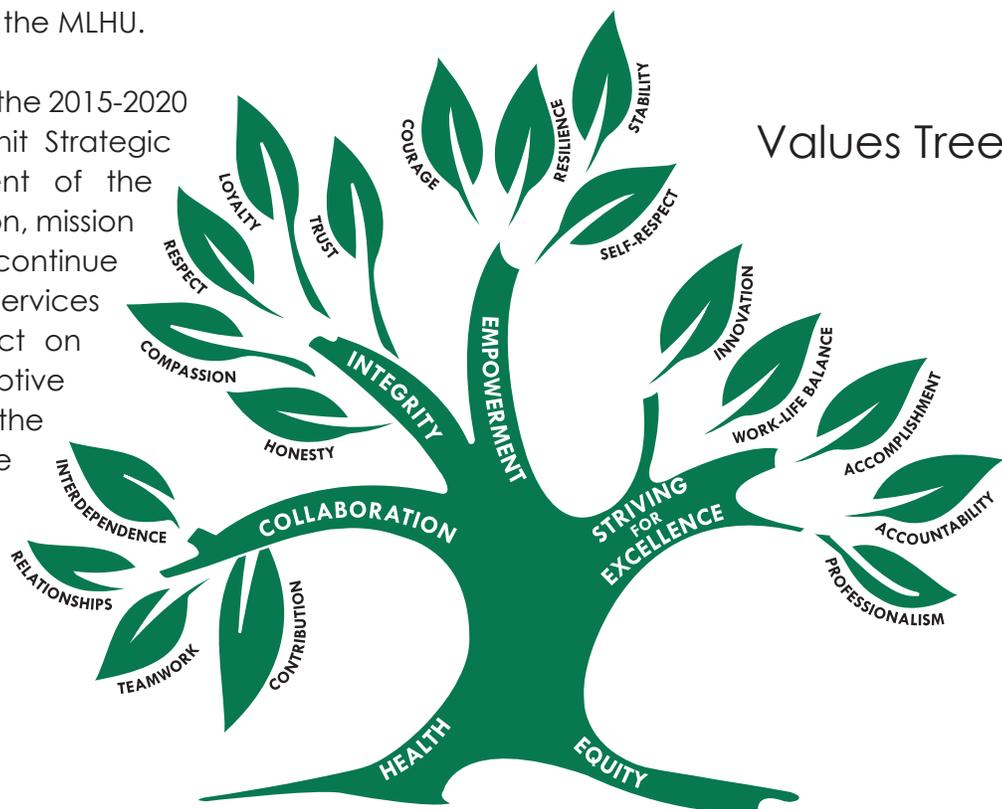
Collaboration  
Striving for Excellence

Integrity  
Health

Empowerment  
Equity

The Values Tree represents the core beliefs and principles under which the MLHU operates day-to-day to deliver its programs and services to the community. The Vision expresses what the Health Unit would like the community to achieve over the long-term; the Mission is the agency's declaration of its core purpose and focus that will contribute to the realization of the Vision; and the Values are the beliefs and principles that will guide the MLHU.

The fundamental purpose of the 2015-2020 Middlesex-London Health Unit Strategic Plan is to ensure alignment of the Health Unit's work with its vision, mission and values, enabling it to continue delivering programs and services that have a positive impact on the community. With an adaptive vision towards the future, the Strategic Plan details the things the MLHU must do to make it the best health unit it can possibly be.



Values Tree



### Our Priorities

#### **The Middlesex-London Health Unit Balanced Scorecard**

The *Balanced Scorecard* is a strategic framework that allows the Health Unit to translate its vision, communicate and link strategic priorities across the organization, integrate strategy into planning processes, and gather feedback in order to learn continuously and enhance its contribution to the community.

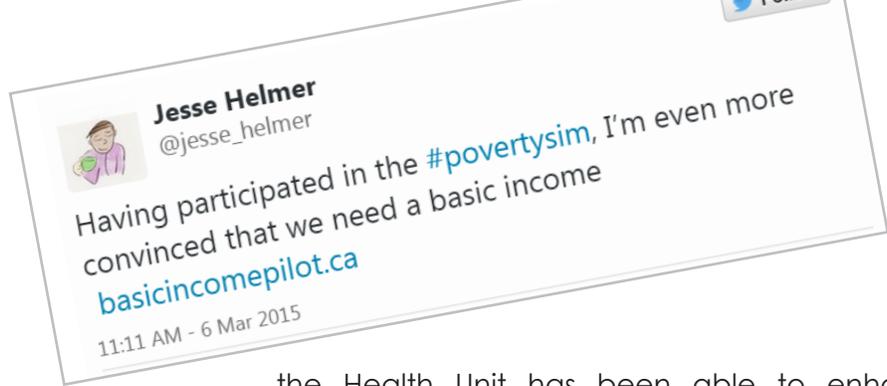
## Poverty

### Addressing Poverty in Our Community

Poverty is a growing issue of concern in London and Middlesex County. In order to meet local needs, the Health Unit took a close look at how it could address matters of health equity and adjust programs to meet the needs of the most vulnerable people in the community. Public Health Nurses whose efforts focus on the Social Determinants of Health work to address the factors that have a negative effect on health, including poverty. Through their work and support of the MLHU's Health Equity Working Group,

the Health Unit has been able to enhance both internal and organizational capacity to incorporate and consider health equity in all of the agency's programs and services. Working with individual clients, neighbourhood groups and community partners, the Health Unit continues to help reduce barriers by participating in activities that fall outside of the traditional health sector.

Collaborating with other sectors such as housing, education and employment, the Health Unit participated in a number of events this year in an effort to continue the community conversation about poverty and health equity in Middlesex-London.



### Poverty Simulations

The Health Unit partnered with the London Child and Youth Network's Ending Poverty Awareness Committee and the United Way London & Middlesex to host two poverty simulations. The first was held at Kings College in February and involved participants from Western University, while the second was held in March at Youth for Christ London, drawing participants from other community agencies and municipal government. The simulations created a personal experience designed to provide an understanding of the challenges faced by those who live in poverty. Participants learned first-hand about barriers, including lack of transportation, low wages, precarious employment and other factors that contribute to the cycle of poverty. The goal of the simulation was to change decision makers' perceptions of poverty-related issues, leading to policy and program decisions that have a positive effect on city and county residents.

*"The experience of the poverty simulation led to a lot of discussion on social media and challenged many of the participants to rethink important poverty-related issues".*  
Tweet from Jesse Helmer, Middlesex-London Board of Health member.





## Mayor's Advisory Panel on Poverty

On September 16, 2015 the Mayor of London brought together a group of community leaders to develop recommendations that would address poverty-related issues in London. Dr. Mackie was named Co-Chair of this group along with City Councillor Maureen Cassidy. With the rest of the advisory panel they aimed to engage local stakeholders in an effort to create meaningful change in the community. Among the panel's objectives are:

1. Developing a shared understanding of how to address poverty more effectively in London;
2. Mapping the current efforts aimed at addressing poverty in London;
3. Identifying gaps and areas which require significant action;
4. Engaging in dialogue with local stakeholders about those gaps and approaches to addressing poverty matters more effectively; and
5. Developing a set of recommendations to better coordinate local efforts to address poverty-related issues more effectively and identifying the areas which require significant action.



## Provincial Poverty Reduction Fund Announcement

In mid-September, the Honourable Deb Matthews, Deputy Premier of Ontario visited the Health Unit and announced more than \$2.8 million dollars in funding as part of the province's Poverty Reduction Fund. Through this provincial funding, eight new projects led by local organizations in Southwestern Ontario will help improve the lives of people affected by poverty. As part of the announcement, the MLHU received \$351,000 to fund the Nurse-Family Partnership, a new nursing education program that will support vulnerable young mothers and their babies.



**17%**

Over 17 percent of households in London and Middlesex are living in poverty.



London has more children, youth and families living in poverty than the provincial average.

**13%**

Nearly 13 percent of people living in London and Middlesex households receive social assistance.



### Healthy Communities and Injury Prevention

As a key part of its work, the Healthy Communities and Injury Prevention team advocates for healthy community design, promotes physical activity, workplace wellness, and works with community partners to prevent injuries in a number of areas including child safety, helmet and bike safety, falls prevention, alcohol and substance abuse and road safety.



### Give Active Transportation A Go!

With the arrival of warm summer weather, the MLHU and City of London launched its *Give Active Transportation A Go!* awareness campaign. Through social media and radio advertising, local residents were reminded and encouraged to use human-powered transportation to get to work, school or to run errands. These messages were reinforced through the Workplaces program, which provided incentives for employees to walk, bike or use public transit to get to work. As part of this initiative and the Healthy Communities Partnership, the Health Unit also reviewed the city and county *Cycling Master Plans*, submitting recommendations which would increase the knowledge, and use of, active transportation in the community.



# Buckle Up – Phone Down

The Health Unit, in partnership with the London Middlesex Road Safety Committee, led the development of the *Buckle Up - PhoneDown* campaign which encouraged drivers to not only wear seat belts, but to never use a phone while driving. Distracted driving is a major area of concern for public health as it has led to more than 400 deaths on Ontario roads since 2010.

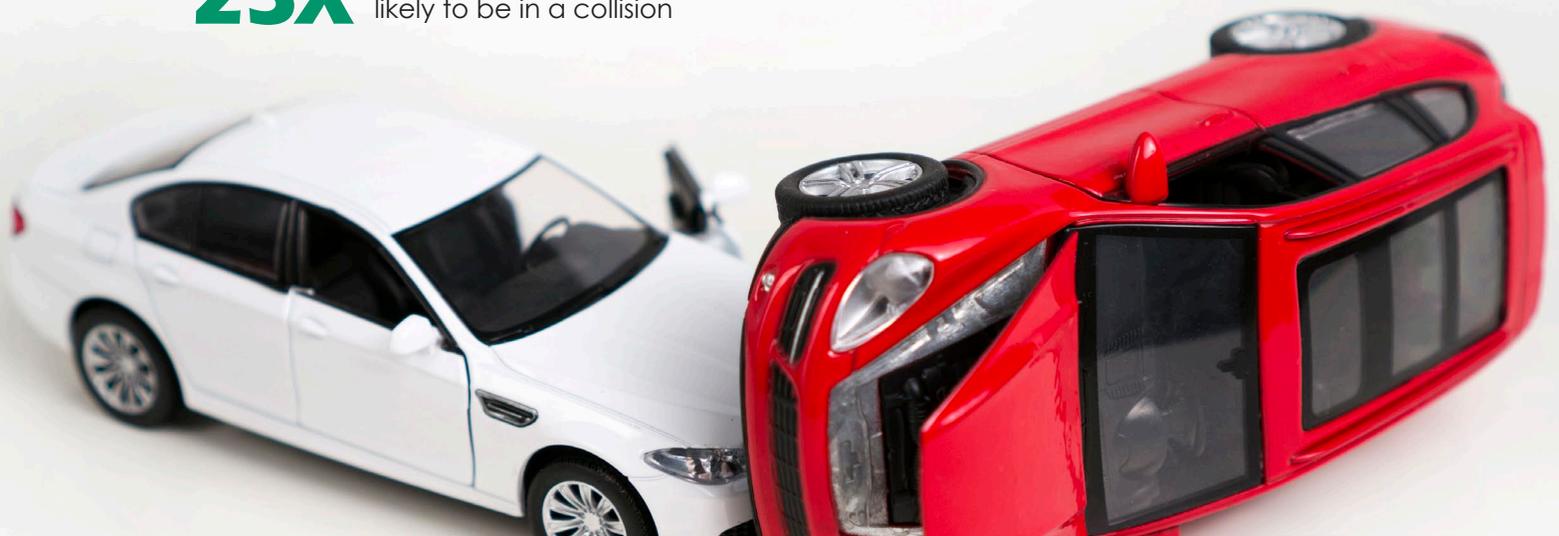
Through the campaign, the MLHU shared *Josh's Story*, a video about how the consequences of distracted driving changes the lives of a London family forever. The campaign also featured a contest for high school students which called on them to use their creativity to join the fight against distracted driving.



**4X** Drivers who use a cell phone are 4 times more likely to be in a collision than a driver who is focused on the road

**+35%** Over one-third (35.9%) of Ontario student drivers, grades 10-12, self-reported texting and driving at least once in the past year

**23X** Drivers who text while driving are 23 times more likely to be in a collision



### One Life One You – Youth Advocacy Group

Through peer-to-peer contact and community engagement, the Health Unit's *One Life One You* youth advocacy group strives to increase knowledge among local youth about the health risks associated with tobacco use. Through creative campaigns, events and health promotion initiative, *One Life One You* also aims to decrease the social acceptability of tobacco use by changing and exposing the social norms.



Among those efforts was the group's efforts around raising awareness about Bill 45, the *Making Healthier Choices Act*, which restricts the sale and promotion of e-cigarettes to minors; prohibits the sale of flavoured tobacco products and requires menu labelling, including calorie information, on restaurant menus.

In February, during the International Week of Action for Smoking in the Movies, several youth from One Life One You, TCAN Staff, and youth from all over Ontario travelled to Niagara Falls to meet up with young people from New York State's Reality Check tobacco prevention program on the Rainbow Bridge for a demonstration to raise the issue of smoking in movies. On the eve of this event the Canadian Falls was lit in teal to show support for this event. Raising awareness about the impact of depictions of tobacco use in youth-rated movies continues to be an important part of One Life One You's advocacy efforts as they continues to call on the Government of Ontario to change the film classification system in the province.

### Tobacco Prevention Highlights 2015:

**3** Weekend events held at local off-leash dog parks to raise awareness about changes to the Smoke-Free Ontario Act and regulations related to smoking in outdoor public places.

**5000** Tobacco Use Prevention partnerships and projects deliver information to 5,000 youth

**<** Reduction in the number of Middlesex-London residents exposed to second-hand smoke in vehicles and in public places

**2000** People attend the Health Unit's two Smoke-Free Movie Nights, one held in London and the other in Strathroy



Tobacco companies have a long history of working with Hollywood to promote tobacco products and tobacco use in movies





**EFFECTIVE JANUARY 1, 2015**  
**NO SMOKING** within 20 metres of:

- **PARK RECREATIONAL AMENITIES**  
Playgrounds, Splash Pads and Skate Parks
- **SPORT FIELDS and SPECTATOR AREAS**  
Courts, Diamonds and Pitches

*Compliance begins with you.*

Middlesex-London Health Unit Tobacco Information Line:  
 519-663-5317 ext. 2673 or  
[smokefreeinfo@mlhu.on.ca](mailto:smokefreeinfo@mlhu.on.ca)



## Changes to the *Smoke-Free Ontario Act*

The rules around smoking in outdoor public places set out in the *Smoke-Free Ontario Act* were updated in 2015. The changes came into effect January 1st and made it illegal to smoke on patios and near food concession stands as well as within 20 metres of any public playground or sports field, including spectator areas. The changes to the provincial regulation included a ban on the sale of tobacco products on all college and university campuses, an additional step aimed at preventing young people from taking up smoking. Under the changes, the maximum fine for smoking on or around outdoor public spaces ranges between \$1,000 and \$5,000 for individuals, while the fines for corporations range between \$100,000 and \$300,000. With the update to the provincial legislation, the Health Unit's enforcement role will expand to include inspections at outdoor public places and investigations following public complaints.

## Tobacco Control by numbers:

**1223** Workplace and public place inspections

**355** Bar and restaurant inspections

**1268** Tobacco retailer inspections

**67** Charges issued for the sale and supply of tobacco to those under 19 years of age

**8** Charges and 201 warnings issued for the illegal promotion and display of tobacco products

**73** Charges issued for smoking in prohibited places: 63 charges and 422 warnings for workplaces/public places; 10 charges and 54 warnings at bars/restaurants



## Increasing the health and wellbeing of families in London and Middlesex



An overall goal of the Child Health and Young Adult Teams is to work closely with teachers, principals and school board employees to improve the health and wellbeing of children and youth in London and Middlesex County. Education is a key determinant of health and investing in the health and wellbeing of students is essential. According to the World Health Organization, healthy students are better prepared to learn. Achieving optimal wellbeing can be a big challenge, given the vast number of unhealthy behaviours learned and adopted during childhood and adolescence. Between the ages of five and 17, children are spending an average of seven to nine hours per day being sedentary and/or using electronic devices. With respect to healthy eating, 59% of children between the ages of two and 17 eat fewer than five fruits and vegetables each day, which is well below the recommended guidelines.

To improve the health and wellbeing of school age children, the Child Health and Young Adult Teams use a two-pronged approach: prevention services that target specific individuals or small groups, and upstream health promotion initiatives that target the whole school.

In 2015, the Health Unit's Public Health Nurses (PHNs) who work in secondary schools conducted more than 2,400 confidential, one-on-one counseling meetings. Common health concerns addressed in these sessions included mental health, growth and development, and healthy relationships. More than 1,300 of these one-on-one visits resulted in PHNs being able to refer students to appropriate community resources.

The teams' health promotion activities include working with teachers and principals to develop action plans and implement strategies centered on health topics such as healthy eating, physical activity and mental health. Examples of this work include securing grants for breakfast programs, supporting the *Let's Get Cookin'* program that teaches elementary school children how to prepare simple, healthy food or providing "fruit-grams" instead of "candy-grams". Health Unit PHNs involve parents, school staff and students in the planning and implementation of these strategies.

In addition to this work, and to connect further with local youth, the @MLTeens Twitter account was launched in June of 2015. The Twitter account is staffed by PHNs who work in schools and was created to communicate fun and interesting health messages to teens in London and Middlesex County.



## Increasing the health and wellbeing of families in London and Middlesex

### iParent Campaign

Supporting parents and children in London and Middlesex County is an important part of the Health Unit's work. Under its iParent program, the Health Unit has invited parents with questions or challenges to seek answers together through parenting classes, workshops and online resources. The iParent awareness campaign has captured a lot of attention with its humorous and thought-provoking ads.



## Distribution of Nutri-STEP Nutrition Screening Tool

In April 2015, the Health Unit began hosting community and school-based events where staff distributed Preschool NutriSTEP® questionnaires to parents of children aged 3-5 years. Once the NutriSTEP® form was completed, Health Unit nurses answered questions and assisted parents in understanding their child's nutrition risk score and discussed possible next steps. These included contacting their healthcare provider or a registered dietitian to discuss growth, development and a completing a full nutrition assessment.

NutriSTEP® is a nutrition screening tool which helps assess a child's eating habits and assists in identifying potential nutrition concerns. Parents can also access the tool online through the MLHU website ([www.healthunit.com/nutristep](http://www.healthunit.com/nutristep)) and answer the 17 questions that cover areas including growth and development, food and nutrient intake, physical activity and the feeding environment. Parents are able to determine their child's nutrition risk score by completing the questionnaire.

## Baby-Friendly Initiative Designation

In 2011, Ontario's 36 health units were mandated by the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care to implement the Baby Friendly Initiative or BFI. Developed and led by the World Health Organization (WHO) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), BFI is a global, evidence-based approach that increases the health and well-being of all children and families by protecting, promoting and supporting breastfeeding.

To be considered for their BFI designation, health units must complete several steps, including site visits and a thorough document review conducted by BFI assessors. Through the efforts of more than 37 staff members, these steps were all completed and after several one-on-one interviews with assessors and careful review, the Health Unit was granted its BFI designation in late 2015.

While Health Canada recommends that infants are breastfeed exclusively for the first six months, fewer than 17% of mothers in London and Middlesex County meet this goal. Research has shown that through BFI, there is an increase in breastfeeding initiation,



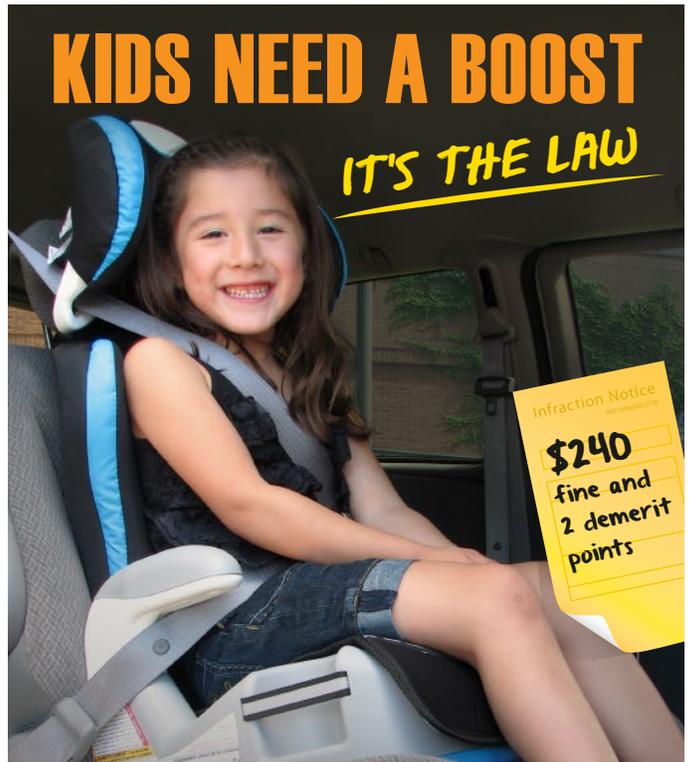
exclusivity, and duration. Through BFI, Health Unit staff work with local families to provide the information they need to make the best feeding decisions for their families.



### Booster Seat Awareness

The Middlesex-London Child Safety Committee, chaired by Health Unit staff members works to provide information about child safety to parents and caregivers, including education materials and resources about bicycle helmets and child booster seats. The importance of booster seat use, in particular, is not well understood by parents and caregivers as nearly 70 percent of all children who should sit in booster seats when riding in a vehicle do not use these important safety devices. In 2015, the Committee, which includes representatives from local police, fire, EMS, school boards, acute care, childcare centres and Ontario Early Years Centres, created a Booster Seat Awareness campaign. Through their efforts, an online video was developed and more than 250 booster seats were distributed to families in need. The Booster Seat campaign continues to focus on the importance of using proper booster seats and the provincial legislation that governs their proper use.

MLHU staff members are part of the *Helmets on Kids Coalition*, which distributed 1,000 bicycle helmets to children with need.



Booster seats are for children over 40lbs. The purpose is to “boost” your child up so they can position an adult seat belt properly on their body. This will reduce your child’s risk of head, neck, spinal and abdominal injuries in a motor vehicle collision.

Ontario’s Highway Traffic Act requires children to use a booster seat when they are:

- Less than 80lbs (36 kg)
- less than 4’9” (145 cm)
- or under the age of 8 years old



\*Drivers who fail to use booster seats face a \$240 fine and 2 demerit points

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MIDDLESEX-LONDON  
HEALTH UNIT  
[www.healthunit.com](http://www.healthunit.com)



## Harvest Bucks

The Harvest Bucks program aims to: provide access to, and increase consumption of, fresh vegetables and fruit; increase awareness and knowledge of farmers' markets; and, support local producers while increasing local community-based food programming. Harvest Bucks are vouchers distributed to community program participants which can be used in the place of cash to buy fresh vegetables and fruit at participating farmers markets and stores in London. In addition to providing the vouchers, the Harvest Bucks program has additional goals, which include food skills development for program participants and the promotion of healthy eating.



**\$31,160**

worth of Harvest Bucks was distributed in 2015, 83 % of which were redeemed for fruits and vegetables

**21** community programs distributed Harvest Bucks to 908 households in 2015



## Local Community Food Assessment

In 2015, the Local Community Food Assessment was launched by the MLHU in partnership with the London Community Foundation, the City of London and the London Food Bank in an effort to find out what local residents know about the local food system. The idea was to take a closer look at the strengths and weaknesses of the local food system. Among the next steps for the Local Community Food Assessment are completing the community food assessment and gathering the findings in a final report which will set a direction for a future Middlesex London Food Policy Council, which it is hoped will guide the community toward a more healthy and sustainable food system.

### World Hepatitis Day

In late July, the MLHU partnered with Regional HIV/AIDS Connection and the London Intercommunity Health Centre in recognizing World Hepatitis Day. With its theme of “Prevent Hepatitis: It’s Up to You”, the World Hepatitis Alliance and the World Health Organization used a social media approach with the hashtag #Prevent Hepatitis to focus on increasing awareness of viral hepatitis B and C. Health Unit staff attended the Regional HIV/AIDS Connection’s World Hepatitis Day barbeque at the Covent Garden Market to help raise awareness and engage community partners.



### Infectious Disease Highlights 2015:

**1000** Followed up 1,000 cases of reportable diseases, including : active tuberculosis, campylobacter, salmonella, E. Coli, invasive Group A Streptococcus, hepatitis C, hepatitis A, influenza, listeriosis, West Nile Virus, legionella and Lyme disease

**180** Confirmed and managed 180 potential outbreaks which included coordinating with affected institutions to ensure best practices for infection prevention and control, specimen collection and that communications are followed

**620** Inspected 620 Personal Service Settings to achieve a 100% inspection completion rate

**25** Conducted more than 25 community presentations on infectious disease-related topics

**280** Responded to over 280 telephone, email and walk-in consultations on topics related to infectious diseases



## Drinking Water Safety - Well Water Testing

In 2015, the Health Unit made it easier for those who draw their drinking water from a well to have their water tested, by providing several locations in Middlesex County where they could drop off water samples. Some of these locations included municipal offices and library branches. The Health Unit also began developing new education material and resources for private well owners. These will be launched in 2016 and will include a video highlighting the importance of having private well water tested and the locations where water samples can be dropped off for testing.

**FREE!**  
**WELL WATER TESTING**

**IS YOUR WATER SAFE TO DRINK?**

Unsafe water can cause:

- Stomach cramps
- Diarrhea
- Vomiting
- Other problems that could become fatal.

**We have a Water Testing Depot near you!**

FOR MORE INFORMATION AND LOCATIONS:  
Visit [www.healthunit.com/private-well-water](http://www.healthunit.com/private-well-water)  
or speak to a Public Health Inspector  
at 519-663-5317 ext. 2300

**ML** BUREAU DE SANTÉ DE  
MIDDLESEX COUNTY  
HEALTH UNIT  
[www.healthunit.com](http://www.healthunit.com)

## Environmental Health highlights for 2015:

**1700**

Responded to more than 1,700 complaints and/or service requests for environmental health-related issues including: pest infestations, indoor air quality, poor housing conditions, demolition permits, marijuana grow operations, land use planning issues and vector-borne disease concerns



**800**

Responded to more than 800 reports of suspected rabies exposures, with investigations being initiated within one day of the MLHU being notified



**687**

Completed 687 inspections of area pools, spas, wading pools and splash pads through the Recreational Water Program

Enhanced the public reporting of inspection data through the expansion of the MLHU's public health inspection disclosure website to include public pool, spa, tattoo and piercing facility inspections

**8**

Issued eight Cold Weather Alerts, totaling 43 days



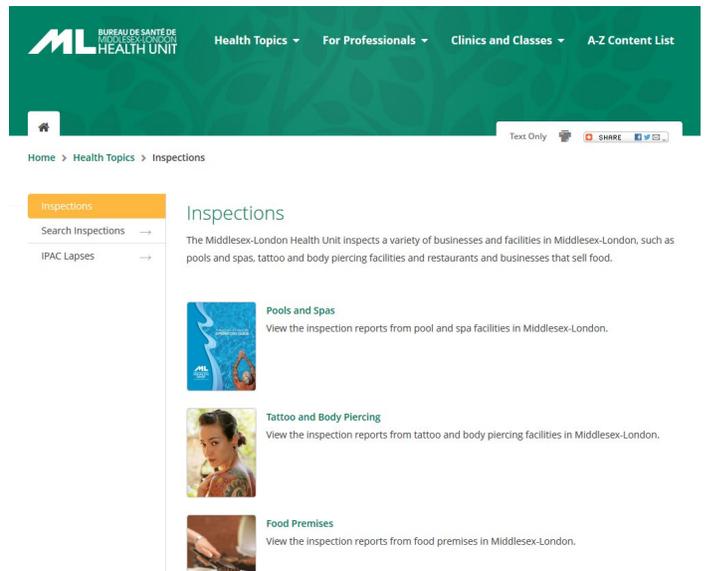
**2**

Issued two Heat Alerts, totaling just over one day

## New Inspections Data on healthunit.com

At the end of June, the MLHU increased the amount of public health inspection data available on its website by adding inspection results for tattoo and body piercing establishments, as well as pools and spas. This data was added to the existing DineSafe food premises inspection information and launched under a new "Inspections" heading on the MLHU website ([www.healthunit.com/inspections](http://www.healthunit.com/inspections)). This new data will provide summaries of routine inspection findings, including infractions for public pools, spas, and piercing and tattoo facilities.

The positive community response and subsequent awareness of food premises inspection results through the previous DineSafe website demonstrated the potential for expanding the amount of inspection data available online. In addition to providing information to consumers, the online disclosure of inspections creates an incentive for business operators to work with the MLHU to ensure the safety of their clients and that their practices are in compliance with the Health Protection and Promotion Act.



### Food Safety highlights for 2015:

**3848** inspections of year-round food premises

**281** re-inspections of year-round food premises

**350** inspections of special event food vendors

**2053** Food Handler Training Certificates issued

**1144** public requests for service (referrals, complaints, suspected foodborne illnesses etc.)

## The Clinic

*The Clinic*, the Middlesex London Health Unit's sexual health clinic, offers both Family Planning and Sexually Transmitted Infections (STI) clinics for clients who require low cost birth control, the morning after pill, cervical cancer screening, pregnancy testing, STI testing and treatment, and sexual health education. *The Clinic* sells low cost birth control, provides free treatment for sexually transmitted infections and consults with clients for Intrauterine device/ Intrauterine system insertions.

## Top 10 Reasons – Sexually Transmitted Infection (STI) Testing campaign

In early 2015, the Health Unit launched its Top Ten Reasons STI testing campaign. In a humorous way, the campaign highlighted some of the most common reasons people get tested for sexually transmitted infections. This campaign has proven to be very popular, with significant online engagement and also interest from other health units to adapt campaign resources for use in their own communities.



## Sexual and Reproductive Health Awareness Week

February 9-13 marked *Sexual and Reproductive Health Awareness Week* when the MLHU reminded London and Middlesex County residents to Heart Your Parts. The campaign focused on sexual and reproductive health with an emphasis on the whole person encouraging them to be self-aware, have healthy conversations about sex, and increase their knowledge about safer sex and protection methods.

**14,000**

More than 14,000 visits to the Health Unit's Sexual Health and Family Planning clinics in London and Strathroy; services included birth control and screening and treatment for sexually transmitted infections

**26,300**

More than 26,300 birth control pills dispensed at the Health Unit's Family Planning clinic

**1500**

More than 1,500 cases of sexually transmitted infections reported to the Health Unit, which were followed up by a Public Health Nurse

**16,000**

More than 16,000 phone calls to Public Health Nurses for sexual health-related matters



## Harm Reduction in Middlesex London

On November 25th, the MLHU was honoured to be recognized along with Regional HIV/AIDS Connection, the London Intercommunity Health Centre, and the London Area Network of Substance Users, as a co-recipient of the prestigious Community Collaboration Award during the 2015 Pillar Nonprofit Network Community Innovation Awards. The award came in recognition of the work and partnership that led to the creation of the Naloxone Program, which has the ability to reverse overdoses and save lives.



Indeed since its launch in May of 2014, the Naloxone Program has been proven to save lives, and to also reduce the risk of overdose, as those who use drugs begin to feel greater control over, and responsibility for, their addiction. This collaborative program, supported by the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care provides individuals who are at risk of opioid overdose themselves with basic lifesaving skills, including how to administer naloxone when someone has overdosed. Once an individual completes training they receive a pocket-sized kits which contain two small containers of Naloxone, syringes, instructions for administering the Naloxone, and a training certificate. Community Naloxone distribution programs have proven to play a part in saving the lives of thousands of opioid overdose victims, including several lives in our region. The presentation of the Community Collaboration Award to the Naloxone Program is a milestone that marks shifting attitudes in our community.



## PILLAR COMMUNITY INNOVATION AWARDS 2015 FINALISTS ANNOUNCED

Pillar Nonprofit Network recently announced their 12 outstanding finalists for the 2015 Pillar Community Innovation Awards. Their stories of Innovation, Leadership, Impact & Collaboration are truly inspiring. Join the celebration on November 25th. Find out more at [www.pillarnonprofit.ca](http://www.pillarnonprofit.ca)



Tania Goodine & Carolina Triana, representing platinum sponsor, Libro Credit Union with Theresa Carrier, Leadership Finalist & Twee Brown, Program Co-Chair

Event submitted to snabd  
Website code: peteuj



Collaboration Finalists - Naloxone Program - Brian Lester, Regional HIV/AIDS; Henry Eastabrook, London InterCommunity Health Centre; Rhonda Brittan, Middlesex London Health Unit & Michelle Hurtubis, London InterCommunity Health Centre



Impact Finalists - Pride London Festival - Martin Withenshaw, Andrew Rosser & Chad Challander



Leadership Finalists - Theresa Carrier, Ghaedir Madlol & Jamie Clark



Kim Woodbridge & Ian Sterling from Fresh Radio 103.1 announce the finalists

Images used with permission from Snapd London

## Needle Exchange and Safer Inhalation Kits

Through *The Clinic*, the Health Unit offers safer inhalation kits in collaboration with Counterpoint, as part of its free needle exchange service. Through the distribution of Safer Inhalation Kits, the MLHU aims to reduce the risk of disease transmission among drug users, which can occur by sharing unsanitary or dangerous supplies and paraphernalia.

As its name suggests, the Needle Exchange Program allows clients to exchange used needles and syringes for new, clean and sterile needles and/or syringes. Additional resources such as sharps containers, condoms and educational resources are also available for clients at the Needle Exchange.

The distribution of resources such as Safer Inhalation kits through Needle Exchange provides opportunities for Health Unit staff to connect with clients and provide education, resources and support, which includes the possibility of referring those who use drugs to other community programs and services for support.

The Needle Exchange Program provides clean needles/syringes and other injection resources such as safer inhalation kits.



## Middlesex-London Fentanyl Patch Return Program

The Middlesex-London Fentanyl Patch Return Program is the result of a collaboration between the Middlesex London Health Unit, Strathroy-Caradoc Police Service, Ontario Provincial Police, London Police Service and local physicians and pharmacists. Through the program, doctors and pharmacists work with patients to promote safe and responsible use of fentanyl patches to help control the number of un-monitored patches in the community. Fentanyl is a powerful opioid medication that has been linked to overdoses. The aim of the program is to assist in the prevention of fentanyl-related deaths linked to misuse of the drug such as in cases of illegal street use or personal theft. Under the program, patients are required to return used patches to their pharmacy before they can receive more.

Through Bill 33, the Safeguarding Our Communities Act, which received Royal Assent in December of 2015, the Fentanyl Patch Exchange program is expected to become provincial law by the end of 2016.

## Community Drug Strategy

As part of its on-going work, the Middlesex-London Health Unit continues to work towards a community drug strategy for London and Middlesex County; working collaboratively with a broad range of local stakeholders. The effort includes engaging community members to identify a comprehensive and co-ordinated approach, which can more effectively reduce the harms associated with substance use on our communities. The strategy is based on a Four Pillars model that considers prevention, harm reduction, treatment and enforcement. Through sharing knowledge and best practices, setting a common direction, outlining priorities and clarifying roles, the strategy aims to identify concrete actions that can be taken.

## Vaccine Preventable Diseases

The Vaccine Preventable Diseases (VPD) Team focuses on reducing or eliminating the incidence of diseases that can be prevented through vaccination. Team members provide immunization clinics in schools, as well as community and clinic settings. They also review and update the immunization records of students in London and Middlesex County, and provide information to healthcare providers and local residents about vaccines and the importance of immunization. The VPD Team also operates the Health Unit's downtown London immunization clinic, located at 50 King Street and its Strathroy clinic located at 51 Front Street.

Through clinics it held in 2015, the team administered more than 22,000 immunizations to some 17,000 clients. In addition to the clinics, Public Health Nurses with the VPD Team also visited local elementary and secondary schools, where they administered

more than 6,500 doses of meningococcal, hepatitis B, and/or HPV vaccines to Grade 7 and 8 students in 2015.

VPD Team members follow up with parents of children whose immunizations are not up to date and conduct investigations and follow-up in matters related to reportable diseases.



## Vaccine Preventable Diseases by the numbers:

**19,500**

Responded to more than 14,000 calls and 5,500 emails from the public and healthcare providers related to vaccines and matters related to infectious diseases

**400**

Conducted 400 (100% of total) cold chain inspections of fridges storing publicly funded vaccines

**150**

Conducted more than 150 vaccine preventable reportable disease investigations and followed up



## Dental Services

Oral health is an important part of overall health, playing a significant role in determining an individual's quality of life. The Oral Health Team works to increase optimal oral health by identifying people who may be at-risk of health complications due to poor oral health and ensures they have access to the information, education and oral health care they need. The Health Unit offers a variety of dental services, including low- or no-cost treatment to eligible children, youth and adults. The MLHU offers many of these services at its downtown London treatment clinic located at 50 King Street.



**4800** dental claims processed for clients receiving dental treatment through Healthy Smiles Ontario/Children In Need of Treatment (CINOT)

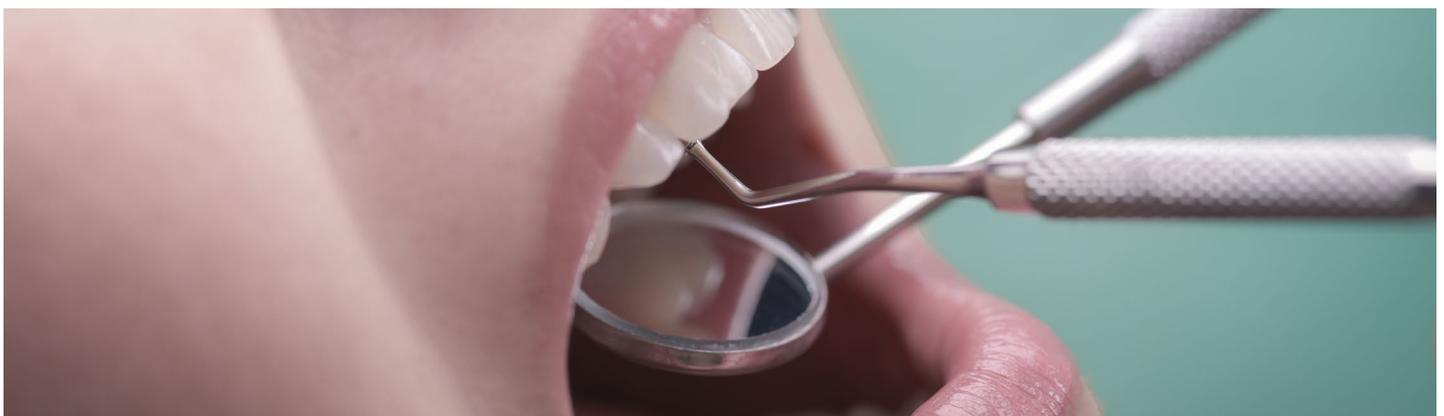
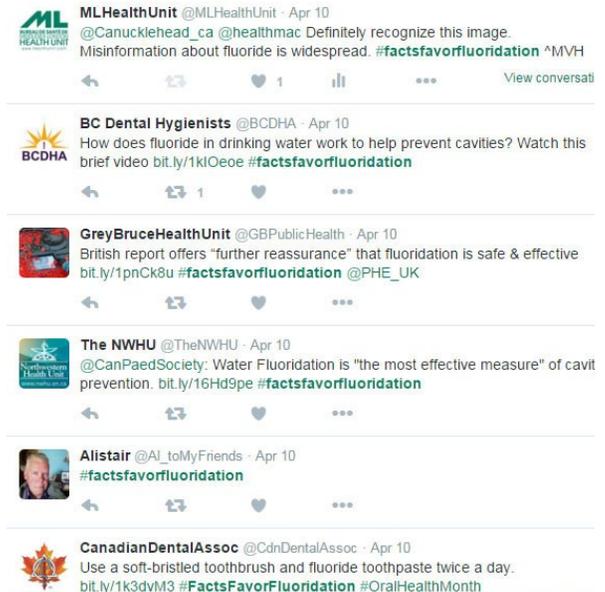
**600** clients received dental treatment/clinical services through CINOT and other publicly-funded programs

**450** eligible clients received treatment and preventive dental services (including cleaning, sealant and fluoride varnish)

**400** high-risk children received fluoride varnish through pilot program

## Fluoride Twitter Storm

In January 2015 the Health Unit participated in a social media Fluoride Twitter Storm, initiated by the Children's Dental Health Project, and supported by the Ontario Association of Public Health Dentistry (OAPHD), to promote community water fluoridation and discuss the benefits of fluoride treatments in preventing tooth decay. The campaign, used the #factsfavorfluoridation hashtag and was extremely successful in starting a conversation about the benefits of fluoride in preventing tooth decay. The MLHU played a significant role in the conversation, as one of the top contributors to the Twitter storm with 56 tweets, 24 Retweets and over 369,000 impressions on online users. The featured hashtag reached nearly 870,000 social media accounts, delivering more than 2.2 million impressions over 8 days.



### Early Years

The MLHU's Early Years Team seeks to improve the health and development of children by addressing the physical, emotional and social growth of youngsters from birth to age three. Through programs and services, staff members provide direct services to clients, raise awareness, strengthen community collaboration and build partnerships with families and caregivers in Middlesex-London.

The team was very active in 2015, launching the Tummy Time program, which provided educational information through consultations

with licensed child care centres. In addition, the team also launched the *Building Healthy Brains to Build a Healthy Future* campaign and worked with the Child and Youth Network to develop other outreach campaigns, while collaborating with Ontario Early Years Centres in the region to screen children through the NutriSTEP program. The Early Years Team also continued its collaborative partnership with the *Community Early Years Partnership Committee*, made up of front-line staff from 35 local agencies to provide services that improve childhood outcomes.



**1500**

Public Health Nurses provided one-on-one education and support to nearly 6,000 individuals, related to breastfeeding, infant mental health, early childhood development, healthy eating and physical activity, parenting and adjustment to parenthood

**1000**

Responded to more than 1,000 calls through the MLHU's Health Connection telephone service

**280**

Offered over 280 group sessions about infant mental health and early childhood development to families, healthcare providers and licensed child care centres

**133**

Conducted 133 group sessions to educate clients on topics including car seat safety and Triple P (Positive Parenting Program) Parenting



## Speech and Language, Infant Hearing and Blind Low Vision Programs

The Screening, Assessment and Intervention team provided services to 3,250 children in 2015.

Through the tykeTALK program, staff focus on prevention and early intervention to increase positive outcomes for children's communication, play, social and literacy development. The program provides early identification of, and intervention for, children with communication disorders from birth to the age of school-entry. tykeTALK provides assessment and/or intervention to approximately 11.5% of the school-age child population in the Thames Valley region.

The Infant Hearing program is a prevention and early intervention hearing program, which seeks to identify babies who are deaf or hard of hearing, monitor those with risk factors for developing hearing loss and provide evidence based communication interventions as well as support to parents, providing family-centred care and promotion of a smooth transition to school. The program screens about 10,000 newborns each year and provides follow-up support and services to about 120 children per year who are identified as having a permanent hearing loss.

The Blind Low Vision Early Intervention Program provides healthy child development education and support to families and community professionals. Services are provided to approximately 100 children per year who have been diagnosed as being blind or having low vision.

**3020** children received a speech and language assessment and/or intervention

**92** 92% of area newborns received a hearing screening before reaching one month of age

**24** children were identified as being blind or having low vision, while support and services were provided to 99 children

**50** new children were identified with permanent hearing loss while support and services were provided to 100 children who have permanent hearing loss



## Best Beginnings

The *Healthy Babies Healthy Children* (HBHC) program offered by the Best Beginnings team supported more than 1,500 families at risk for challenges which can affect healthy infant and child development. This program provides services to women and their families in the prenatal period and to families and children from birth to the transition to school. The program includes screening, assessment, home visiting and referrals to community resources and support.

Public Health Nurses offered postpartum sessions in Strathroy, providing information to promote breastfeeding, address issues of infant safety and injury prevention, and link participants to resources in the community to support families after the birth of their child. Public Health Nurses also provided services in eight women and children family shelters in London and Middlesex County for women, children and families. Services at shelters include screening, assessment, intervention, advocacy, and linking families to community services. Family Health Clinics provide Nurse Practitioner services to families prenatally and with children from birth to school-age in London and Strathroy.

*Smart Start for Babies* provides participants with weekly prenatal sessions at six sites in London and Strathroy. With a focus on nutrition, the program supports mothers identified as being at a higher-risk and their support person with information to improve nutrition education, address food preparation and safety to assist in developing life skills. Participants receive healthy snacks or meals, food vouchers, bus tickets and prenatal vitamins. Best Beginnings staff partner with an advisory group drawing from local community agencies to support *Smart Start for Babies* participants, assisting with recruitment and linking participants to additional community supports.



### Young Adult

Staff on the Young Adult team work in schools to support the health and development of students in areas related to healthy eating, physical activity and mental health as well as growth and development. Public Health Nurses on the Young Adult Team work in partnership with four local school boards to plan and implement activities that focus on healthy schools with a goal of influencing youth attitudes, knowledge and self-efficacy to contribute to positive health outcomes. Of the 26 high schools that the Young Adult Team works with, 17 (65%) have a Healthy Schools Committee and 2,473 students receive one-on-one support from a school nurse.

**1485** clients received primary care from the team's Nurse Practitioner during Family Health Clinics in the community

**195** client assessments completed at women and children family shelters

**297** Smart Start for Babies prenatal support sessions offered to clients in 2015

**92%** of clients initiated breastfeeding through prenatal support and education programs offered by the Best Beginnings Team through the Smart Start for Babies Program

## Preconception to Prenatal

In 2015, the Reproductive Health Team worked on preconception and prenatal health resources in an effort to help parents prepare physically, emotionally, and socially for conception so as to improve pregnancy and healthy birth outcomes. Among the strategies used to prepare clients for parenthood was the development and roll-out of a combined online e-learning and skill-building prenatal program, offering both group and online components. The team also provided preconception education, as well as health teaching to priority groups including those at the Elgin-Middlesex Detention Center, Mutual Aid Parenting Program (MAPP) and the South London Community Group.

### Reproductive Health Highlights for 2015:

**2** Launched two social media campaigns to promote the Pre-Pregnancy Planning tool (for clients and healthcare providers)

**520** Held 520 office sessions and distributed 19,000 resources through the Healthcare Provider Outreach Program

**600** More than 600 women enrolled in the prenatal education class series, with an additional 477 individuals registering for the e-learning module

**16** Provided 16 food skills sessions to 163 participants in an effort to increase subsidized access to fruits and vegetables through collaboration with community partners

**325** Offered 13 Preparing for Parenthood classes to 325 pregnant women and their support persons

**189** Provided 10 breastfeeding support classes to 189 participants

Partnered with London Health Sciences Centre to pilot an early pre-admittance group session for pregnant women in their second trimester (18 – 22 weeks)

Developed a prenatal education program for at-risk pregnant women in collaboration with community partners

## Awareness Campaign

### We're HERE for YOU

In 2015, the MLHU launched its We're HERE for YOU awareness campaign shining a light on the Health Unit's key role in the local health system. Health Unit staff work in schools and immunization clinics, they work with families to support their needs; they inspect restaurants, swimming pools, tattoo shops, nail salons, spas and more. The Health Unit's team of professionals work to provide dental services, conduct local research and work with politicians, decision makers and social services agencies to create programs, bylaws and guidelines that help to create healthier communities and identify community needs. Using humour and simple, clear messages, the campaign featured several of the programs and services provided by the MLHU and encouraged clients and community partners to learn more about Health Unit by visiting its website.





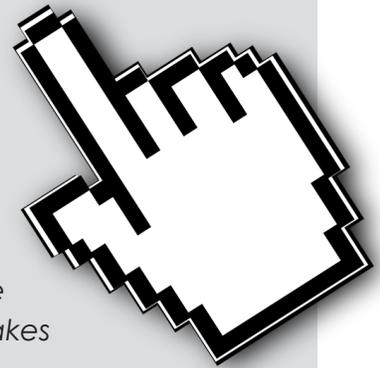
## Enhancing the Health Unit's Online Presence

Through the work of the Health Unit's Communications team, the MLHU was able to engage its audiences and provide useful information through an expansion of its social media and online presence. Highlights for 2015 include:

*The creation of new inspection disclosure website for personal service settings, pools and spas and an overhaul of the DineSafe website, which makes food premises inspection data available.*

*On-going investigation of new social media platforms and the creation of the youth-oriented @MLTeens Twitter account.*

*The creation, development and sharing of more than 50 new videos on the MLHU YouTube channel.*



### Social Media by the numbers:

**1700** Attracted more than 1,700 new followers to the MLHU Twitter account (@MLHealthUnit)



**5,000,000** Generated more than five million audience impressions on Facebook



**You Tube 85,000** Received more than 85,000 views for Health Unit videos through AdTube pre-roll advertising on YouTube

## Expenditure Budget



### MIDDLESEX-LONDON BOARD OF HEALTH FUNDING SOURCES

- Province of Ontario
- Government of Canada
- City of London
- County of Middlesex
- Program revenues

## EXPENDITURES 2015

### Cost-Shared Public Health Programs:

Mandatory Programs	\$24,383,924
Vector-Borne Diseases	616,000
Small Drinking Water Systems	46,049
CINOT Expansion Program	90,000
<b>Total Cost-Shared Programs</b>	<b>25,135,973</b>

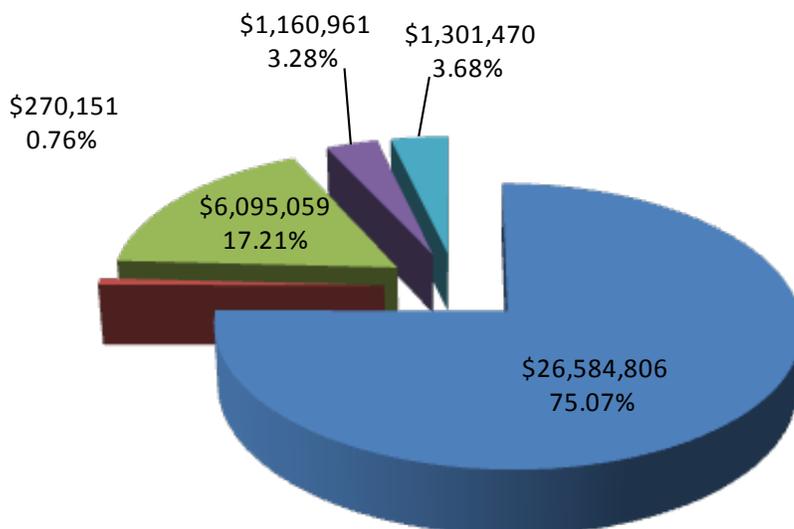
### 100% Public Health Programs:

Infectious Diseases Prevention and Control	1,166,800
Needle Exchange	363,700
Public Health Nursing Initiatives	392,100
Healthy Babies Healthy Children	2,483,313
Smart Start for Babies	152,430
Enhanced Safe Water Initiative	35,700
Enhanced Food Safety Initiative	80,000
FoodNet	144,664
Panorama Implementation	217,155
Shared Library Services	107,475
Healthy Smiles Ontario	941,600
Dental Treatment Clinic	247,145
Smoke Free Ontario	1,073,344
tykeTALK	1,866,460
Infant Hearing & Screening Program	845,886
Blind Low Vision	158,702
<b>Total Public Health Programs</b>	<b>\$35,412,447</b>

## REVENUES 2015

### Sources of Funding:

Province of Ontario	\$26,584,806	75.07%
Government of Canada	270,151	0.76%
City of London	6,095,059	17.21%
County of Middlesex	1,160,961	3.28%
Program revenues	1,301,470	3.68%
<b>Total Sources of Funding</b>	<b>\$35,412,447</b>	





2015 Annual Report

**ML** BUREAU DE SANTÉ DE  
MIDDLESEX-LONDON  
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