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September 21, 2012

Child Care Modernization  
c/o Early Learning Division  
24th floor, Mowat Block  
900 Bay St.  
Toronto, Ontario  
M7A 1L2

To whom it may concern:

OSPAPPH's mission is to elevate physical activity as a public health priority in Ontario through engagement, education, advocacy and strategic alliances. We aim to be the unified voice representing public health practitioners with the mandate of promoting physical activity in our respective communities. This society builds on the strengths of an established infrastructure and mandate within the public health system, as well as the partnerships formed at the community, provincial and national levels, with the ultimate purpose of increasing physical activity levels in Ontario. We welcome the opportunity to provide input to the Government of Ontario's Child Care Modernization effort.

Physical literacy is an important public health issue. Individuals who are physically literate move with competence and confidence in a wide variety of physical activities in multiple environments that benefit the healthy development of the whole person.<sup>i</sup> Physical literacy plays a critical part in how a child's health develops and sets the stage for a healthy active future.<sup>ii</sup> Unfortunately, less than 10 percent of Canadian children are meeting the recommended daily minimum physical activity requirements for health benefits.<sup>iii</sup> Furthermore, many children today lack the basic skills, knowledge, and physical activity behaviours needed to lead healthy active lifestyles<sup>iv</sup>.

Physical literacy must be a priority in childcare settings and be held to the same standard as literacy and numeracy. Early learning and development is supported by physical activity participation. Active children are fit to learn and physical activity in the early years helps to increase creativity, learning and academic performance through improvements in cognitive function, reduced misconduct and increased attention span.<sup>v vi</sup> Moreover, minimizing sedentary behaviour – such as screen time and other behaviours that require little movement - is as important as increasing physical activity.

Childcare settings are ideal environments to deliver activities and quality programs to foster the learning and development of physical literacy and reducing sedentary behaviours in the early years. We would like you to keep in mind the following elements that we believe are essential in moving forward with the modernization of child care in Ontario:

- Strengthen the Day Nurseries Act (DNA) to promote and support physical activity and physical literacy development in licensed childcare settings.
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- The DNA must meet the recommendations from the Canadian Physical Activity and Sedentary Behaviour Guidelines for the early years (0 to 4) and for children (5 to 11).
- The DNA must continue to provide guidelines for outdoor play, sleep time, and indoor and outdoor play equipment.
- Ensure ongoing training related to physical activity and physical literacy for all licensed childcare providers. Training should include as a minimum:
  - Enhancing childcare providers' knowledge and skills regarding physical activity and physical literacy.
  - Enhancing knowledge and skills on how to deliver quality daily physical activity programming.
- Support child care centres in creating supportive environments for physically active behaviours. This can include, but is not limited to:
  - Support for the development and implementation of policies.
  - Support for improvements in infrastructure and design of child care centres to maximize physical activity opportunities and behaviours.
- Coordinate efforts with other divisions within the Government of Ontario.
  - The Healthy Kids Panel is currently seeking submissions for input to reduce childhood obesity in Ontario. It is critical that staff from the Early Learning Division of the Ministry of Education collaborate with their colleagues from the Healthy Kids Panel to coordinate efforts in addressing childhood healthy weights particularly as it affects the childcare environment.

Finally, OSPAPPH acknowledges that the modernization of childcare in Ontario is a long term process. We welcome the opportunity to be consulted on matters related to physical activity and physical literacy development. We look forward to hearing more about the next steps in this endeavour.

*Chalonde*

Chantal L. Lalonde  
OSPAPPH Co-chair

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Jackie Leroux  
OSPAPPH Co-chair

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<sup>i</sup> Mandigo, J., Francis, N., Lodewyk, K. & Lopez, R. (2009). Position Paper – Physical Literacy for Educators. *Physical & Health Education Canada* (2012). Retrieved from [http://www.phecanada.ca/sites/default/files/current\\_research\\_pdf/07-22-10/PhysicalLiteracyPositionPaper.pdf](http://www.phecanada.ca/sites/default/files/current_research_pdf/07-22-10/PhysicalLiteracyPositionPaper.pdf)

<sup>ii</sup> Canadian Sport for Life (n.d.). Developing physical literacy – A guide for parents of children ages 0-12. Retrieved from <http://www.canadiansportforlife.ca/sites/default/files/resources/Developing%20Physical%20Literacy.pdf>

<sup>iii</sup> Statistics Canada (2011). Canadian Health Measures Survey: Physical activity of youth and adults. Retrieved from [www.statcan.gc.ca/daily-quotidien/110119/dq110119b-eng.htm](http://www.statcan.gc.ca/daily-quotidien/110119/dq110119b-eng.htm)



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<sup>iv</sup> Tremblay, M and Lloyd, M (2010). Physical Literacy Measurement – The Missing Piece, *Physical and Health Education Journal*, 76(1), 26-30

<sup>v</sup> Active Healthy Kids Canada (2009). Active Healthy Kids Canada Report Card on Physical Activity for Children and Youth: Active kids are fit to learn. Retrieved from [http://dvqdas9jty7g6.cloudfront.net/reportcard2009/ahkc-longform\\_web\\_final.pdf](http://dvqdas9jty7g6.cloudfront.net/reportcard2009/ahkc-longform_web_final.pdf)

<sup>vi</sup> Ontario Ministry of Education (2010). The Ontario Curriculum Grades 1-8: Health and Physical Education. Queen's Printer for Ontario.

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