

Healthy Kids Panel To Help Reduce Childhood Obesity

McGuinty Government Keeping Ontario Kids Healthy

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NEWS

Ontario is bringing together a group of experts to help tackle the challenge of reducing childhood obesity by 20 per cent over five years.

The Healthy Kids Panel will be co-chaired by Alex Munter, Chief Executive Officer of the Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario, and Kelly Murumets, President and Chief Executive Officer of ParticipACTION.

Drawing on a broad range of expertise, the panel will work with health care leaders, non-profit organizations and industry to create a unique model that draws on successful strategies to reduce childhood obesity.

The panel will provide the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care with recommendations that are evidence-based and fiscally achievable. It will report back later this year with its first recommendations.

Minimizing the factors that contribute to obesity during childhood, helps reduce the likelihood of being overweight and obese in adolescence and adulthood. Childhood obesity is strongly linked to increased risk of high blood pressure, type 2 diabetes, heart disease, gallbladder disease, stroke, and certain types of cancer including breast and colon cancer.

The Healthy Kids Panel will help to keep Ontario healthy and is part of the McGuinty government's Action Plan for Health Care.

QUOTES

"The Healthy Kids Panel will help our government meet our target of reducing childhood obesity in Ontario by 20 per cent over the next five years. It's an ambitious goal, but we owe it to our kids to give them the best possible start in life – and that includes good health. I look forward to the Healthy Kids Panel's advice, so we make Ontario the healthiest place to grow up and grow old."

— Deb Matthews, Minister of Health and Long-Term Care

"As a society, we've changed the trajectory on health issues before. From reducing tobacco-related illness to improving workplace safety, we've been successful when all sectors work together. Reducing childhood obesity rates is one of the most important health concerns of our time. I look forward to working with this talented panel to develop ways Ontario can change the trajectory on this issue too."

— Alex Munter, Co-Chair – Healthy Kids Panel

"Childhood obesity is a critical, but complex issue, and one of the most pressing concerns of our time. The Expert Panel will draw upon the wide range of expertise and commitment required to address this complicated issue. Our efforts will benefit the children of Ontario; we must ensure they live longer, healthier and more fulfilling lives."

— Kelly Murumets, Co-Chair – Healthy Kids Panel

QUICK FACTS

- 75 per cent of obese children grow up to become obese adults.
- In 2009, the estimated direct and indirect costs associated with obesity to Ontario's health care system were \$4.5 billion.
- In Ontario, 25.6 per cent of children ages two to 17 are overweight or obese.
- Childhood obesity rates for Canadian children ages two to 17 have risen from 15 per cent in 1979 to 26 per cent in 2004.

LEARN MORE

Read [Ontario's Action Plan For Health Care](#).

Find out more about [children's health programs](#) in Ontario.

For public inquiries call ServiceOntario, INFOline at 1-866-532-3161 (Toll-free in Ontario only)

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