

How the National Lung Health Framework's Database Can Help You

Many programs and initiatives currently listed in the National Lung Health Framework's **Respiratory Resources Canada (RRC)** database promote strong partnerships, develop and apply best practices, and may be implemented in your area.

Educators and health care professionals are eager to cooperate by sharing their experiences. Your health region, organization, or program may benefit from the experience of others. By connecting with successful programs, children's programs can be established more quickly and more successfully than if they were developed in isolation.

- Respiratory disease is the leading cause of child hospitalization
- Asthma rates in Canadian children continue to climb
- The smoking rate for 15-19 year olds is at 15%

The Challenge

As anyone struggling with a lung disease will tell you, "When you can't breathe, nothing else matters." For parents of children with conditions like asthma and infections like RSV (respiratory syncytial virus) or pneumonia, there is an overwhelming helpless feeling when you watch a child struggle to breathe.

Children are also at great risk of harm from the dangers in the air we breathe. They have little control over what they are exposed to, their developing systems are more susceptible to damage, and their young bodies may not be equipped to protect them from infections and toxins.

The Response

The **National Lung Health Framework** is a Canadian initiative designed to improve lung health across the country by promoting collaborative and coordinated action among health care professionals, policy makers, researchers, clinicians, advocates and others.

Within the **National Lung Health Framework** as it relates to childhood respiratory health, we work together to achieve:

- Improved respiratory disease prevention and management through the implementation of effective and coordinated health promotion and disease awareness programs;
- A reduction in exposure to environmental air contaminants;
- A reduction in indoor and outdoor air contaminants; and
- Increased awareness, knowledge, and understanding of respiratory health issues.

HIGHLIGHTED PROGRAMS

Childhood Respiratory Health Programs are available in various places in Canada. Here is a small sample of successful programs in action, from the **Respiratory Resources Canada** database:

Youth Advocacy Training Institute (YATI) Ontario

Following its "Be. Do. Lead" approach, YATI engages youth in health promotion and advocacy

- Provides interactive training and support to youth and youth leaders on a variety of topics, especially in the areas of tobacco control and soon air quality
- **Healthy Empowered Youth (HEY!)** training conferences bring together youth and adult support personnel in different regions across Ontario. Youth and adult participants learn about how to impact the health of their communities by preventing chronic disease through health promotion, advocacy and policy
- Free downloadable "train-it-yourself" training manuals and support materials for adults and youth leaders are available online



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HIGHLIGHTED INITIATIVES continued

STARSS – (Start Thinking About Reducing Secondhand Smoke)



The **STARSS** program was developed to meet the needs of CAPC (Community Action Programs for Children) projects, although the program has been implemented in many settings and services (such as Public Health Units and addiction treatment programs) where there are pregnant and parenting women smokers – especially those who don't want, or aren't ready, to quit smoking.

- Developed to help mothers (especially those in single parent and low-income situations) to take small steps for change
- Uses a “harm reduction model” of protecting children from secondhand smoke while mothers are on the way to quitting smoking
- In the process of rolling out across CAPC sites across Canada

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Children's Respiratory Rehabilitation Program

Winnipeg, Manitoba

Children's program uses the Wii gaming system and the Wii Fit Program as part of training program

- Small group sessions for children 7 years of age and older over a 3 month period of time (intensive and maintenance program)
- Wii program used to improve core strength and balance
- Tracked lung function & standard exercise tests as well as records from memory cards of game machines on usage
- Participants improved in several key areas including less shortness of breath and increased endurance and a reduction in health care resource utilization

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How You Can Make a Difference

If you would like to help make a difference and improve the lung health of Canadians there are things you can do.

Promote what is happening in your field and in your community. Share information about successful activities with others across Canada through the **Respiratory Resources Canada**. The information will be seen by people across the country working in respiratory health.

Make it happen. Have you wanted to start a much-needed initiative in your community and were not sure where to get started or how to make it happen? Make use of **Respiratory Resources Canada**. It is a searchable database where you can find out what is happening all across Canada. You can also use the database to connect with individuals who can provide you with helpful information and share their own successes.

Go to www.lunghealthframework.ca for more information on the database and what it can do for you.

The National Lung Health Framework is chaired by and housed at The Lung Association, with the support of a multi-stakeholder Steering Committee.

Working Together Makes a Difference

- *I had a pretty good idea – lots of good information – before the classes, but am much more comfortable now and feel as if I am better informed as to how to control and monitor it. My daughter's confidence increased – she is in control. Being informed has made her more comfortable using medication at school – parent of a school-aged child after attending the Children's Asthma Education Centre, Winnipeg, Manitoba*
- *With YATI, they give you the tools, but they don't really tell you what you have to do, so they like kinda let you explore what you want to do. I think that's really important.” – Katie, Youth Participant at YATI conference*

Canadian children are not safe from lung disease:

- Smoking rates among 15-19 year olds range from 13% in Ontario to 20% in Saskatchewan
- Among Canadian children between the ages of 4 and 11 years, 15.6% (485,700 children) have been diagnosed with asthma
- Asthma rates continue to increase especially among boys and young children
- Children (ages 0-17 years old) are regularly exposed to secondhand smoke in 8% of homes