

Public Health Inspection Practice in Child Care Settings

A Project by the Canadian Partnership for
Children's Health and Environment & Ontario
Public Health Association

Growing Up Healthy and Green: A Dialogue
Environmental Health and Green Practice in Child
Care

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 **Region of Peel**
Working for you
Public Health

Outline

- Context Setting
 - Children's Health and Environment
 - Child Care
 - Public Health Inspection in Child Care Settings
- Public Health Inspectors Project – Phase 1
- Public Health Inspectors Project – Phase 2

What is Children's Environmental Health (CEH)?

- Preventing impacts associated with exposures to environmental contaminants and other hazards in indoor and outdoor environments
- Includes all developmental stages
 - pre-conception, early childhood, childhood adolescence and reproductive years
- Cautionary – extending “childproofing” to CEH

What Makes Children Healthy?

Figure 1: Determinants of Health



Source: World Health Organization, undated.

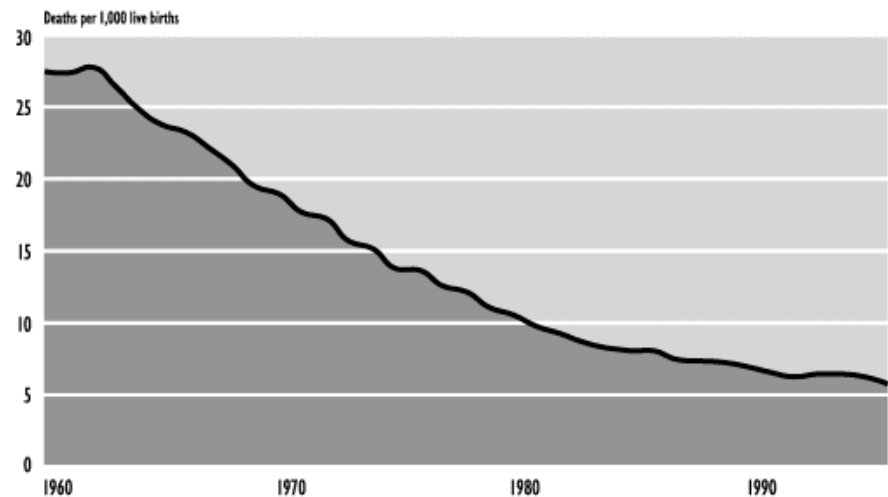
Physical Environment Determinant

- plays an important role in healthy child development
- interacts with others
- can be altered... exposure can be prevented
- Nature & degree of the impact will differ regionally/ globally
- Priorities will vary

Canadian Children's Environmental Health

- Low overall rates of serious illness/death
 - infant mortality has dropped steadily: access to medical care/improved sanitation
- Patterns of disease among children have changed

Figure 1 Infant Mortality Rates, Canada, 1960-1996

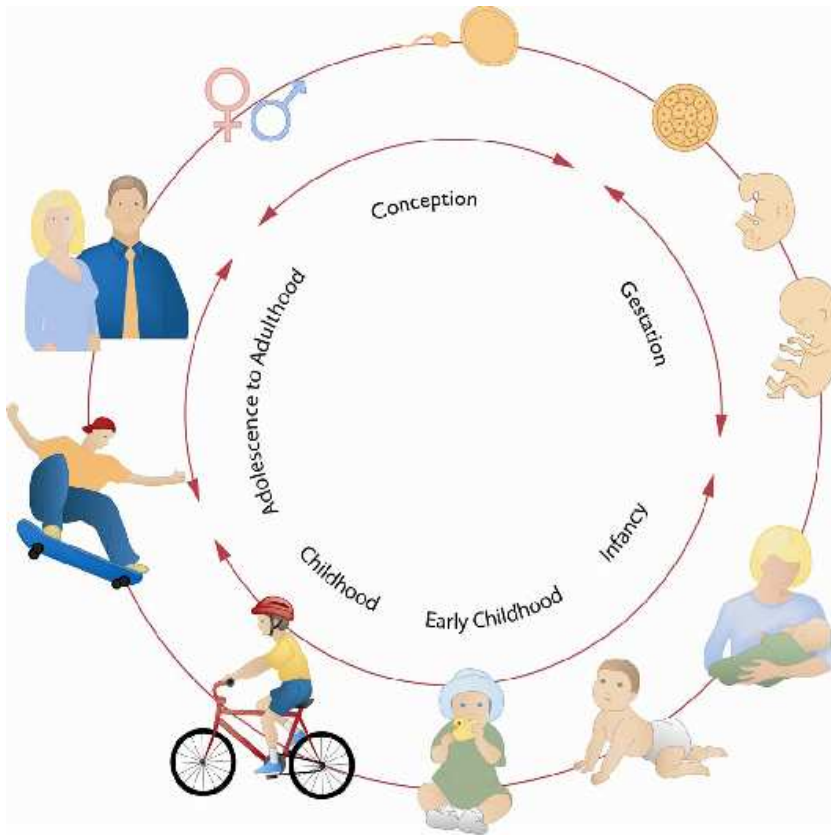


Source: PHAC, 1999

Children are Different.....More Vulnerable

- Greater exposure
 - Proportion
 - Physiology
 - Behaviour
 - Longer life-span
- Some children are more vulnerable than others
- Windows of vulnerability

A Window of Vulnerability is Always Open

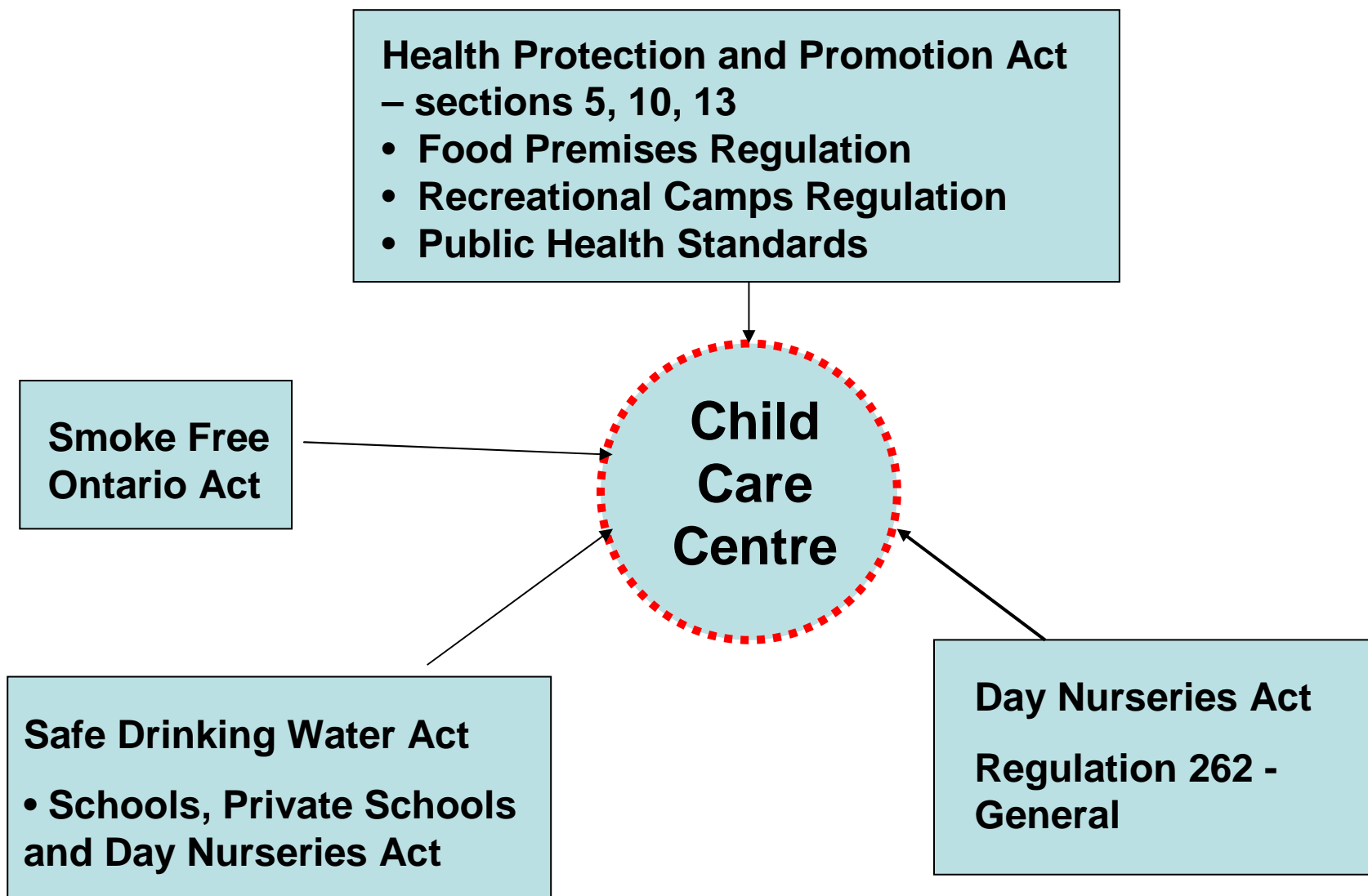


- many life stages from preconception to the end of adolescence
- Maternal and paternal *preconception* exposure, especially occupational, also relevant

Child Care

- In 2005, approx 55% children between 6 months & 5 yrs are in some form of care program outside the home
- In 2006, almost 75% of mothers of children under 5 yrs worked, 68% for those with children under 3yrs

Health Inspections in Child Care Settings



Day Nurseries Act (General Regulation 262)

- ensure equipment and furnishings are maintained in a safe and clean condition and kept in a good state of repair
- ensure that any recommendation or instruction of a medical officer of health with respect to any matter that may affect the health or well-being of a child is carried out
- ensure that there are policies and procedures approved by a Director, under the Day Nurseries Act, with respect to sanitary practices

Safe Drinking Water Act & Smoke Free Ontario Act

- ***School, Private Schools and Day Nurseries Regulation*** - prevent childhood exposure to lead in drinking water
 - Flushing based on date of plumbing installation
 - daily (before Jan 1990)
 - weekly (after Jan 1990)
 - annual drinking water testing
- **SFOA** - prohibits anyone from smoking or holding lighted tobacco in a day nursery

HPPA – Mandatory Health Program and Services Guidelines (1997)

- Program Standards - Chronic Diseases and Injury, Family Health and **Infectious Diseases (Food Safety, Safe Water, Infection Control)**
- General Standards - Equal Access, **Health Hazard Investigation**, and Program Planning and Evaluation

HPPA – Public Health Standards (Draft)

- Food, water and infection control still the main focus - scope of childcare facility inspections not widened
- Requirement to increase awareness about the potential health hazards posed by indoor air, outdoor air and built environments
- Requirement to “support healthy public policy development” in reducing exposure to health hazards

PHI Project – Phase 1

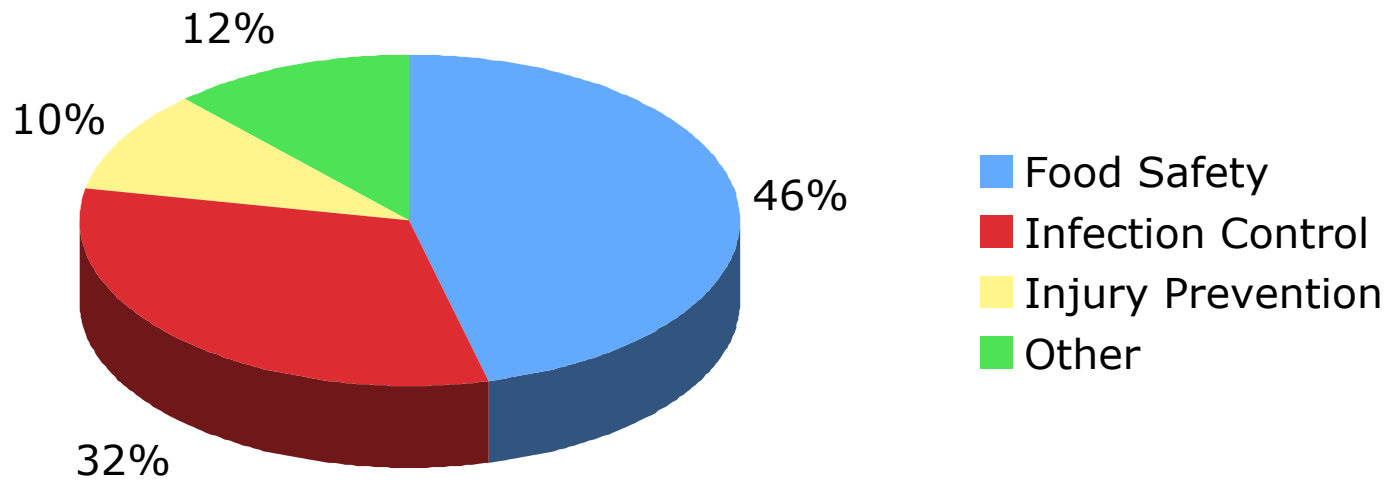
- Objective
 - to research and analyze published and self-reported data relating to the range of environmental health hazards that may be encountered in out-of-home childcare environments
- Study conducted by School of Occupational and Public Health, Ryerson University
- CPCHE/OPHA project funded by Trillium Foundation

Environmental Scan - Review of Available Materials

- Information materials, inspection report forms/checklists
 - ensure compliance and address hazards broadly under food safety, infection control and injury prevention categories
 - Other hazards - addressed under the broad section of “general sanitation,” “sanitation and housekeeping,” and “general housekeeping.”

FACT SHEETS	POSTERS	DIRECTIVES OR INSTRUCTIONS
<p>Fifth Disease (parvovirus B9) Norovirus Outbreak Management Smog Diapering: Routine Practices Rotavirus Fever Influenza: Preventing Spread Pandemic Planning Childhood Vaccinations Food Allergies</p>	<p>Anti-Smoking Handwashing Instructions Safe Food Temperatures</p>	<p>Cold Weather Guidelines (prevention recommendations and signs of cold injury) Hot Weather Guidelines (prevention recommendations and signs of heat illness) Safe Food Temperatures (danger zone, importance of keeping “hot foods hot and cold foods cold”) Food Safety Tips for Bagged and Boxed Lunches Pandemic Planning Checklist Immunization Schedules Respiratory Outbreak Management Checklist</p>

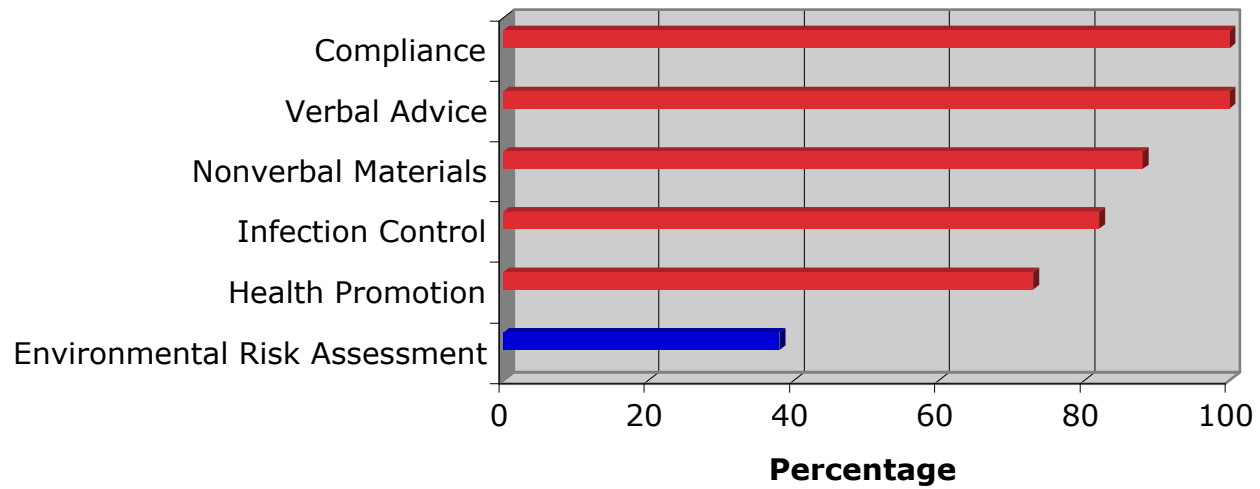
Broad Subject Matter of Educational Material Distributed by Public Health Units



Surveys

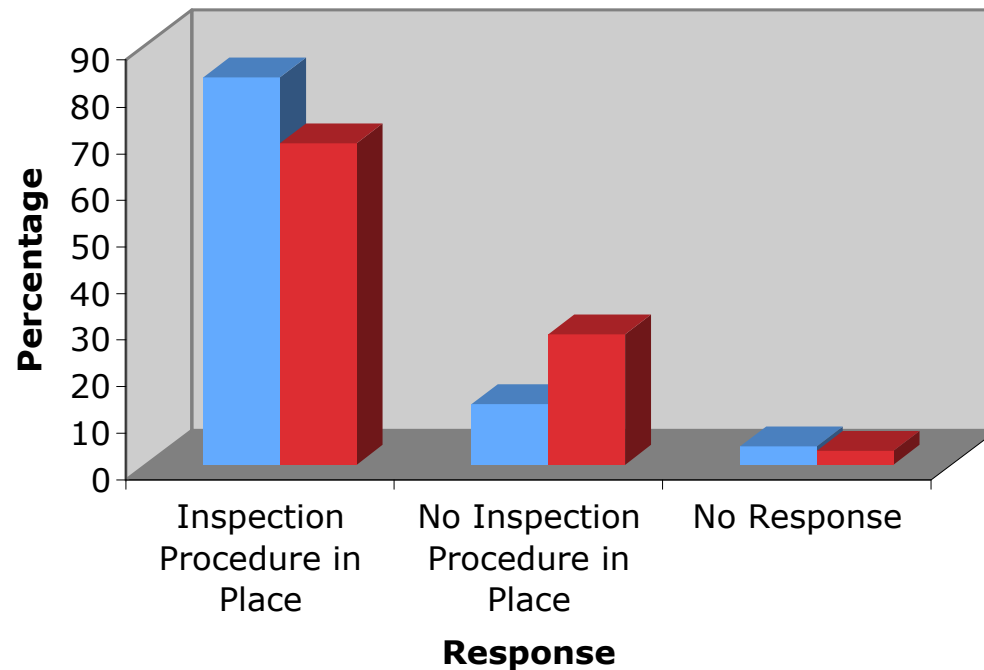
- Management
 - determine the range of practices in place to prevent and minimize exposure to environmental hazards in childcare settings across Ontario
 - 28 of 36 health units responded (78%)
- Public Health Inspectors
 - Evaluate his or her knowledge & perception types of hazards that may be found in child care facilities
 - gained insight into commonly noted infractions, information disseminated to operators, the nature of specific requests for information from operators and perceptions of preparation/training.
 - 64 of approximately 800 (~8% or 1.8 responses per health unit)

Supervisor Perceptions of the Functions of Childcare Facility Inspections



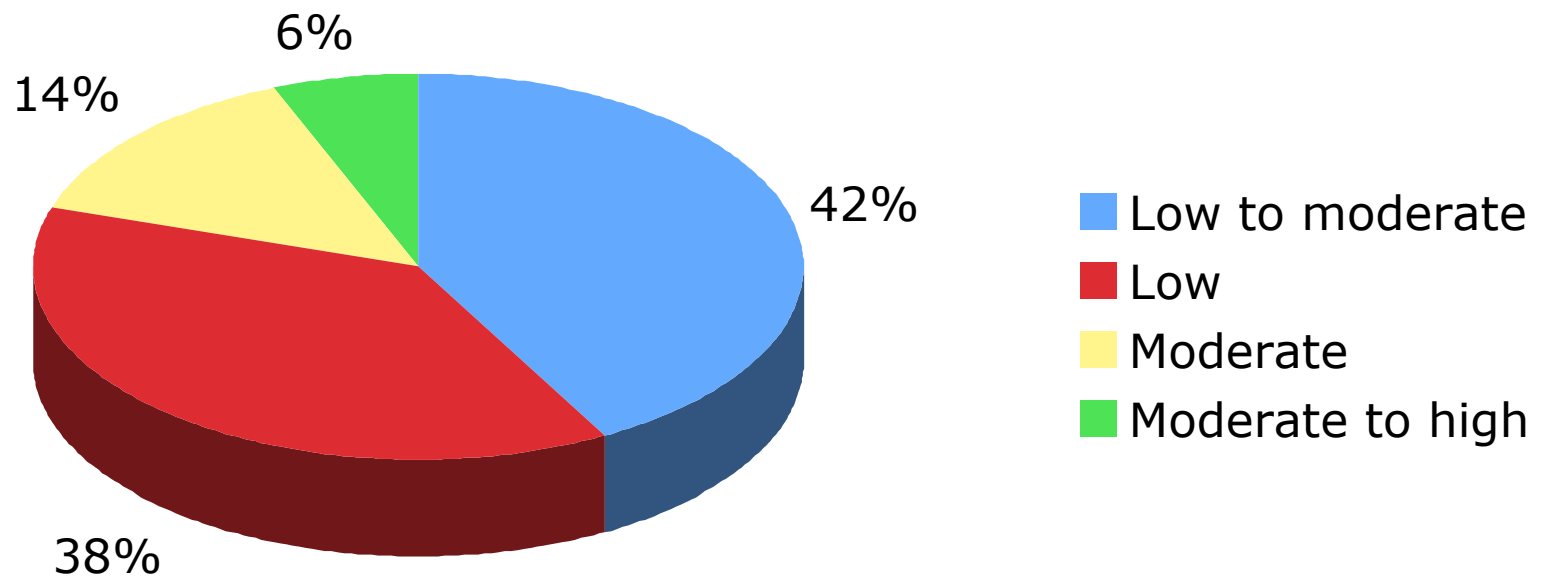
Standard Inspection Procedure

Self-Reporting: Use of Inspection Procedure



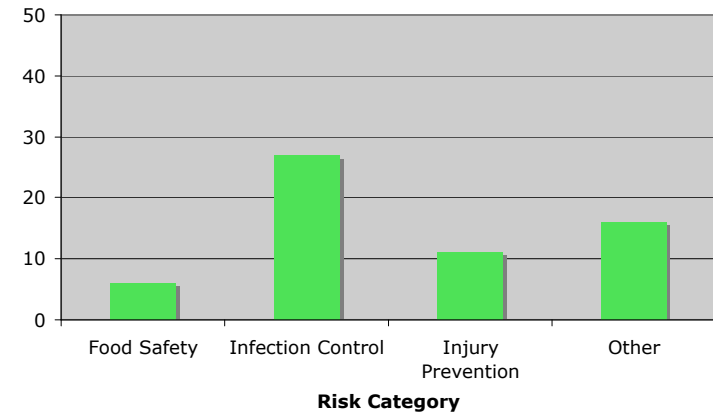
■ Supervisor Response ■ Public Health Inspector Response

Public Health Inspector Perception of Risk Posed by Environmental Health Hazards in Childcare Facilities

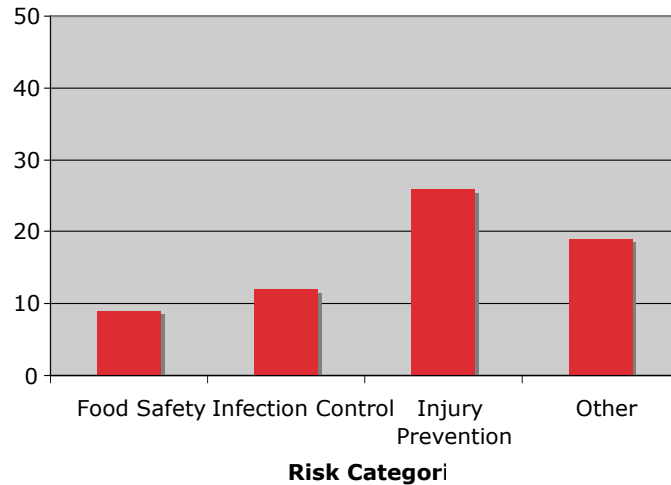


Hazards presenting greatest risk to health by age

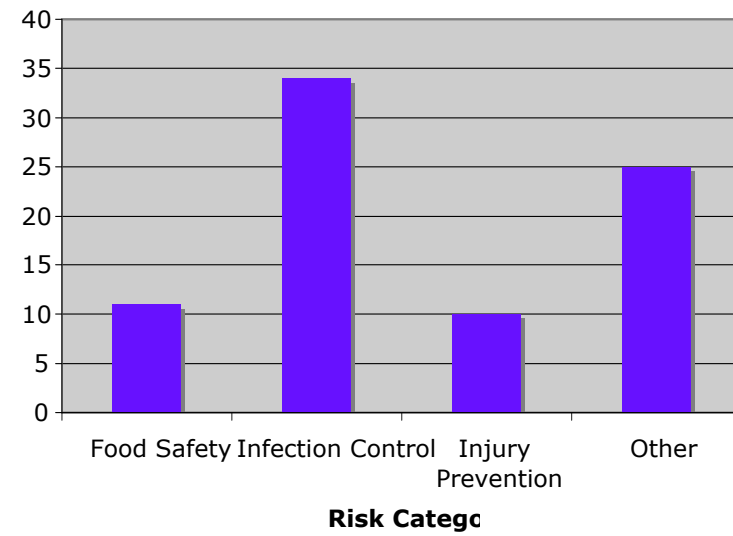
Perceived Risk by Age Group: 0-18 Months



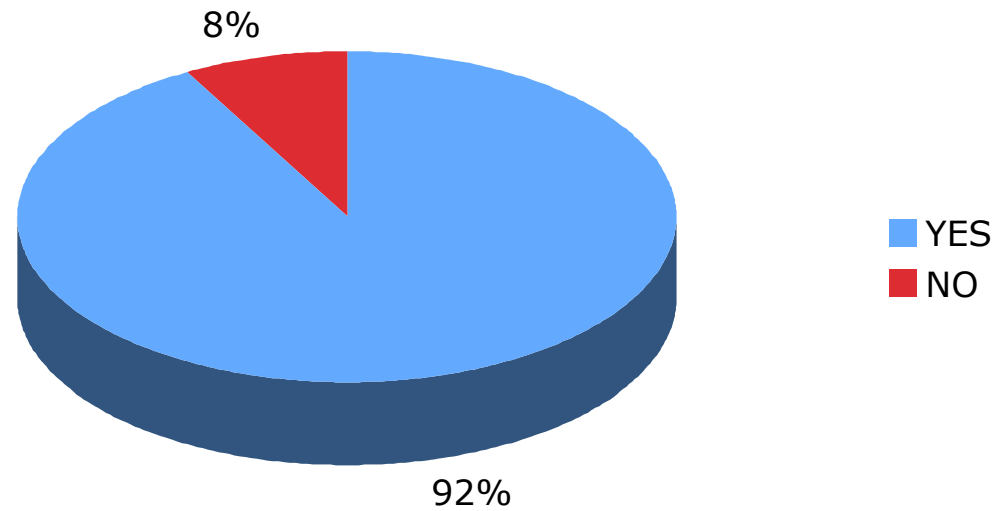
Perceived Risk by Age Group: 18-24



Perceived Risk by Age Group: 24+



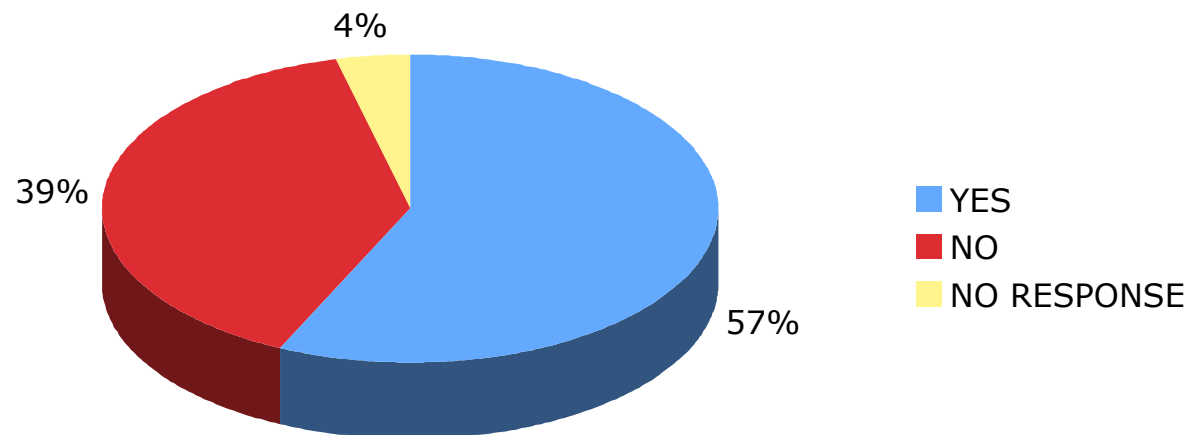
**Proportion of Public Health Inspectors
Comfortable Providing Advice to
Childcare Facility Operators**



- 75% felt they had enough support material to provide information/guidance
- Over 93% had not encountered a hazard that they perceived to be not adequately covered by their protocols
- 33% felt that they would benefit from additional training and information
- 33% indicated that they had received specialized training in child care inspection

- 72% indicated that they offer educational workshops

**Health Unit Circulation of Educational Material
Related to Children's Environmental Health**



Conclusions

- Standardization of public health inspection protocols
 - inspection requirements, procedures and standards (MOHLTC, the Ministry of Community and Social Services and public health units)
- Enhancement of educational opportunities for health inspectors that go beyond food safety, infection control and injury prevention
 - Collaboration between public health agencies and childcare providers to develop curriculum content and joint learning opportunities (schools of public health and schools of early childhood education)
- Health promotion
 - information dissemination strategies and educational campaigns (daycare and children's non-government groups, provincial government and public health authorities)

PHI Project – Phase 2

- Communications and Health Promotion Strategy
- integrates children's environmental health information into existing public health inspector materials
- create customized educational materials

Perception of Harmfulness

