Creating supportive environments for health

What boat do you want to be in?

Prepared by Dr Anne Andermann, Isabelle Barbeau and Chantal Vinet, with input from Dr Elizabeth Robinson, for the Public Health Department, Cree Health Board, 2014
The true story of 2 boats

**Unhealthy boat**
- Usual meals served
  - Fried steak
  - Mashed potatoes with gravy
  - Ice cream

**Healthy boat**
- Healthy meals served
  - Oven-roasted meats
  - Baked potatoes
  - Low-fat frozen yoghurt
Out to sea for 6 months

- The sailors were not told to do anything differently
  - They chose what they wanted from the cafeteria menu
  - They ate as much food as they wanted
  - They were not told to do any exercise

The only difference between the two boats was the type of food that was served on board. Thus, only their environment changed, and any differences found after 6 months have NOTHING TO DO WITH INDIVIDUAL BEHAVIOUR CHANGE.
What they found

**Unhealthy boat**
- Usual meals served
  - On average:
    - Gained 3kg
    - Waist grew 3-5 cm
  - Especially those who were already overweight, **gained even more weight**

**Healthy boat**
- Healthy meals served
  - On average:
    - Lost 5kg
    - Waist shrunk 5 cm
  - Especially those who were already overweight, **lost even more weight**
We are products of our environments
Too much preaching about individual behaviours

- Don’t eat that, it’s not healthy
- You should quit smoking
- You drink too much
- Do more exercise
Stop blaming the victim!

Figure 2.9 Creating supportive environments is needed to make the healthy choices the easy choices.

- Unhealthy choices are a product of an unhealthy living environment.
- People who make unhealthy choices are weak and irresponsible.

Changing the environment → Making healthy choices the easy choices → Blaming the victim
Making the healthy choices the easy choices
Healthy individuals

• The health of individuals depends on the health of their family, community and society…
Healthy populations

- So, what makes entire populations healthy?
Population health approach

The frontline health worker (e.g. doctor, nurse)

seeks to improve the health of their PATIENT

The public health professional

seeks to improve the health of the entire POPULATION
Figure 2.6 A continuum of strategies is required to improve population health *

- Action on the social determinants of health
- Health promotion (Ottawa charter)
- Primary, secondary and tertiary prevention
- Diagnosis, treatment & rehabilitation

- General population
- High risk groups
- Patients

- Upstream action
The big picture

• Making the connections: our city, our society, our health...

Objectives for this session

1. Clarifying the concept of “supportive environments” (environnements favorables à la santé) which overlaps, but is distinct from “environmental health”

2. Begin to develop a repertory of “supportive environments” being developed in Region 18

3. Discuss how to go about working on creating even more “supportive environments” as part of your work plans for the coming year (and in liaison with the liyuu Ahtaaawin initiative)
Timeline

- **TOTAL 90 MINUTES:**
  - 15 minutes:
    - Introduction (Anne)
  - 5 minutes:
    - Clarifying concepts (Anne)
  - 25 minutes:
    - Repertory of supportive environments in our region (Chantal)
  - 40 minutes:
    - Developing future initiatives on supportive environments as part of our work plans and liyuu Ahtaawin (Isabelle)
  - 5 minutes:
    - Working more “upstream” on supportive environments and healthy public policies requires working differently (Chantal)
### Overlapping concepts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Environmental health</th>
<th>Supportive environments</th>
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<tr>
<td>A branch of public health that focuses primarily on the impact of the physical environment (air, soil, water, food) on health, including the built environment (i.e. urban planning, sidewalks, parks, walking &amp; cycle paths...)</td>
<td>One of the 5 axes of the Ottawa Charter</td>
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<tr>
<td>Involves health protection, as well as disease prevention &amp; health promotion strategies</td>
<td>Encourages the development of physical, as well as social, economic and political environments that are conducive to health</td>
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<td>Requires intersectoral action and multi-level interventions to effect change on a large scale</td>
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Ottawa Charter

- Health promotion action means:
  - Build healthy public policy
  - Create supportive environments
  - Strengthen community actions
  - Develop personal skills
  - Reorient health services

First International Conference on Health Promotion, Ottawa, Canada, 21 November 1986
http://www.who.int/healthpromotion/conferences/previous/ottawa/en/
Policies shape our environment
The Sundsvall Statement

• "The Sundsvall Conference identified many examples and approaches for creating supportive environments that can be used by policy-makers, decision-makers and community activists in the health and environment sectors. The Conference recognized that everyone has a role in creating supportive environments for health."

Third International Conference on Health Promotion, Sundsvall, Sweden, 9-15 June 1991
http://www.who.int/healthpromotion/conferences/previous/sundsvall/en/
Keeping children safe: rethinking how we design our surroundings

Andrew W. Howard MD MSc

Key points

- Injury is the leading cause of death among children in the industrialized world, and often involves failure to negotiate a built environment.
- Safety should be considered when designing the built environment to substantially reduce injuries and fatalities.
- Perceived lack of safety is a major barrier to the use of active modes of transportation such as walking or cycling.
- A safer environment can lead to improved public health, physical activity levels and quality of life, and reduced pollution.

Safer playgrounds
Safer schools
Safer recreational water
Safer walking routes
Safer homes

MSSS wants to know...

Quelles actions ou mesures la DSP de votre région a-t-elle prises, depuis 2008, pour encourager les environnements favorables à la santé ?

• Réalisation par la DSP d’une étude ou recherche sur les EFS
• Réalisation par la DSP d’une recension ou d’une veille informationnelle sur les EFS
• Prise de position publique de la DSP sur les EFS
• Publication par la DSP d’un rapport sur les EFS
• Développement par la DSP d’un plan ou d’une politique pour encourager les EFS
What examples exist in our region?
Examples of supportive environments

- Restaurants and stores that sell healthy foods
- By-laws that prevent smoking in public places
- School policies against selling junk-food and pop
- Urban planning that promotes “active transportation”
- Social norms that empower women and girls and oppose family violence
Examples in our region

- Getting grocery stores and restaurants to sell healthy food that is accessible and affordable
- Healthy food policies in local daycares and health clinics (for consumers & employees)
- School breakfast and healthy snack programs
- Parenting support programs and parent-child activities (e.g. annual winter triathlon)
- Family support services (food bank, clothing bank, drop-in centre, etc.)
Murray’s lodge: A holistic example

- Physical activity: walking to the lodge, going hunting
- Healthy food: serving traditional food
- Social cohesion: communal kitchen, working together, socializing
- Fostering cultural identity: elders teaching the traditional ways
Taking it to the next level

When developing our work plans, how can we focus even more on creating supportive environments for health?
Let’s build the healthy boat!

What would the healthy boat look like for Region 18?

Isabelle
Game time!
Working differently

- Working more “upstream” and creating more supportive environments for health requires new ways of working with a wider range of partners
Requires “big picture” health planning

Figure 2.5 The health planning cycle

1. Needs assessment
   - Priority setting
   - Understand causes
   - Select & implement interventions
   - Evaluate outcomes
and engagement of local actors and leaders

Figure 7.2 Tackling the social determinants takes multiple types of leadership *

- Political leadership
- Health leadership
- Mobilization leadership

Planning and implementing community strategies to create supportive environments for health

Further reading: