

The **6th**
Conference on

Recent Advances in the Prevention and
Treatment of Childhood and Adolescent Obesity

Understanding the Interplay between Physical and Mental Health

Post Conference Report



October 24–26, 2016

Fairmont Chateau Laurier
Ottawa, Ontario
Canada

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Conference Information Online: www.interprofessional.ubc.ca/Obesity2016

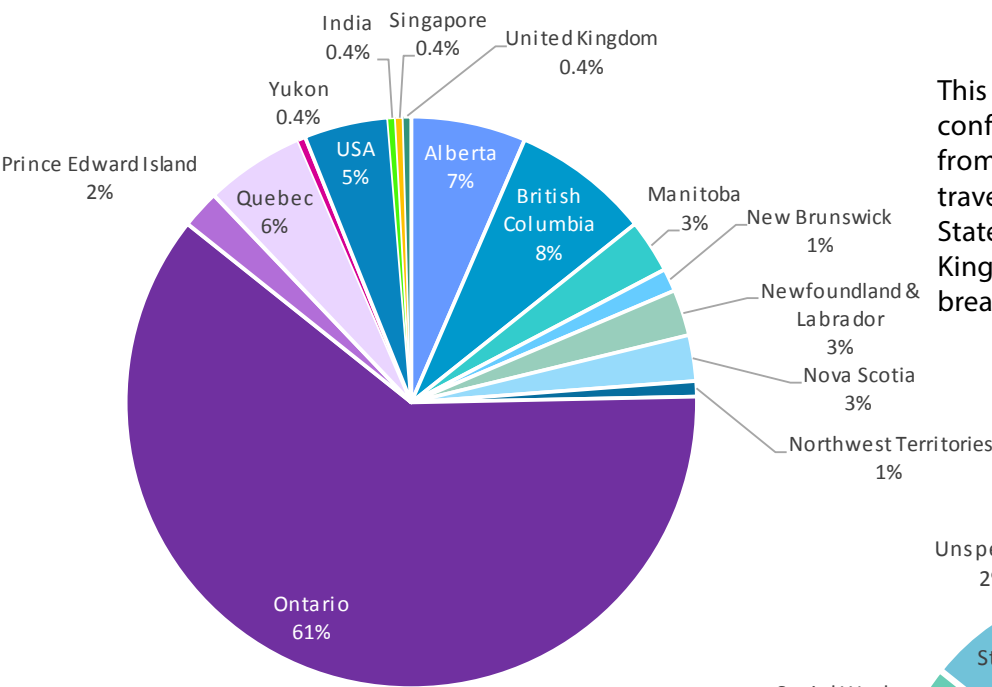
GENERAL INFORMATION

The 6th conference on Recent Advances in the Prevention and Treatment of Childhood and Adolescent Obesity: Understanding the Interplay between Physical and Mental Health was held on October 24-26, 2016 at the Fairmont Chateau Laurier in Ottawa, Ontario. The conference gathered an interdisciplinary group of professionals including dietitians, pediatricians, psychologists, researchers and registered nurses working in the field of childhood and adolescent obesity.

With a prominent focus on the role of mental health in the etiology and management of childhood and adolescent obesity, this conference examined the psychobiological and psychosocial determinants of childhood obesity. From exploring the adverse effects of childhood trauma as well as the impact of weight bias and stigma to discussing positive strategies to promote health in our children and families, speakers at the conference provided insight on prevention and management strategies in childhood obesity at the policy, school, public health, and all care levels.

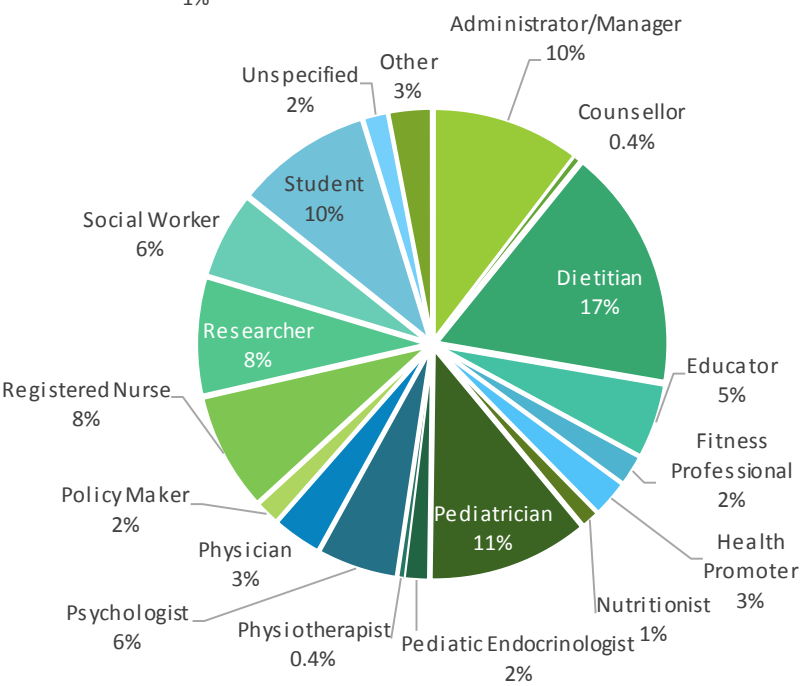
Delegates were warmly welcomed to the conference with opening remarks from its co-chairs, Stasia Hadjiyannakis and Annick Buchholz, followed by an opening prayer led by Elder Annie Smith St-Georges. Over the course of the conference, 28 speakers and 42 poster presenters shared their knowledge on topics that included the effects of weight stigma, family engagement, and health and effective wellness practices within families.

ATTENDANCE STATISTICS



This year, 231 participants attended the conference, 61% percent of whom coming from Ontario. The remaining delegates travelled from across Canada, the United States, India, Singapore and the United Kingdom. The chart on the left includes a breakdown of attendees by geographical location.

Over 25 professions were represented at the conference, demonstrating the importance of providing a space for delegates to make connections across professions. Major professional groups included Dietitians, Pediatricians, Administrators and Managers, Students, Registered Nurses, Psychologists and Researchers.



PARTICIPANT FEEDBACK

The conference was a great success and was very positively rated on evaluation questionnaires, receiving an average of 4.35 out of 5.

Captivating keynote presentations, engaging concurrent and plenary sessions and carefully curated poster presentations offered different occasions for participants to network. During their sessions, speakers not only shared their valuable expertise and experiences, but also encouraged open dialogue with the audience during facilitated Q&A periods. For participants, the opportunity to learn new ideas in emerging research inspired them to reinvest in advocacy work for policy and governmental change.



It is so important to have an opportunity to meet nationally as healthcare providers and researchers working with these young people and their families.

—Dietitian



This conference has allowed us, as a team, to rethink what our focus should be and how I, as a clinician, can continue to show as much compassion in my sessions as possible.

—Fitness Professional



Many of the delegates identified a need for continued collaboration between programs in the community and appreciated the ability to exchange knowledge with other health focussed professionals in the field. Learning about new resources across borders was also beneficial for travelling delegates who expressed their desire to apply the skills they learned in their own communities.

This year's focus on the relationship between mental and physical health was of great import to many participants. Sessions that emphasized the need to reduce weight bias and stigma deeply resonated with delegates. Sessions that promoted the importance of sleep and motivational interviewing offered practical strategies of engagement.

Some participants were also pleased to see the inclusion of Indigenous health concerns, recalling themes explored in the 5th Conference on the Prevention and Management of Childhood and Adolescent Obesity held in 2014, which addressed obesity in Indigenous Youth. Looking forward, attendees are interested in continuing to confront the ways in which the residual effects of colonialism can impact issues of obesity. Other topics of interest include environmental health, family engagement, and policy change. Many delegates expressed an interest in attending the next conference to see results from current research and to see how current programs can be adapted in the future, demonstrating a long-term interest in the conference program content and topics presented.

Some feedback on highly-rated presentations are included in the following comments:



Importance of Sleep for Mental and Physical Health | Jean-Philippe Chaput

Sleep hygiene is a topic presented in my healthy weights group program. This presentation validated the materials we use to deliver this session. I love the quote "Sleep is not a waste of time."

—Health Promoter, Nurse

“ **Weight Stigma in Healthcare & Education: Impact on Children & Families | Angela Alberga, Brenndon Goodman**

Having a patient as presenter had a great deal of impact. Hearing from someone who has experienced the situation is invaluable. Having worked in a hospital setting for many years, weight bias and stigma in healthcare is an area of interest to me. I think there is much work to be done in this area and I look forward to being part of the solution. —Social Worker

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“ **The Effect of Adverse Childhood Events on Health Moving Beyond Individual-Difference Variables | Christopher Mushquash**

An absolutely fabulous and unique presenter. Made you really think critically and self-reflect. —Family Physician

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“ **Parenting and Limit Setting as Agents of Change in Chronic Disease Prevention | Anne Wareham**

It was great to hear an expert in the field address the fact that parenting is difficult. No one ever always has the best or correct approach in situations and it is okay to be good enough as a parent. I think this is something that society needs to appreciate and be more compassionate about. The speaker did a great job talking about the subject. —Family Physician

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We would like to acknowledge the dedication and hard work of the planning committee, expert planning committee and advisory committee who worked closely on this conference:

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Bursary Support:

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Without the work and support of the conference committees, sponsors, and speakers, this conference would not have been possible. Thank you to all those involved in the planning and success of this conference.