

HEALTHY PARENTS, HEALTHY CHILDREN INITIATIVE EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Healthy Children and Families, Alberta Health Services (AHS) created *Healthy Parents, Healthy Children* (HPHC) print and online products in response to an identified need to have standardized, evidence-informed pregnancy, birth and early childhood provincial products. Two books were created for expectant parents, parents of young children up to six years of age, and healthcare providers (HCPs): *The HPHC: Pregnancy and Birth* and *HPHC: The Early Years*. HPHC print and online products provide readers with comprehensive and reliable information on best practices from pregnancy to parenting.

Initiative Goal and Objectives

The HPHC initiative goal was to develop, implement, disseminate and evaluate the standardized provincial product(s) for expectant parents, parents of children from birth up to six years of age and HCPs working with these populations. The initiative objectives were to:

- develop product(s) that respond to parental and HCP needs
- utilize the Health Product Development Model (HPDM) to develop, design and disseminate the HPHC products
- encourage parents and HCPs working with these populations to adopt the information available through the HPHC online and print products
- establish and incorporate findings from ongoing evaluation and quality improvement (QI) for enhancements to the HPHC product(s)

Product Development, Implementation, Marketing and Dissemination

An internal project team supported by provincial stakeholders developed online and print products which were available in June 2013. Promotion to both HCPs and the public was undertaken. A new system for provincial dissemination across Alberta was created. This included contact points through primary care, Community/Public Health Centres (C/PHCs) and other community service agencies.

Evaluation Objectives

The following primary objectives guided the evaluation and are reported in this executive summary. Additional objectives are described in the full HPHC evaluation report.

1. To assess the dissemination of the HPHC print and reach of online products.
2. To assess parent and HCP awareness, knowledge, utilization and satisfaction with the print and online products.
3. To examine the perceptions of parents who may be more vulnerable to poor health outcomes regarding the HPHC online and print products.

Methods

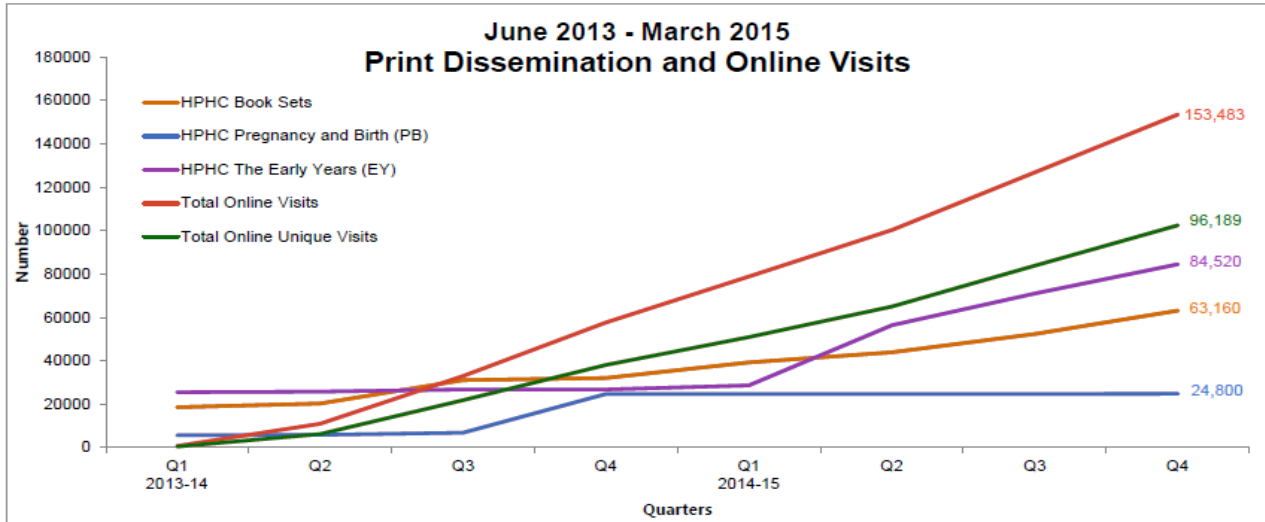
The HPHC evaluation used a complex, mixed methods approach which applied a variety of study designs and data collection approaches. The data collection approaches reported here are listed below:

- direct measurement of book dissemination and online resource data
- cross-sectional semi-structured surveys of Alberta parents and HCPs
- key informant interviews with HCPs working with populations vulnerable to poor health outcomes
- focus groups across the province with populations vulnerable to poor health outcomes.



Evaluation Findings

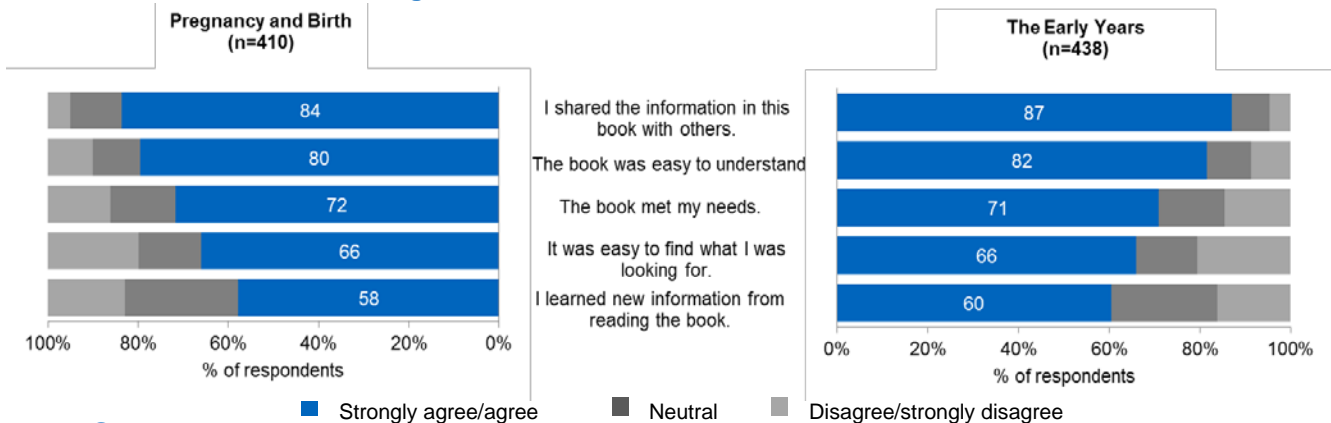
A total of 63,160 HPHC book sets, 24,800 *Pregnancy and Birth*, and 84,520 *The Early Years* books were disseminated across Alberta from June 2013 to March 2015. In addition, there were 96,189 unique online visits with 79% of visitors from Alberta. Estimates of the dissemination of the products indicated that if these books reached their intended audiences, 81% of the pregnancy cohort from the past 22 months would have received a book set or a *Pregnancy and Birth* book. Additionally, 45% of the parents of children from birth up to six years of age would have received *The Early Years* book. Approximately 25% of the intended audience of parents visited the online product.



Healthcare Provider Survey

A total of 503 electronic surveys were completed by HCPs who worked in public health, prenatal, postpartum and early childhood areas. The majority of respondents were aware (68%) or somewhat aware (22%) of the dissemination process. 65% of the HCPs who disseminated books reported *no difficulty* with the process. The most commonly cited difficulty with dissemination (about 35% of comments) was that parents had not received redemption cards from their primary care providers. HCPs described the inconvenience of the two-stage redemption process. A majority of HCPs were satisfied with the products and shared them with their clients.

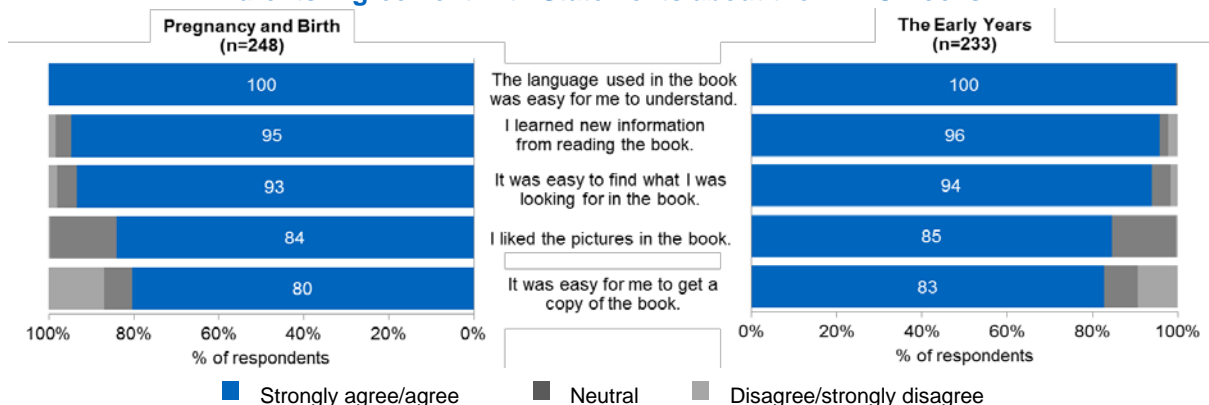
HCPs' Agreement with Statements about the HPHC Books



Parent Survey

In total, 465 parents of children from birth up to six years of age completed a survey. Eighty-six percent of surveyed parents had seen at least one of the HPHC products before. Two-thirds (65%) of all parent respondents received print copies of the complete set of two books or at least one of the HPHC books (*Pregnancy and Birth*, and/or *The Early Years*). About 30% of parents had seen the online product. Parents were highly satisfied with the HPHC products.

Parents' Agreement with Statements about the HPHC Books



What Parents Like Most

“I was relieved to see all the information about how labour will proceed. When the actual labour started I knew what to expect.”

“Pictures about how something works were easy to understand.”

I love to read about children(‘s) milestones. It’s something interesting and what I enjoy with these books.”

What Parents Like Least

“Speaking about giving formula negatively. Breastfeeding is obviously preferred; however, some people have no choice but to formula feed.”

Sometimes I found it hard when I was looking for something specific. Sometimes very opinionated, it should say this is what is recommended because at the end of the day mothers know best.”

Evaluation among populations vulnerable to poor health outcomes

Part of the evaluation was to examine the perceptions of parents from populations who may be more vulnerable to poor health outcomes regarding the HPHC products. Specific populations included: Aboriginal, including First Nation and/or Métis parents; new Canadians; pregnant or parenting teens; low income families; and Low-German-speaking (LGS) Mennonites. Twelve HCPs who worked directly with one of the identified targeted populations were purposefully selected to participate in key informant interviews. A total of seven focus groups were held across Alberta with expectant and parents with children from birth up to six years of age who attended existing parenting groups or programs that specifically served one of the target populations. There were 74 participants who attended the groups.

Themes arising from the interview and focus group data:

Impressions of the current HPHC products: All parents reported liking the books and commented on how helpful the photos and illustrations were in the books.

Topics important for these unique populations and missing from HPHC:

Parents and key informants identified issues and concerns that remained unaddressed in the book: Adoptions and navigating child services, multi-family housing and parenting large families, and parenting benefits and subsidies.

To translate or not to translate: There were mixed feelings from Aboriginal groups, new Canadians and LGS Mennonite groups about translation of the books. Most felt that simple English would be better because: it would help them practice English; they don’t read their first language well; and they don’t know the vocabulary for pregnancy and parenting topics in their first languages. Some new Canadians felt that translation might help, but that more pictures and plain English would address their needs.

Dissemination strategies: Participants provided a number of excellent suggestions for locations to disseminate the products.

What Unique Groups said about HPHC















“[The books] are exactly like what it should be and how it should look.”
[Focus Group Participant]

“English is the best. Simple, basic English with pictures.” [Key Informant]

“In Aboriginal homes, there are multiple families living in one home. This book represents one, single family view on a family.”
[Key Informant]

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Overall, the HPHC products were received well by parents and HCPs. There are some improvements to consider in the dissemination of the books, to enhance their user-friendliness among HCPs, and to the content, based on parent suggestions.

Topic	Recommendation	Supported by Universal Population Results	Supported by Vulnerable Population Results
Health Product Development Model	Further refinement of the HPDM (e.g., developing guidelines outlining the outcomes for each phase of the model and supporting tools) for future products.	Internal Recommendation	
HPHC Product Dissemination	Continue communication efforts of the dissemination and ordering processes of print products to HCPs and the dissemination process to parents.		
	Consider expanding the definition of HCP or the sites for dissemination to include areas where care providers work with parents outside of the healthcare system. This may include social workers, pharmacists and those working with teens.		
	Continue to increase the number of locations disseminating the products and reduce restrictions, allowing providers to use their preferred dissemination process (e.g. providing books or redemption cards).		
	Continue to increase awareness among parents and HCPs on how to access and use the online product.		
HPHC Product	Continue with the ongoing content review process and incorporate parent suggestions where feasible (e.g., incorporating more pictures and images; parental anecdotes and case studies; using inclusive language and tone in recommendations, especially regarding breastfeeding/formula feeding; improving the usability of the index and glossary; adding more space for note taking, etc).		
	Continue with the ongoing content review process and incorporate HCPs suggestion where feasible (e.g., developing quick-reference tools [one-page sheets and/or bookmarks] of the HPHC content for HCP use; adding tabs to print product chapters; creating a frequently-asked-questions document; developing key messages).		
	Continue with enhancements to the online product including improvements to the search ability, functionality and interactivity of the product.		
	Continue to ensure and expand the use of plain language and images to express information.		
Social Media Campaign	Examine the cost effectiveness, including staff time, of using the various marketing strategies to drive users to the online product.	Internal Recommendation	
	Consider developing a multi-year engagement strategy for future campaigns, rather than a short-term strategy.		

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