



Ontario Public Health Association
 l'Association pour la santé publique de l'Ontario
 Established/Établi 1949

The mission of OPHA is to provide leadership on issues affecting the public's health and to strengthen the impact of people who are active in public and community health throughout Ontario.

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Constituent Societies

Association of Ontario
 Health Centres (AOHC)

Association of Public Health
 Epidemiologists in Ontario (APHEO)

Association of Supervisors of
 Public Health Inspectors of Ontario
 (ASPHIO)

Canadian Institute of Public Health
 Inspectors (Ontario Branch) (CIPHIO)

Community Health Nurses'
 Initiatives Group (RNAO)

Health Promotion Ontario (HPO)

Ontario Association of Public
 Health Dentistry (OAPHD)

Ontario Association of Public Health
 Nursing Leaders, (OAPHNL)

Ontario Dietitians in Public Health
 (ODPH)

Ontario Society of Physical Activity
 Promoters in Public Health (OSPAPPH)

Charitable Registration
 Number 11924 8771 RR0001

May 3, 2018

Minister of Health and Long-Term Care
 80 Grosvenor Street
 10th Floor, Hepburn Block
 Toronto, Ontario M7A 2C4

Re: Immunization Education – ISPA Immunization Education Module

Dear Minister:

I wanted to draw your attention to some baby feeding images being used in a ministry video, explain our concerns with these images and offer some ideas about ways your ministry could help promoting breastfeeding and consistency with the World Health Organization's Baby Friendly Initiative.

I am writing on behalf of The Ontario Public Health Association (OPHA) Breastfeeding Promotion Network. Our group consists of public health professionals who work collaboratively to promote and support breastfeeding in Ontario by advocating for evidence-based practice and healthy public policy, specifically, the Baby-Friendly Initiative (BFI).

BFI is a World Health Organization and United Children's Fund (UNICEF) best practice initiative that helps to protect, promote and support breastfeeding in order to strengthen maternal and child health. Implementation of BFI is promoted by Health Canada and the majority of Ontario Health Units have received this designation.

BFI and best practice require that breastfeeding is recognized as the biological norm and that breastfeeding is promoted as normal and easy. Unfortunately, products and images that depict artificial feeding undermine breastfeeding as the normal way to feed a baby.

We noticed in your video that the English version of the ISPA Immunization Education Module for families who do not plan to vaccinate shows a parent bottle feeding a baby. We are concerned about this image as it can be interpreted as normalizing bottle feeding. In addition, many public health units, hospitals and community health centres that have received or are working towards BFI designation will not be able to show the video in its

entirety. For organizations to receive this prestigious BFI designation, they cannot use resources that normalize bottle and formula feeding.

We understand it is challenging to alter or change a video once it has been released, however, we encourage you to consider our feedback should you be able to update this video at a later date. We commend your efforts to inform vaccine-hesitant parents to consider the important practice of protecting children from infectious diseases.

Many organizations have implemented a policy and a checklist to ensure their resources and online messages promote breastfeeding and consistency with BFI best practices. I have attached a sample checklist that could be adapted for your own organization's use. If you have any questions or would like further support to create a policy, our network would be happy to help. I can be reached via email at heather.lawson@healthunit.ca or 1-800-563-2808 ext. 5407.

Sincerely,



Heather Lawson RN, BScN, BEd | Public Health Nurse
On behalf of the OPHA Breastfeeding Promotion Network

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CC Jean-Claude Camus | Assistant Deputy Minister, Communications and Marketing Division