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To be listed on the Community Services
 Agenda, 3 August 2000

DATE 21 July 2000

TO/DEST. Co-ordinator
 Community Services Committee

FROM/EXP. Medical Officer of Health

SUBJECT/OBJET **HEALTHY BABIES, HEALTHY CHILDREN – FUNDING
 UPDATE, JULY, 2000**

BACKGROUND

Early childhood experiences make a critical and long-term difference in children's health and well-being during childhood and as adults. Healthy Babies, Healthy Children is a prevention/early intervention program designed to give children a better start in life. It is a joint Ministry of Health (MOH) and Ministry of Community and Social Services (MCSS) initiative under the direction of the Office of Integrated Services for Children. Healthy Babies, Healthy Children is intended to augment and strengthen existing services for families and children in the province of Ontario. The revised Mandatory Health Programs and Services Guidelines for Boards of Health include the goals, objectives and program requirements of Healthy Babies, Healthy Children. Planning for this program is linked with the MCSS initiative *Making Services Work for People*.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

In July 2000, the Health Department was notified by the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care that the funding for the Healthy Babies, Healthy Children program in 2001 will be \$2,870,797. This is an increase from the 1999/2000 budget of \$383,149. The Department was also informed that the pro-rated funding for the nine months remaining in 2000 will be \$2,153,098. The program will now use a calendar year for budget purposes.

CONCLUSION

Identifying young children who are at risk of poor social, emotional, cognitive and physical health and intervening as early as possible can improve the child's life prospects. In many cases, severe problems can be prevented if professionals and other service providers who have contact with children and families intervene early to provide supports. This ongoing funding will allow us to provide a comprehensive early intervention program to pregnant women and families of infants and young children.

*Approved by
Robert Cushman, MD, FRCPC*