

# HEALTHY START FOR MOM & ME

...and family too!

Reaching  
out to  
expectant  
and new  
families  
in big and  
small ways

**ANNUAL REPORT | 2014-2015**

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“THIS IS THE ONLY GROUP SAFE ENOUGH FOR ME TO CRY”  
a participant said this year...

In January 2015 Healthy Start completed 18 years supporting healthy babies and families as a dependable presence in 8 neighbourhoods, reaching challenged, isolated and resilient families.

## FROM THE BOARD CHAIR AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

**It was another full and purposeful year at Healthy Start:**

- so many participants and babies at prenatal and postnatal groups in 8 locations
- great breastfeeding initiation
- extra support to families through one-on-one contacts at home or other venues
- set of 3 breastfeeding posters made - enthusiastically coordinated by dietitian Karen
- production of teaching resources for sister Healthy Baby programs - Cheryl, Tara, Karen
- took part in Giving Tuesday, tried Mobile Giving (text donations) - thanks, Monique Everton
- 3rd year with the midwife research project (PIIPC- Partners in Inner-city Integrated Prenatal Care)
- continued involvement with Dr. Bob Schroth's child dental research with newcomers
- ongoing connections with community folks who quilt, make blankets and layettes and let us bring the beauty of the handmade to families
- a year-end office move to bright, renovated space for our valued staff and resources - thanks for the beauty and design to Laney May/Stewart and to our welcoming landlord group at the IBEX Centre

**Healthy Start is a significant community undertaking** with basic, important principles and SO many key interconnected relationships and details that make it work. Founded on the understanding that poverty, isolation, barriers to information and impacts of residential schools for our aboriginal neighbours are profound, Healthy Start's work requires profound, consistent attention.

The staff know well the details of a **travelling road-show weekly, monthly, yearly**. Team partners that include nurses, midwives, dietitians as well as childminders, food prep volunteers and interpreters add their spirited presence and assistance year-round too in a **collaboration that might look simple but isn't - yet it works. It always seems to work**. Participant feedback is heartwarmingly consistent in its appreciation for the opportunity to learn in their neighbourhood and be treated with welcome and respect.

We thank Knox United Church for housing the Healthy Start office for over 15 years; it was an intriguing and helpful time in both our histories. We are not gone, as our groups for newcomers to Canada continue in the Knox basement, a Central Park gathering place. On another note of change and loss, we faced the reality of closing the Weston site in July 2014; the few participants easily transferred to other groups.

Great thanks are owed to our excellent staff, team partners and board of directors. Special thanks to new, generous corporate donors - **Wawanesa and iQMetrix** - and to many new and continuing individual donors. This support is so meaningful and is an important addition to operational funding from 2 levels of government.

**Thanks to ALL. A great start for a baby and its family is a belief in our shared future.**



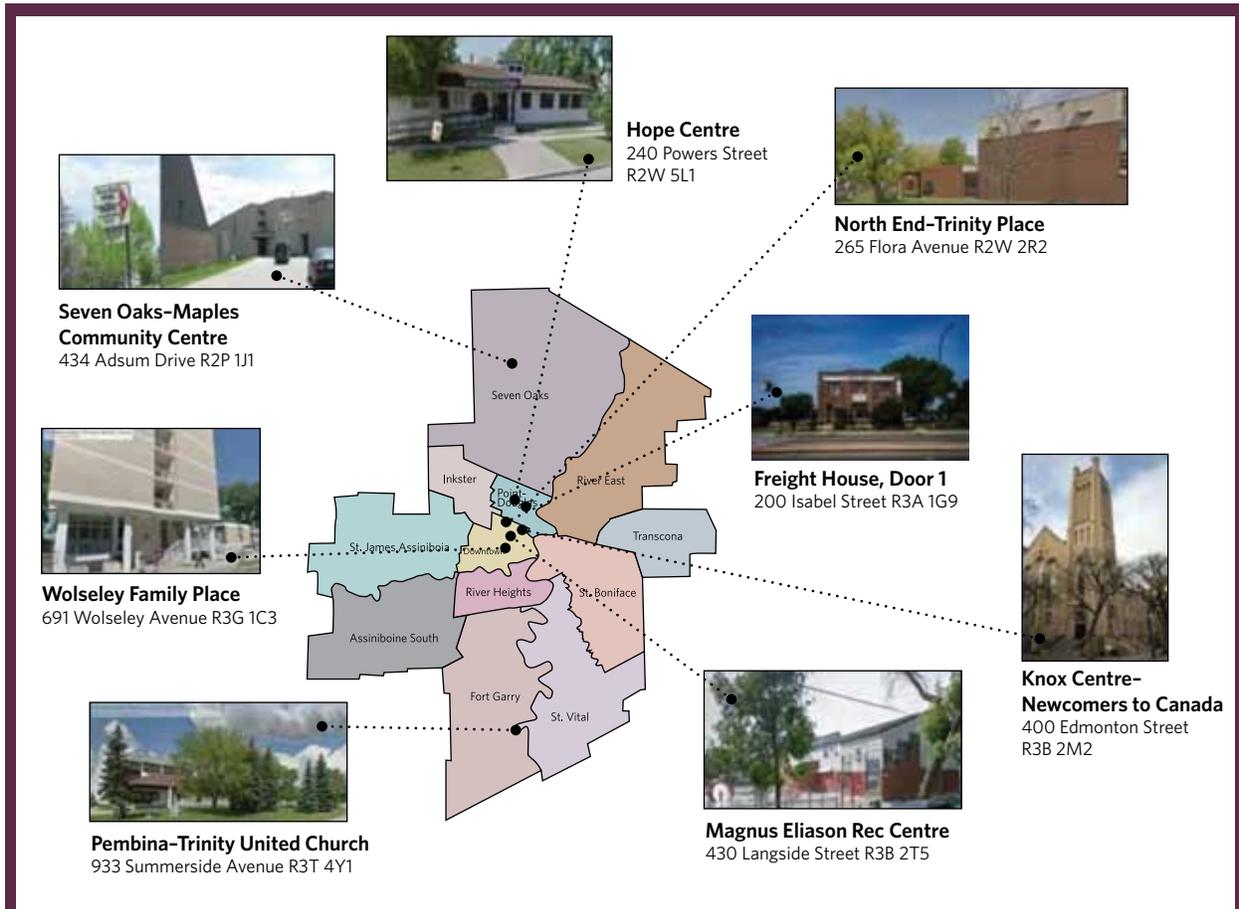
**HELEN QUINN**  
Board Chair



**GAIL WYLIE**  
Executive Director

**HISTORY** We started with a lively community development process funded by the Canada Prenatal Nutrition Program in 1995; it yielded a model for outreach via neighbourhood sites and personnel contributions from public health nurses and dietitians. A 1996-97 training program put together with Red River College and Taking Charge produced our first 3 outreach workers. Prenatal groups phased in at 8 neighbourhood locations starting in January 1997. Manitoba provincial funding in 1999 enabled the launch of postnatal "Baby Steps" groups. Dietitians of Canada sponsored us at the beginning. Healthy Start incorporated in 2004 and became a registered charity in 2005. Mothers who had lived in poverty and been involved in the planning process gave us our name. The & (instead of "and") in our name is intentional and meant to suggest informality.

# HEALTHY START GROUP LOCATIONS



**Drop-by groups (NO WAITING LISTS) start relationships that result in many other connections with families. One-to-one visits supplement groups.**

## SOME STATS

- 1363 individual women (not including partners, dads, children, babies) were involved this year
- 402 group sessions held
- 52% of participant women were newcomers to Canada, 32% were Aboriginal, 15% other
- 16 languages were interpreted at the Knox newcomer groups
- 90% of participants who gave birth initiated breastfeeding!
- 6.8% low birth weight rate, including twins – a positive outcome for our population
- 2550 ready-to-cook Meal Bags compiled with help from volunteers (for group snacks & for families to buy for \$1.50)
- 2,880 volunteer hours (1232 from nutrition students & est. 1650 from others) or equivalent to 1.6 staff
- 9,400+ healthy low-cost meals served to moms, accompanying partners or family, children
- 20 public health and community nurses, 5 midwives, 7 dietitians and 7 outreach workers make up 16 current teams plus one of our dietitians contributes services to the Adolescent Parent Centre Healthy Baby team

**“ALL TITLES (and descriptors) SUCH AS DOCTOR, HOMELESS, ETC. ARE LEFT AT THE DOOR. THIS IS THE BEST THING”** says a staff member.

**TUNA AND POWER:** A mom told us she hated tuna but watched how to make tuna cakes with interest. Now she makes them at home and the whole family loves them. She said she **“didn’t know how much power and joy she would find in the kitchen”**. Why “power”? Because, she explained, the cooking tips and demonstrations at the group gave her both **TOOLS and CONFIDENCE**.

## FOOD IS IMPORTANT AND EMPOWERING



From a pregnant participant: **“I’ve cut back on pop and caffeine because of what I’ve learned here.”**

A mom bought and made a Healthy Start pizza Meal Bag (\$1.50) – a first. **Her family loved it even though it had whole wheat flour!** The ready-to-cook Meal Bags always seem to bring positive responses about skill.

A dad noted that the **Pregnancy Journal families can make at group is a great keepsake**. It includes a photo of the pregnant participant - often the only one she ever has as reminder.

A participant filed taxes for the first time in 5 years because of the encouragement she received to do so. **It was a start to getting life in order for the baby.**

**I came because I don’t want my baby to be apprehended.** (Not mandatory, but free will, thinking ahead.)

On being asked about a promise they want to make to their baby:

- **I will my baby the life I never had** (repeated often)
- **I will always tie her shoes** (from a dad)
- **I will breastfeed as long as I can**

An inner city dad told the team **“I learn so much every time I come to this group.”** (Common feedback.)



People report tasting and liking foods they’ve never had, such as **kale salad, yogurt, beans, avocado, tofu...** They love learning to offer such things to baby too.

The milk and egg coupons are a big draw and matter...

Prenatal vitamins too.

**So much more happens when practical support is offered first.**

A participant learned how to **chop and cook broccoli** after seeing a demonstration by the dietitian. Before this she avoided broccoli at the store. Now she buys it, makes it **and the kids love it.**

## LOOKING AHEAD TO A NEW BABY - PARTICIPANTS’ STRENGTHS, OPENNESS AND HOPE IMPRESS AND HUMBLE US

A pregnant participant opened up to our outreach worker about using drugs, having a prior baby apprehended at birth and about dealing with addictions.

**They had an honest, open discussion about drugs, getting clean and preparing for her coming baby...**

She’s back in treatment.

# “...EARLY LIFE HAS A LONG REACH FORWARD.”

The Science of Early Child Development, June 2010



Poor or no housing, violence, unemployment, isolation, poor literacy, unreliable relationships, stress and more: these contribute to health inequalities. Everything Healthy Start does is geared to a practical understanding and response to such factors. **Our outreach staff and dietitians connect and support families with multiple issues**, as do the team nurses we join with...Improvement in low birth weight rates in babies and breastfeeding initiation are just 2 measurable outcomes of this wholistic focus.

**It's a gentle art to impart the science of early childhood...**In the informality of a group in a community centre, families absorb concepts of *epigenetics*, without the use of the word. The proven & measured important relationship of caregiver and baby is affirming to new parents. Early experiences of all kinds affect child brain development, mental and physical health and future relationships. Families learn this at Healthy Start. For some it is new and jarring.

## ADDRESSING HEALTH INEQUALITIES IN NEIGHBOURHOODS - AN ART AND SCIENCE

A newcomer participant calls her pregnant sister-in-law **in India** after EVERY group and translates the information provided at group. The Wednesday phone call is anxiously awaited. **So the word - the science - gets around...**



Newcomer women who used to turn their backs when birth control was discussed **now ask questions** about condoms and other methods.



The feeling of being powerless or unequal can be changed with kindness, suggestion of options, a job to do for a day, a nudge to explore something new or just making a phone call. Healthy Start outreach staff have many such stories.

**Mental well-being can be strengthened by the arts of conversation, listening, laughing, being taken seriously.**

This work is whites-of-the-eyes. **It's based on relationships, a relaxed style and respect for people and their circumstances.** The "science" (the information) falls into place and into minds when food and trust are foundational. (from a staff member)

**HE WHO HAS HEALTH HAS HOPE, AND HE WHO HAS HOPE HAS EVERYTHING.**

- MIDDLE EASTERN PROVERB

# A FEW MOMENTS IN THE HEALTHY START YEAR



A 3-poster set featuring participants was produced this year, with dietitian Karen's enthusiasm and persistence.



Make and Take - cooking and blanket-making at Knox, March 2015



Dietitian Cheryl with participant



Melanie, lugging supplies on the way to group



Groceries for group



Baby at end of group!



Nurse Gillian & HS outreach Michelle, Florena at MERC site



Accepting blankets from St. Mary's United Church: Gail, Executive Director, with Shirley



Lakewood Elementary School students knit baby hats for Healthy Start

# AGAIN, THANKS TO ALL. A GREAT START FOR A BABY AND ITS FAMILY IS A BELIEF IN OUR SHARED FUTURE.

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS** Helen Quinn (Chairperson), Tracy Cappello (Treasurer), Linda Uhrich (Secretary), Zobida Ambtman, Sheryl Bates Dancho, *Linda Abraham, Corinne Eisenbraun, Gail Wylie (ex-officio). Finished June 2014: Petrina Underwood*

## STAFF

*Outreach Staff (by years from longest to newest):* Michelle Ryyananen, Melanie Duncan, Tammy Hamelin, Florena Richardson, Nikki Black, Lisa Berezowski, Erin Young. *Left during the year: Beth Ann Mclvor (term) and Nancy McDowell-Kok*

*Community Dietitians:* Tara Hawking-Kreller, Karen Deeley, Cheryl Oliveira

*Program Coordinators:* Davorka Monti (Prenatal & Dietitian), Valeria Santermer (Postnatal)

*Administrative:* Gail Wylie (Executive Director), Bev Friesen (Reception & Office Assistant), Luchie Ocampo (Office & Data Manager), Mireille Noel (casual, data assistant)

**BOOKKEEPER** fee for service: Maryon Grant

**INTERPRETERS** Arek Wek, Birkity Mekonnen, Brekti Hagos, Dhan Mahat, Dongxia Yang, Ephemie Nyelele, Fahima Sharif, Halima Hanaf, Htooku Lerwah, Iftu Mohammed, Justine Kiwanuka, K'Dah Ra Wah, Lihui Guo, Marie Madeleine Uwimbabzi, Nadia Ourrhi, Nadia Yousofi, Nathalie Bibentyo, Olena Velynteichyk, Phyllis Pak, Rachana Lamichhane, Sahra Farah, Soyame Hunde

## PARTNERS IN PROGRAM DELIVERY

*Winnipeg Regional Health Authority* - Public Health Nurses involved at every Healthy Start site - sorry, too many to name and you change. Dietitians (Rosemary, Lana, Lavonne) and midwives (Kelly, Gina, Gordana, Dawn, Joan)

*Mount Carmel Clinic* - nurses Linda & Jan, dietitian Nina

*Wolseley Family Place* - Noelle, childcare coordinator

*Partners in Inner-City Integrated Prenatal Care* - research project of Dr. M. Heaman involving midwives at 5 HS groups

*Business partners re coupons* - Safeway/ Sobey's, Cantors Grocery, Neechi Foods, Zeid's Food Fares, Maples IGA (now closed), Red River Co-op; *Karam Shuker* - Data assistant, Pembina group:

## VOLUNTEERS (IN ADDITION TO THE BOARD)

*Food prep at groups:* Rumbidza Mundangepfufu, Mary O'Handley, Mihiri Witharana, Crystelle Dupont, Emmy Moreno, Tressa Alexiuk, Chase Butterfield, Dominique Chell, Ilana Minuk, Chantel Peters, Gemma Gibb, Glenna McClenahan, Jen Collins, Jennifer Hopper, Jing Ma, Johnson Hoang, Kari Manary, Kathryn Duffied, Kirsti Cordell, Lindsay Johns, Mariah Tremblay, Meagan Lilley, Rachelle Oliveros, Halee Pachal, William Zhang, Maureen Perlmutter & from WRHA: Michele Huynh, Maria Morales, Shalynn Van Solkema, Alyssa Hoadley, Chanelle Bohemier  
*Dietetic Intern (3 weeks):* Kerby Sylvester. *U of MB Nutrition:* Practice-based research course students' project group  
*Nursing students from Red River College* - twice during the year *Meal Bag assembly 2014:* Westgate Mennonite Collegiate students & teachers, WRHA & Community Venture volunteers, Monique Everton, Sue and Howie Simpson

**CHILDMINDERS AT GROUPS** Arfassa, Dhelal, Francine, Gremma, Kathy, Letekiden, Maria Theresa, Marjorie, Masoma, Oluwakemi, Paula, Sediqa, Sylvie, Thelma, Verna. Thanks to Magnus Eliason Recreation Centre and Wolseley Family Place for childminding.

## GOVERNMENT FUNDERS

Public Health Agency of Canada, **Canada Prenatal Nutrition Program** Healthy Child Manitoba, **Healthy Baby**

**DESIGN FOR NEW OFFICE: Lalena May (Laney Stewart)** - thanks for understanding our needs and creating beauty

**POSTER DESIGN AND PHOTOGRAPHY** (the new breastfeeding poster set): Cyndi K Design and Ker Stephens Photography

**DONORS & GRANTS** A very great thank you to **over 100 donors** this year. We haven't started listing names or had permission to do so. We know who you are (except those who texted) and appreciate each of you.

Donors via **Canada Helps, Mobile Giving & United Way** are so appreciated in addition to those who mail cheques.

The Winnipeg Foundation: YiP (Youth in Philanthropy) *Kelvin High School; The Mustard Seed Grant; and a grant to be reimbursed in 2015 Grant for materials from Manitoba Bed Bug Program ANONYMOUS generous foundation grant*

**EXTRA THANKS TO SPECIAL FRIENDS for generous financial support: Wawanesa, iQMetrix, DataConstruct**

**Drs. Celia Rodd & Atul Sharma, an unnamed foundation, Ruth & Peter Diamant, Lauranne & Henry Matheson, 2 anonymous donors, "what's-his-name & wife"**

## BUSINESSES THAT ASSISTED WITH DISCOUNTS, IN-KIND CONTRIBUTIONS OR OTHER HELP

Safeway, C.W. Braun Computer Services, Meyers Drugs, Nak Sales, Zeid's Food Fare, City of Winnipeg, DataConstruct, Assiniboine Credit Union - Common Share Vouchers, Design for All, UM Marketing, Hospital Connection (for hospital patient care products), Ddrops, CANU Canada (coupons for free children's shoes), Hello Websites, Modern Earth & Neovation

## COMMUNITY GROUPS WHOSE IN-KIND CONTRIBUTIONS HELPED

**THE PROGRAM THIS YEAR** ABC Quilting Group of Manitoba Prairie Quilters (such special baby quilts), Thelma Wynne Project of St. Matthews Maryland (wonderful layettes), Blanketing Manitoba, Koats for Kids, WRHA IMPACT (car booster seats), First Books Canada, Faith Lutheran Church c/o Susan Care (for lovely layettes), St. Mary's United Church (baby items), Clinic (condoms), Just Like New to You (HSC guild shop), Rachel's Garden project (veggies & flowers), Wolseley Family Place...

Others: *quilter Vivian Cameron*, who is in her late 80s and makes us lots of great baby quilts!

*Bruce Hanks* for some of the photos in this report!

Thanks to the MANY donors of baby clothes, toys and housewares for families who can use them.

*We have done our best to note many people and groups who make Healthy Start what it is. If we have left some out, we greatly appreciate you in spite of memory or record-keeping deficits.*



**Healthy Start for Mom & Me is a charitable organization**

funded by the Canada Prenatal Nutrition Program (Public Health Agency of Canada) and Healthy Baby (Healthy Child Manitoba) and supported by other grants and donations.

## DONATIONS ARE APPRECIATED AND TAX-RECEIPTABLE.

Material (in-kind) contributions of useful, gently-used, small items also welcomed. No stuffed toys please.

# FINANCIAL REPORT

These are excerpts from statements reviewed by Meyers Norris Penny and cover the major operations of Healthy Start for Mom & Me Inc. A complete report is available on request.

## Statement of Operations for the year ended March 31, 2015 (unaudited)

	Total 2015	Total 2014
<b>Revenues</b>		
Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC) - Canada Prenatal Nutrition Program (Schedule 1)	495,214	548,089
Healthy Child Manitoba - Healthy Baby (Schedule 2)	371,115	369,371
Poster Project (Schedule 3)	1,075	425
Donations and Other Contributions (Schedule 4)	51,846	22,453
Youth in Philanthropy (Schedule 5)	400	1,650
	<b>919,650</b>	<b>941,988</b>
<b>Expenses</b>		
Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC) - Canada Prenatal Nutrition Program (Schedule 1)	495,214	548,089
Healthy Child Manitoba - Healthy Baby (Schedule 2)	371,115	369,371
Poster Project (Schedule 3)	-	15
Donations and Other Contributions (Schedule 4)	21,091	6,875
Youth in Philanthropy (Schedule 5)	400	1,650
	<b>887,820</b>	<b>926,000</b>
<b>Excess of revenues over expenses</b>	<b>31,830</b>	<b>15,988</b>

## Schedule 1 - Public Health Agency of Canada (Canada Prenatal Nutrition Program) Revenue and Expenses for the year ended March 31, 2015 (Unaudited)

	2015	2014
<b>Revenues</b>		
CPNP - Grant revenue	495,214	486,877
CPNP - Resource grant	-	61,212
		<b>548,089</b>
<b>Expenses</b>		
Equipment	19,751	877
Evaluation	500	600
Materials	91,731	94,336
Other	17,964	29,029
Personnel	321,975	367,710
Rent and utilities	30,598	24,560
Travel	12,695	30,977
	<b>495,214</b>	<b>548,089</b>
<b>Excess of revenue over expenses</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>

## Schedule 2 - Schedule of Healthy Child (Healthy Baby) Manitoba Revenues and Expenses For the year ended March 31, 2015 (Unaudited)

	2015	2014
<b>Revenues</b>	<b>371,115</b>	<b>369,371</b>
<b>Expenses</b>		
Evaluation	11,186	10,854
Materials	18,376	20,257
Office	14,098	21,363
Other	11,224	15,101
Personnel	279,793	275,351
Rent and utilities	27,307	18,410
Travel	9,131	8,035
	<b>371,115</b>	<b>369,371</b>
<b>Excess revenue over expenses</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>

## Statement of Changes in Net Assets For the year ended March 31, 2015 (Unaudited)

	Unrestricted	Reserve fund	2015	2014
<b>Net assets, beginning of year</b>	<b>33,000</b>	<b>77,832</b>	<b>110,832</b>	<b>94,844</b>
<b>Excess of revenue over expenses</b>	<b>31,831</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>31,830</b>	<b>15,988</b>
<b>Transfers</b>	<b>(31,830)</b>	<b>31,830</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Net assets, end of year</b>	<b>33,000</b>	<b>109,662</b>	<b>142,662</b>	<b>110,832</b>