



Atlantic Summer  
Institute on  
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Canada atlantique

## Posterboard Presentation

### ***Loving Care: The Development of a New Public Health Parenting Series for Parents with Children from Birth to Three Years***

#### **Presenters**

Jennifer MacDonald and Trudy Reid

#### **Description of Presentation**

Parents often struggle in making decisions about their children's and family's health. A multi-disciplinary Working Group, made up of Nova Scotian health and family support professionals, worked together to establish the needs of parents and consult parents in the development process for 2 booklets of a 4 part age-paced parenting series. The booklets were written and designed to reach families facing challenges. The booklets, entitled, Loving Care are a public health resource developed in Nova Scotia for Nova Scotian families. Loving Care is written at a reading level that reflects the Atlantic Canada results from the International Adult Literacy Survey. The books have been written and designed to be easy to read, understand and use.

Many Nova Scotian parents focus tested the booklets – 10 focus groups in total. These 80 parents represented our parent experts. Parents from many different backgrounds participated: Aboriginal, Black-Nova Scotian, Acadian, newcomers, LGBT, adoptive, single parent-led, young, on limited incomes. A number of health professionals were consulted to ascertain the evidence behind the information in the booklets. There were 10 individuals on the working group, and about 12 content experts consulted. A plain-language writer was contracted to work in consultation with the working group. The course of the project has been about three years and it continues until we're finished the final two booklets.

What has resulted in the project is a comprehensive series of booklets that was written using the principles of plain



Jen Macdonald, MHSc., is a health educator with the NS Department of Health Promotion and Protection. She supports public health's program areas of family health and communicable disease prevention and control. Her past work involved assessing Canadian research on the mechanisms through which income and income inequality affect population health. She also has worked in the area of building organizational and community capacity in health promotion information and knowledge exchange amongst health promotion practitioners and health intermediaries.

Trudy Reid, BSCh, PDt., is a health promotion coordinator in chronic disease prevention with Public Health Services in Amherst, Nova Scotia. She is a professional dietitian with experience in health promotion resource



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language and in a parent capacity building approach. These resources reflect a desire to move away from a prescriptive approach towards one that encourages families to respond to their baby's cues. The Loving Care books incorporate key Public Health evidence-based messages. Focusing on attachment parenting, the booklets include health promotion and disease and injury prevention messages that help parents make their own decisions about their family's health. The resulting parenting series treats parents as experts in decoding their baby's cues, making decisions, and relying on the social capital that exists within their own communities.

development and supporting participatory research work with families. She has experience as a nutritionist with the Canada Prenatal Nutrition program at Maggie's Place Family Resource Centre and as a Public Health Nutritionist with Healthy Eating Nova Scotia. Some of her past involvement has been with the Provincial Committee and Cumberland Network of the Breastfeeding and Baby Friendly Initiative, and with the Nova Scotia Food Security Steering Committee.

### ***How you will benefit***

- Learn the process we took to develop a provincial parenting series using a strengths-based, capacity building approach.
- How to apply population health thinking to written texts used for a broad audience.

### ***Handouts***

Available during the presentation

### ***Resources***

- To order the resource on line for use outside Nova Scotia: [www.gov.ns.ca/snsmr/publications](http://www.gov.ns.ca/snsmr/publications)
- To view/ download the resource on line: [www.gov.ns.ca/hpp](http://www.gov.ns.ca/hpp)
- To request person to adapt or print large quantities: [healthpromotion@gov.ns.ca](mailto:healthpromotion@gov.ns.ca)

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