

A CICH profile: Health and development in the early years ^[1]

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Abstract

The early years (ages 0-5) are a time of rapid growth and development. Creating the best possible environment for children to develop is important and a responsibility we have as a society to ensure strong and healthy children grow into healthy adults. Prenatal exposure to positive or negative influences could impact birth outcomes, which is why education and care for pregnant mothers is so important. Where young children grow up makes a difference too; children with access to healthy food, physical activity, quality education, health care and positive parenting tend to be healthier and better equipped for the challenges they face growing up. The following module describes Canadian children aged 0-5 and their families including who their parents are, where they live, socio-economic issues they face, family structures they are part of, community supports and challenges, health services they can access, the impact of the environment on their health and developmental outcomes. Creating a healthy, positive start for every Canadian child needs to become a priority: an investment in children is an investment in the future.

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