



# The Windsor-Essex County Health Unit brings you **OFF TO A GREAT START!**

Early Learning Professionals, like you, spend a great amount of time with the children you work with. This makes you a positive influence in their lives and a significant role model for their parents.

The young children you work with are at a critical period in their development. Many researchers have identified birth to age six as the most important developmental phase. It sets the stage for a child's success in school as well as into adulthood. By being a positive influence, you help children get *Off to a Great Start*.

To help you with your work, the Off to a Great Start newsletter has been developed for you, the Early Learning Professional. We want to keep you up-to-date with new and current information about the Early Years. This convenient newsletter will be available quarterly along with regular e-mails. Visit our new website, [www.offtoagreatstart.org](http://www.offtoagreatstart.org).

There is even a section just for you! Click on "Early Learning Professionals" from the homepage. You will be able to register your e-mail address to automatically receive newsletters and regular e-mails.

The website has current information and resources for you to use as well as a listing of our services and upcoming workshops. You will learn many new things that will help you at work and at home. Spread the word about our programs and share what you learn with colleagues and parents.



## Healthy Bodies Physical Activity Everyday

Regular physical activity is important for the healthy development of young children and has many benefits:

- **Physical** – maintains healthy weight, enhances muscle development and coordination.
- **Academic** – increases concentration, improves memory, enhances creativity.
- **Emotional** – improves self esteem, improves ability to handle stress.
- **Social** – teaches life and sport skills, provides opportunities to make friends.

All children should take part in daily physical activity. Toddlers need at least 30 minutes of structured daily physical activity and preschoolers need at least 60 minutes. Also, all children need a lot of unstructured physical activity throughout the day. Structured physical activity doesn't have to happen all at once. Add together the time spent in short sessions throughout the day.

**TIP:** Try including a 2-5 minute physical activity break when you transition between activities. It will help children focus on the next task by getting rid of extra energy. For more information about physical activity and activity suggestions check out [www.offtoagreatstart.org](http://www.offtoagreatstart.org).

## Healthy Learning



### Building Resilient Children

People are resilient if they can cope with stress and life changing events. They are able to quickly “bounce” back to their regular personality and behaviour. To help children develop resiliency skills they need support, especially from at least one emotionally healthy adult in or outside the family. That adult may be you.

There are ways that you can help children bounce back from stressful events.

- Help them build emotional strength and problem solving skills.
- Encourage communication.
- Help them by role modelling a positive view of life.

A NEW workshop for parents, called Helping Preschoolers Develop Coping Skills for Life is being offered. The workshop will provide parents with techniques to help children become resilient. For more information, dates, locations, and times please check out [www.offtoagreatstart.org](http://www.offtoagreatstart.org) and click on workshops.

For more information on helping children become resilient, log onto <http://www.amhb.ab.ca/bouncebackbook>.

## Healthy Growth and Development

### Are parents asking you questions about growth and development?

NEW this Fall, the Windsor-Essex County Health Unit is offering developmental screening clinics for young children as part of the Off to a Great Start program. The clinics will be held at various Ontario Early Years Centres in the City and County.

Public Health Nurses will use the Nipissing District Developmental Screen and teach parents how to use them in the future. The tool has been validated by research, proving that it is effective in picking up problems in the development of young children. Encourage parents to check with their local Ontario Early Years Centre to make an appointment or call the Intake Nurse at the Windsor-Essex County Health Unit, 519-258-2146 ext. 1350 for more information.

Also, Invest in Kids is a national organization that has many resources, handouts, and activity suggestions related to growth and development. Check out their site, [www.investinkids.ca](http://www.investinkids.ca), for reliable information and new ideas.



### Upcoming EVENTS

#### Launch of the new Off to a Great Start Developmental Screening program!

Tell parents to check with their local Ontario Early Years centre to make an appointment or call the Windsor-Essex County Health Unit at 519-258-2146 ext. 1350.

#### Workshops

For a list of upcoming workshops visit [www.offtoagreatstart.org](http://www.offtoagreatstart.org).

### Do you have questions you'd like answered?

For more information contact the Windsor-Essex County Health Unit.

Phone: 519-258-2146 ext. 1350 (Intake)

Website: [www.offtoagreatstart.org](http://www.offtoagreatstart.org)

Address: 1005 Ouellette Ave.  
Windsor, ON N9A 4J8



Share this information with your parents.