



NORTHERN HEALTHY COMMUNITIES PARTNERSHIP

2019-2020 ANNUAL REPORT



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Message from the Co-Chairs

With the spread of COVID-19 reaching Saskatchewan at the beginning of 2020, many of us experienced significant changes in our daily lives that were necessary to protect the health of our communities. A pandemic like COVID-19 highlights the ways in which the conditions in which we spend our lives have a dramatic impact on our health and our risk of getting sick. Having a safe and uncrowded home, access to nutritious foods and good relationships with our family, friends and neighbours form the foundation of our wellbeing not only during a pandemic, but always.

Though the planning work of the Northern Healthy Communities Partnership (NHCP) also changed significantly as gatherings and learning events were cancelled in March, NHCP worked to influence the conditions in which we live, learn, work and play to build a stronger foundation for the wellbeing of northern Saskatchewan residents throughout the 2019-2020 year. We are pleased to share with you the Northern Healthy Communities Partnership (NHCP) 2019-2020 Annual Report, which summarizes the shared efforts and successes of our partner organizations over the year.

This year, the NHCP undertook a formal evaluation of the partnership, with the aim of understanding the value partner organizations realize as a result of their participation in NHCP. In addition, the evaluation sought to explore the effectiveness of the partnership and opportunities for improvement. Results of the external evaluation were very positive, with 100% of survey respondents indicating that their organization experienced some benefit from participating in NHCP and 90% indicating they were satisfied with the partnership's previous year's accomplishments. The conclusion that NHCP contributes to positive outcomes for its partners and the communities of northern Saskatchewan is one we are proud of and, we hope, a sign of good things to come.

We would like to thank the NHCP partner organizations and all those who have contributed to the work of the partnership. It is only through these contributions that we are able to complete our projects and work towards improved health for the residents of northern Saskatchewan.

As you read through the report, we hope you will be inspired to join us in creating supportive environments, developing personal skills and strengthening community actions so northern Saskatchewan residents have greater opportunities to make healthy choices.



Dr. Nnamdi Ndubuka
Medical Health Officer
Northern Inter-Tribal Health Authority



Dr. Rim Zayed
Medical Health Officer
Northern Saskatchewan Population Health Unit



Table of Contents

Message from the Co-Chairs	2
Northern Healthy Communities Partnership	4
NHCP Partner Organizations	4
Northern Healthy Communities Partnership Coordinator's Report	5
NHCP Partner Engagement	5
NHCP Recognition Awards	6
NHCP Partnership Evaluation	6
NHCP Action Team Reports	7
Active Communities Team.....	7
Babies Books and Bonding	9
Building Vibrant Youth.....	10
Healthy Eating Team.....	11
Northern Tobacco Strategy	12
2019-2020 NHCP Financial Report	13



Northern Healthy Communities Partnership

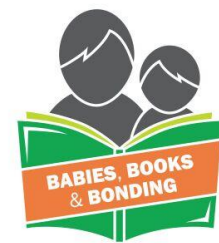
The Northern Healthy Communities Partnership (NHCP) is a network of organizations working proactively to improve the health of northern Saskatchewan residents. Through NHCP, partner organizations work collectively and collaboratively with local, regional, provincial and national stakeholders to achieve a greater impact for the populations they serve. As part of the NHCP Core Group, leaders, and managers from NHCP Partner Organizations meet quarterly to identify common challenges and select shared population health promotion priorities for northern Saskatchewan. The Core Group also provides guidance, strategic direction and support to the work of the partnership.

As part of NHCP Action Teams, professionals from across northern Saskatchewan and the province develop connections, motivation, and specialized tools to help them be more effective in their everyday work. The five NHCP Action Teams work in the areas of: promoting and enabling active living to maximize health for all ages and abilities; supporting early literacy and bonding to improve lifelong mental wellbeing; building resilient young people to reduce substance use and risk taking; fostering nutrition through healthy food environments, and; reducing commercial tobacco use while respecting Indigenous traditions. The Action Teams include representatives from NHCP partner organizations, who are responsible for contributing to the work of the Action Team and for leading the implementation of Action Team projects within their organizations and communities.

NHCP Partner Organizations

Athabasca Health Authority
 Kids First North
 Lac La Ronge Indian Band
 Meadow Lake Tribal Council
 Ministry of Government Relations
 Northern Inter-Tribal Health Authority
 Northern Lights School Division #113
 Northern Saskatchewan Population Health Unit
 Northern Sport, Culture & Recreation District

Peter Ballantyne Cree Nation
 Prince Albert Grand Council
 Saskatchewan Cancer Agency
 Saskatchewan Health Authority
 Saskatchewan Heart and Stroke Foundation
 Saskatchewan Parks and Recreation Association
 Saskatchewan Prevention Institute



BUILDING **V**IBRANT **Y**OUTH
 Northern Healthy Communities Partnership



Northern Healthy Communities Partnership Coordinator's Report

NHCP Co-Coordinators: Amanda Frain, Northern Saskatchewan Population Health Unit – Saskatchewan Health Authority; Kevin Mageto, Northern Inter-Tribal Health Authority

NHCP Partner Engagement

Partner engagement refers to the number of organizations actively participating in an NHCP action team. An example of an engaged partner would be one that has a representative who participates in an action team and carries out the action items assigned to them. In 2019-2020, the partner engagement (63.5%) was slightly higher than 2018-2019 (62%). Given that engagement has remained similar, and below the target of 70%, for the last five years, a closer look at the target will be examined in the next fiscal year to see its feasibility.

As the structure of the Saskatchewan Health Authority (SHA) continues to evolve, the NHCP had adjusted the way it tracks engagement of provincial health authority partner, with the former Mamawetan Churchill River Health Region replaced by the SHA's North-North East (NNE) area and the former, Keewatin Yatthe Health Region replaced by the SHA's North-North West (NNW) area. The Athabasca Health Authority remains unchanged.

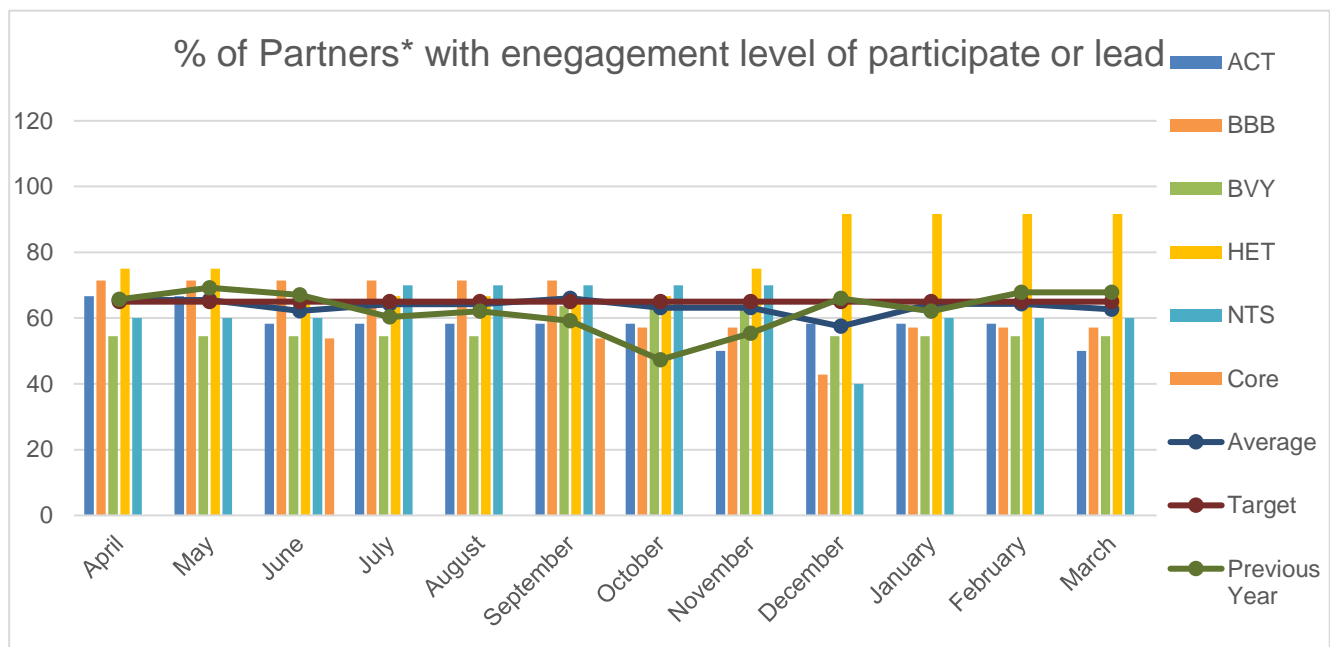


Figure 1. The percentage of partners with engagement levels of "Participate" or "Lead" in 2019-2020.



NHCP Recognition Awards

Working to improve the health of people in northern Saskatchewan by influencing the conditions in which they live, learn, work and play requires the coordinated efforts of many people. Healthy communities are built everyday by people who do ordinary and extraordinary things to be healthy and support the health of those around them. The NHCP Recognition Awards aim to acknowledge and celebrate those who make positive contributions to the health of their community.

Nominations are welcome for individuals who have made changes in their own life and are serving as a role model to others, or for an individual, group, organization or business that has helped make it easier for others in their community to lead healthier lives. Nominations can be submitted [online](#) by anyone. Award recipients receive a letter of thanks and a certificate recognizing their efforts to build healthier communities in northern Saskatchewan.

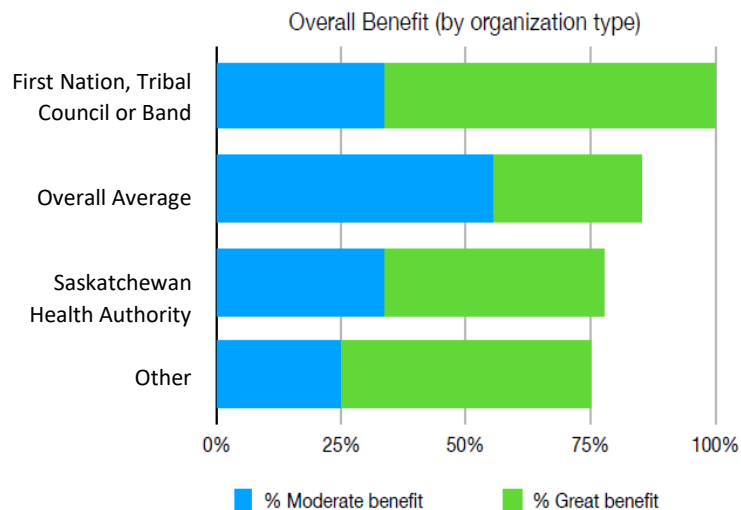


In 2019-20, a NHCP Recognition Award was provided to Jacquie Lim, in recognition of her leadership and contributions in support of early literacy, parent-child bonding and mental health in northern Saskatchewan as the chair of the Babies, Books and Bonding Action Team.

NHCP Partnership Evaluation

In 2019-20 the NHCP engaged Strong Roots Consulting to conduct an evaluation of the partnership. Using a mixed methods approach the evaluation sought to answer four questions:

- What value have NHCP partners realized from their participations in the partnership?
- To what degree have NHCP partners developed knowledge and skills, particularly as related to the social determinants of health?
- How effective is the partnership as a collaborative entity?
- What opportunities can be identified to improve how the partnership functions?



A survey of those involved with the partnership, found very high levels of satisfaction with the its previous years' accomplishments and with benefits to partner organizations, with greater satisfaction and benefit reported by respondents who have been involved with NHCP for a longer time. The survey also identified top five actions partner organizations have taken as a result of their participation in NHCP: created or modified messages around health and health promotion; learned about health-related services provided by other organizations; improved the quality of services; accessed health-related knowledge resources created by NHCP or other partners, and; worked cooperatively with organizations with whom previously we had rarely or never worked.

A small number of key informant interviews were conducted as part of the evaluation, to deepen understanding of survey results and identify opportunities for improving the partnership. Both survey and interview respondents spoke to the importance and value of having access to and being able to share NHCP resources in their programs and communities. Respondents also spoke to the value NHCP creates in fostering connections between individuals working in different organizations and communities, enabling team members to share the workload and to contribute to broader outcomes. Opportunities for improvement identified through the evaluation related mostly to the financial and human capacity of the partnership to support ongoing collaborative work, including the engagement of team members and partners.

Overall, respondents expressed satisfaction with the work of the partnership and the evaluation concluded that NHCP members have realized value from their participation, including contributions to positive outcomes for their organizations and the communities they serve.

“WE’VE GOT A LOT OF DIFFERENT PEOPLE WITH THE SAME GOAL AND WE’RE ABLE TO SPREAD THE SAME KIND OF WORK ACROSS THE BOARD SO IT’S STANDARD, WE’RE ALL SAYING THE SAME THING”

Interview Participant

NHCP Action Team Reports

Active Communities Team

Chair: Kevin Mageto, Northern Inter-Tribal Health Authority

The Active Communities Team (ACT) works closely with northern communities to encourage and integrate physical activity into the daily lives of all people, no matter their age and ability. In 2019-2020, the ACT continued work on its long-term goals of:

1. Growing a strong and purposeful ACT team
2. Influencing the social, built, natural and policy environments in northern Saskatchewan to be more supportive of physical activity
3. To broaden the definition of physical activity





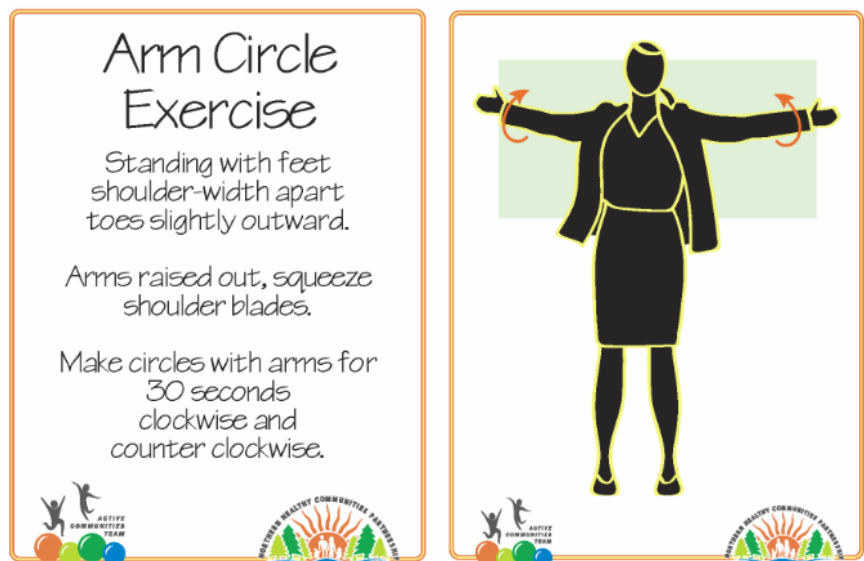
Members of the Active Communities Team during an in-person team meeting.

In 2019-10, the ACT continued efforts to expand and strengthen membership throughout northern Saskatchewan. The team welcomed new members from the Northern Lights School Division, Saskatchewan Cancer Agency and the Ministry of Government Relations. These new members will play a role in expanding the ACT reach to schools and colleges, address social determinants of health as they relate to chronic disease and exercise, as well as, help the team design projects in line with physical activity policies in Saskatchewan.

As part of its ongoing work to support increased physical activity within the workplace, the ACT continued distributing its [point of decision prompts](#) to northern Saskatchewan workplaces and schools. So far, more than 300 sets of points of decision prompts have

been distributed. The ACT also embarked on a project to create table tent cards that could be placed on desks and tables around the workplace. These cards would give workers ideas of activities to do around their workstations or challenge them to have more active meetings. The table tent cards will be published in the next fiscal year once the project is complete.

For the third year in a row, the ACT continued with its partnership with Saskatchewan Lacrosse Association (SLA) to reintroduce lacrosse to NCHP communities. Two lacrosse clinics were scheduled to take place in March of 2020. However, as with most projects and initiatives across the globe scheduled in March, the clinics had to be cancelled due to COVID-19. The team hopes to reschedule these clinics and schedule a number of additional clinics with various communities in conjunction with the SLA in the year to come.



Sample of draft table tent card design.



Babies Books and Bonding

Chairs: Jacqui Lim, Calyn Stange, Saskatchewan Health Authority

In 2019-20, NHCP's Babies, Books and Bonding (BBB) program distributed more than 3000 books to 17 community clinics, the largest number of books distributed in the last four years. This increase in distribution has been enabled in part by additional funding provided by the Northern Inter-Tribal Health Authority (NITHA) which has allowed for the maintenance of a more stable stock of books.

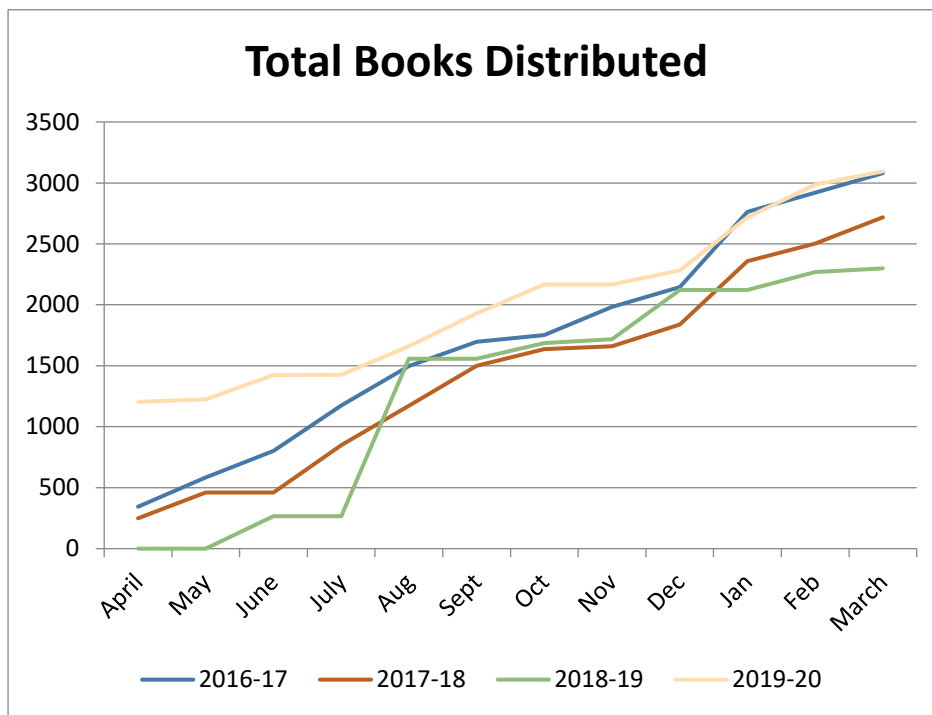


Figure 2. The number of books distributed to community clinics by fiscal year through the Babies, Books and Bonding program

Through its partnership with the University of Alberta, and with funding from Speech-Language and Audiology Canada, the BBB team completed a feasibility study of a drawing activity facilitated through preschools as a means of increasing children's oral language skills and parent engagement in school. Working with 25 families, the study investigated if a weekly activity had a positive effect on multiple oral language and early literacy measures. The findings of the study did not provide evidence for significant growth in language or literacy among the students who completed the six weeks of the talking and drawing activity, though they

were limited by a low participation rate and the small number of students who participated. Parent and teacher experience of conducting the activity was also assessed, with questionnaire results showing an overall positive experience for both groups. The study conclusions encourage preschool teachers to use similar activities that encourage students to draw and discuss their drawings in the classroom.



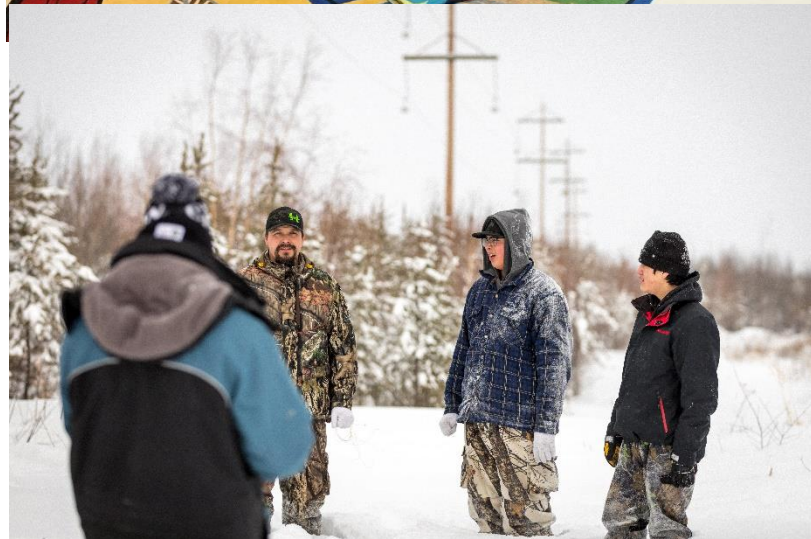
Building Vibrant Youth

Chair: Amanda Frain, Northern Saskatchewan Population Health Unit - Saskatchewan Health Authority

In 2019-2020, the Building Vibrant Youth (BVY) team worked to add two new stories of resilience building in northern Saskatchewan to its video series. Team members travelled to La Ronge, Stanley Mission, and Pelican Narrows to film youth-led initiatives that promote the resilience building factors of strong positive-relationships with non-parent adults and learning and participation in traditional and cultural practices. These protective factors for youth wellbeing are associated with reductions in risk taking behaviours like substance misuse and self-harm, and with increases in positive behaviours like leadership and academic achievement. Final videos will be released to the public via [NHCP's Facebook page](#) in 2020.

As part of their face-to-face meeting in December 2019, a small number of BVY team members made the trek to visit the Lac La Ronge Indian Band's Youth Haven to learn more about the youth and cultural programming offered at the facility on Bigstone Lake. Land-based programming for young people has been of particular interest in the last couple of years; this visit provided team members the opportunity to learn about one such program that has been in operation for nearly two decades.

Photos (top to bottom):
 Filming the Indigenous Spirits members sharing about the drum in the Lac La Ronge area; filming the youth as they set rabbit snares outside of Pelican Narrows as part of the youth mental health land-based program; the LLRIB's Youth Haven and members of the BVY team during their visit.



Healthy Eating Team

Co-Chairs: Audrey Boyer, Northern Saskatchewan Population Health Unit – Saskatchewan Health Authority; Carol Udey, Northern Inter-Tribal Health Authority.



During the 2019-2020 year, the Healthy Eating Team continued with projects to support healthy food environments in schools and stores, nutrition policy, gardening and standardized prenatal education. Stores continued to be encouraged to use the 'food of the month' posters and accompanying recipe cards. The gardening manual was updated with help of Orchid Horticulture. More baby cups were ordered and distributed across the north to promote the use of an open cup at six months of age.

Two workshops were held this year as part of the School Nutrition Mentoring Program. In its final year of funding, and without a mentor to take to schools, the team decided to build on the success of the previous 4 workshops. The La Ronge workshop hosted 11 participants and 4 facilitators, and the Prince Albert session hosted 26 participants and 7 facilitators. Many HET members participated in the planning and implementation of the workshops this year.

The Standardizing Prenatal Education Project saw the completion of the 5th of 5 presentations for prenatal classes. As well, three of the six planned in-person training sessions occurred before the COVID-19 disruptions, reaching 51 pre-natal service providers in the north-north west, Lac La Ronge and Prince Albert areas.

Looking ahead, the HET would like to have the five prenatal classes professionally recorded for virtual promotion to help improve access to the information. The prenatal workbook is also a priority to complement the work that has already been done to standardize prenatal education and tie it more explicitly to prenatal care. The gardening manual will continue to be adjusted for practicality in the north, and resources to promote healthy infant feeding will be updated. The HET is also exploring ways to promote their work on various platforms in light of the reduced in-person sessions.

Photos: Casey using an open cup for the first time, with help from her mom (top); school nutrition workshop participants and facilitators in La Ronge (middle) and Prince Albert (bottom).

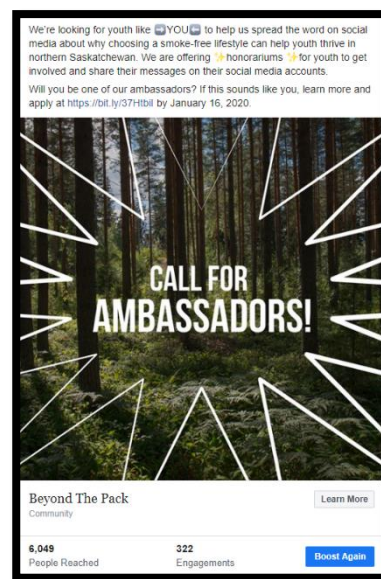


Northern Tobacco Strategy

Co-chairs: Amanda Frain, Northern Saskatchewan Population Health Unit – Saskatchewan Health Authority; Justina Ndubuka, Northern Inter-Tribal Health Authority.

With the help of a local teacher, in 2019-10 the Northern Tobacco Strategy worked to redevelop its Youth Tobacco Workshop into a series of curriculum-linked and classroom-ready unit and lesson plans about tobacco. Lesson plans and worksheets for grades 4 through 9 are finalized and available on the NHCP website, with a few more resources and promotional efforts to come in 2020.

In January 2020, NHCP’s Northern Tobacco Strategy (NTS) sought to recruit youth ambassadors to revitalize and expand the audience of its social marketing campaign Beyond the Pack. Though new activity brought traffic to the campaign page and recruitment efforts gained a lot of attention, building a successful relationship with a youth ambassador proved much more challenging than expected. Content continues to be posted to the page periodically and the team will reassess its efforts to reduce experimentation with commercial tobacco among northern Saskatchewan youth between 11 and 15 years old in the year to come.



Evaluation for the *Brief Intervention for Tobacco Cessation: Helping Pregnant and New Mothers* training shows that since the program’s launch, 71 individuals from 22 communities were trained to complete brief interventions with the pre and post-natal mothers in their communities. Survey results from training participants show notable increases in knowledge and skills to deliver brief interventions as a result of the training, and a sense of feeling prepared to do so. Results from follow up surveys suggest there may be some increases in providing brief interventions to new mothers following the training, however the number of responses is too few to draw any firm conclusions.

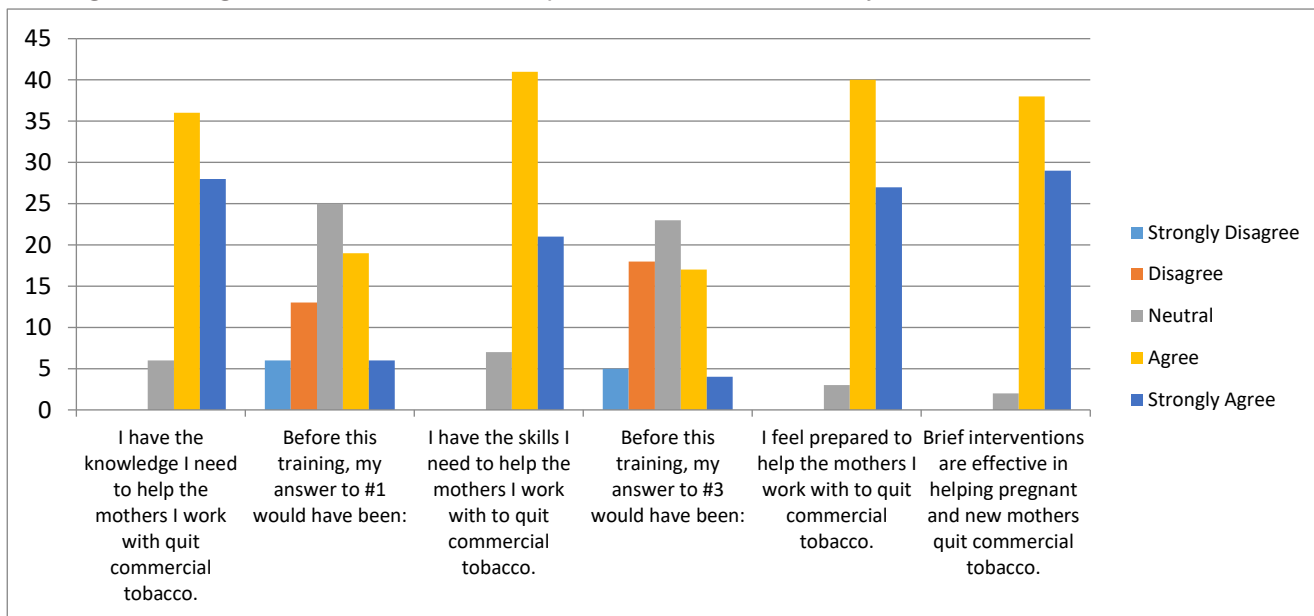


Figure 3. Evaluation results for Brief Intervention for Tobacco Cessation training learning outcomes.



2019-2020 NHCP Financial Report

Funding for the 2019-20 activities of NHCP came from the Saskatchewan Health Authority, the Northern Inter-Tribal Health Authority (NITHA), and the Saskatchewan Cancer Agency (SCA). A private donation was also received to fund a project to film readings of *Are You Hungry?* so that everyone may have access to fluent language speakers reading the story. Without the support of funders, NHCP's efforts to support population level improvements in the health of northern Saskatchewan residents would not be possible.

Northern Healthy Communities Partnership Financial Statement April 1, 2019 to March 31, 2020

Revenue			
	Budgeted/Planned	Actual/Received	Variance
SHA	\$70,450.00	\$74,369.28	\$3,919.28
SCA	\$17,480.00	\$17,536.73	\$56.73
NITHA	\$10,000.00	\$10,000.00	\$0.00
Other External	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00

Total Revenue	\$97,930.00	\$101,906.01	\$3,976.01
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Expenses			
	Budgeted/Planned	Actual/Spent	Variance
Active Communities Team	\$11,000.00	\$2,130.75	\$8,869.25
Core Group	\$2,500.00	\$0.00	\$2,500.00
Coordinator Projects	\$8,000.00	\$1,911.13	\$6,088.87
Babies Books and Bonding	\$21,000.00	\$17,155.43	\$3,844.57
Building Vibrant Youth	\$10,500.00	\$10,454.57	\$45.43
Healthy Eating Team	\$31,430.00	\$40,135.09	\$8,705.09
Northern Tobacco Strategy	\$9,750.00	\$8,413.65	\$1,336.35
Promotions and Media	\$3,750.00	\$1,204.35	\$2,545.65

Total Expenses	\$97,930.00	\$81,404.97	\$16,525.03
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Net	\$0.00	\$20,501.04	\$20,501.04
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