

Children's Health Services

Supporting Families from Pregnancy to School Age



PublicHealth

WELLINGTON-DUFFERIN-GUELPH

Stay Well.

Katrina Olson
Manager, Children's Health Services
June 3, 2026

Every Child Deserves the Best Start



Why Relationships Matter

- **The early years shape lifelong health**
- **During the early years:**
 - **Brains develop rapidly**
 - **Positive parent-child relationships build resilience**
 - **Connection protects against toxic stress**



Early Relational Health Matters.

Meet Sarah

- **First-time parent**
- **New to the community**
- **Excited – but overwhelmed**



Sarah Connects to HBHC

- **Midwife refers Sarah to the Healthy Babies Healthy Children (HBHC)**
- **She is connected to:**
 - A public health nurse (PHN) & family visitor (FV)
 - Free, personalized home visiting services
 - Trusted information & community resources

```
graph TD; A[Referral Sent] --> B[Initial Assessment]; B --> C[Home Visiting Program];
```

Referral Sent

Initial Assessment

Home Visiting Program



Pregnancy Support Preparing for Baby

The PHN and FV help Sarah:

- **Prepare for labour & birth**
- **Learn about infant feeding**
- **Build confidence as a new parent**
- **Connect with local supports**

Support After Birth

Postpartum Period

- After delivery, the PHN comes for a home visit
- Support includes:
 - Maternal mental and physical health support
 - Newborn care, including infant feeding and sleep
 - Reassurance





As Children Grow Early Childhood Support

As Sarah's child grows, new questions emerge.

HBHC Supports:

- Child Growth & Development
- Play-based learning
- Nutrition & feeding guidance
- Referrals to community services

Earlier Connection Leads to Stronger Outcomes

The team has worked to increase opportunities for families to connect earlier through:



In-person prenatal education
launched in partnership with EarlyON



Partnerships with Primary Care



Outreach with Community Agencies

How Families Access Support



- **Supporting Families Early Matters**
 - HBHC strengthens early relationships, confidence, and child development
 - Earlier connection helps families access support when they need it most
- **How families access HBHC**
 - Referrals from hospitals, physicians, midwives & community partners
 - Self-referral through WDG Public Health
 - Call **1-800-265-7293 ext. 7006**
 - Access the online referral form at: www.wdgpUBLICHEALTH.ca/hbhc

QUESTIONS?

