

Canadian Children's Environmental Health Partnership (CCEHP)

Developing a meaningful Partnership

Guiding Principles of the Partnership
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Partnership Terms of Reference

Founding Partners

Canadian Association of Physicians for the Environment (CAPE)
Canadian Child Care Federation (CCCCF)
Canadian Environmental Law Association (CELA)
Canadian Institute for Child Health (CICH)
Health Promotion and Environmental Protection Office, Toronto Public Health (HP&EPO)
Learning Disabilities Association of Canada (LDAC)
Pollution Probe Foundation
South Riverdale Community Health Centre (SRCHC)

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commons
group 

Guiding Principles

The American Academy of Paediatrics, the US National Academy of Sciences and Health Canada have found that children are uniquely susceptible to hazardous environmental exposures. Many of these exposures – exposures that may occur before conception and continue through late adolescence – can cause or contribute to disease and can disrupt development, learning and behaviour.

As a signatory to the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of the Child, Canada supports the basic right of children to the highest attainable standard of health and to healthy environments for play.

In light of the scientific findings of environmental risks to children and the legal and moral obligation to protect children from harm and ensure their rights, we unanimously support the following Principles:

- All children have the right to clean air, safe food and drinking water, and consumer and commercial products free of environmental health and safety threats.
- All children have the right to healthy homes, healthy childcare facilities, healthy schools and healthy communities.
- All children and adults have the right to know about proven and potential hazards to their environmental health and safety.

It is our mutual responsibility to protect these rights and to act with precaution on decisions that could affect children's health and development.

** adapted from the Partnership for Children's Health and the Environment in the US*

CCEHP Approach to Partnership

A group of 8 founding organizations and an expanding number of other groups are joining together to form the Canadian Children's Environmental Health Partnership (CCEHP). The CCEHP builds on the work of previous Canadian initiatives and the US Partnership. Its purpose is to facilitate a closer collaboration between health, environment and childcare professionals in order to coordinate activities, create efficiencies and build the capacity of partners with the goal of becoming more effective promoters of children's environmental health in Canada.

CCEHP has chosen an innovative collaborative model – a constellation model – that seeks to achieve the following:

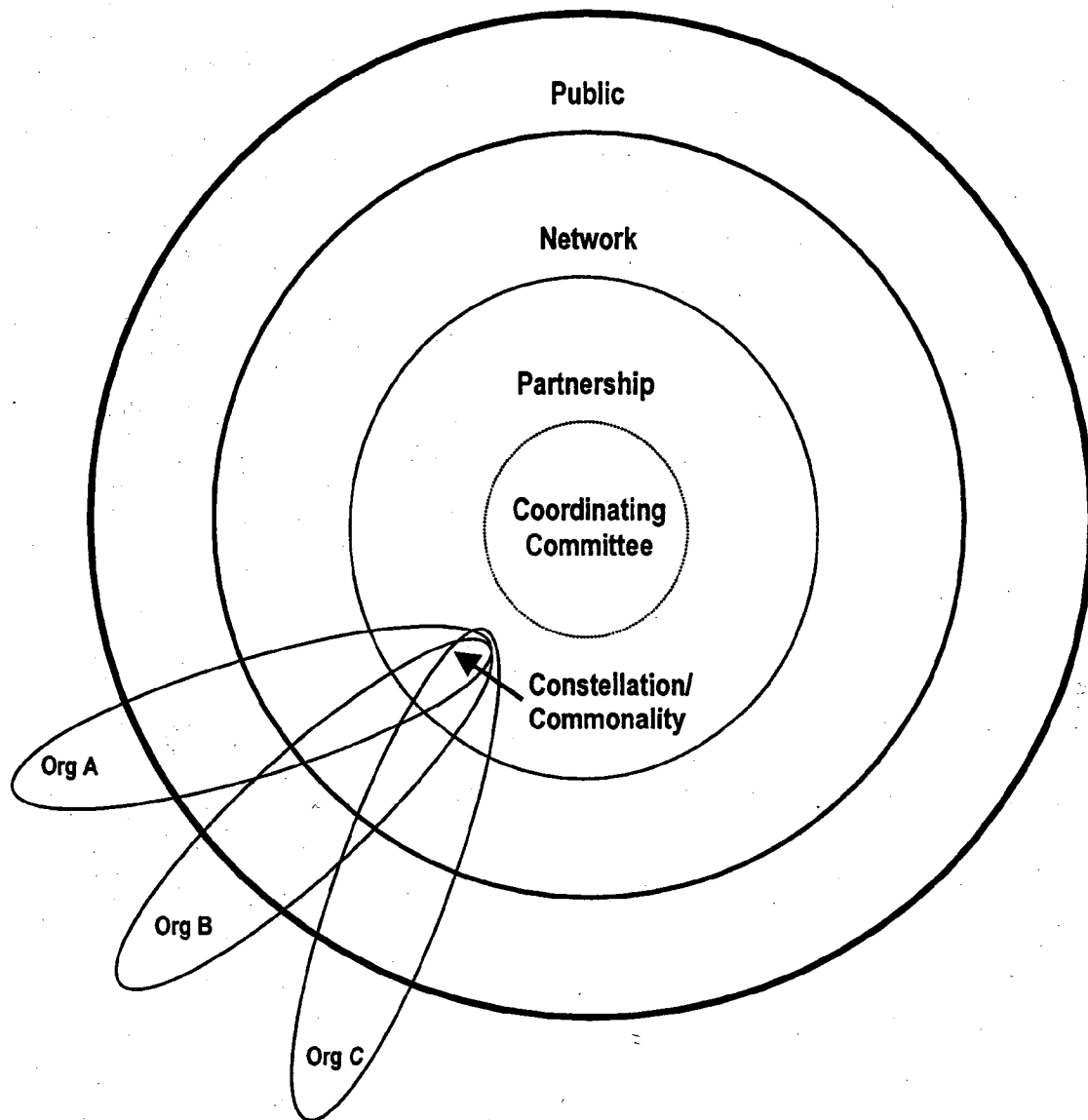
The Canadian Children's Environmental Health Partnership (CCEHP) is governed by a flexible form of partnership that enables organizations to work together in constellations on children's environmental health issues. The constellation model supports a partnership wherein leadership is 'balanced', the work is 'action-focused' and 'coordinated self-interest' is seen as the best way to secure resources, build on core competencies and create efficiencies while maintaining autonomy and carrying out our shared goal of improving the environmental health and safety of children in Canada.

The Constellation Model aims to embody the following characteristics:

- ❑ Exists to support the members of the partnership.
- ❑ Encourages an activity-lead approach to collaboration.
- ❑ Encourages leadership from different organizations depending on the issue area.
- ❑ Maintains the autonomy of the organizations to take on projects regardless of the partnership
- ❑ Assists partners to avoid duplication of efforts and competitive funding applications.
- ❑ Balances the load among partners, so that no one group does it all or can dominate the group.
- ❑ Avoids the creation of costly infrastructure by ensuring that resources go through and to the partners and not to an umbrella organization.
- ❑ Enables greater flexibility in working with a variety of funders.
- ❑ Leverages greater resources and reduced administration and costs through a collaborative approach to resource development.
- ❑ Focuses on the core competencies and builds on the existing resources of the partners.
- ❑ Is flexible and able to mobilize quickly around issues.
- ❑ Does not preclude an organization from taking on other initiatives outside the partnership.
- ❑ Builds the capacity of the partners.

A Coordinating Committee whose function is to coordinate action, develop shared voice, build capacity and support the CCEHP Guiding Principles facilitates the CCEHP. The real dynamic is in each of the activity-based constellations, which are self-governed but incubated and supported by the Coordinating Committee of the CCEHP.

CCEHP Constellation Governance Model



Legend

Public Target audience including parents, children, caregivers, decision-makers or the general public.

Network This is the expanded network and broader constituency. It includes professionals in the field, NGO's, health groups, government and stakeholders that are interested in children's environmental health.

Partnership - Responsible for leading and administering the initiatives and activities of the constellations. Partnership is dictated by the level of involvement.

Coordinating Committee = Responsible for facilitating the work of the Partnership and incubating the constellations. Will involve fundraising, partnership development and coordinating a shared voice.

Constellation = Constellations emerge out of activities that the CCEHP deems as priorities. They are self-governing, lead by the partners and are the primary bodies of the CCEHP. A constellation can be created at any time that the CCEHP sees as appropriate.

CCEHP Governance Terms of Reference

Definitions

The Partnership

The **partnership** is the core group of organizations that agree to actively work together in good faith, through the constellations and the coordinating committee, to advance the Guiding Principles of the CCEHP. The partnership may expand as needed. In no way does membership in the Partnership prevent a partner from pursuing projects and activities, outside the partnership.

The Network

The **network** is a loose affiliation of non-governmental organizations, government agencies, federations, health groups, citizens and others interested in *children's environmental health and safety* in Canada. The partnership will maintain a loose affiliation with the broader community through the implementation of a national e-mail list and through a web site. Over time and as resources allow, the partnership may expand itself to more actively engage the broader network.

A Constellation

A **constellation** is an activity-based group of organizations that have chosen to work together on a particular issue relating to *children's environmental health* under the auspices of the Canadian Children's Environmental Health Partnership (CCEHP). It is a flexible, self-governing group within the Partnership that builds on the collaborative strength and leverage of the partnership. A Constellation may utilize the time and expertise of the Secretariat and will maintain a reporting relationship with the Coordinating Committee for the mutual benefit and coordinated voice of the Partnership.

The Coordinating Committee

The **Coordinating Committee** is the coordinating body that represents the members and supports the partnership in the emergence of a shared and coordinated voice around issues and strategy. The Coordinating Committee will also play a role incubating the work of the constellations and building a stronger mandate for *children's environmental health* in Canada.

The Secretariat

A **secretariat** will be created to provide partnership/governance support to the Coordinating Committee and the Partnership. It will pursue activities that support the partnership and it will also act as an incubator for the constellations. The Secretariat will report to the Coordinating Committee.

General Partnership

1. The name of this group shall be *The Canadian Children's Environmental Health Partnership (CCEHP)*.
2. All members of the Partnership shall have equal voice and status.
3. All members will consult with and represent the views of their organization as they make decisions on the Coordinating Committee and as a part of the Partnership.

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4. Records of partnership related meetings will be kept and made available to all members of the partnership as needed.
 5. In signing on to the CCEHP, all members of the Coordinating Committee, partnership and constellations agree to participate in good faith to the decision-making and conflict resolution process outlined in this document.

Roles & Responsibilities of the Coordinating Committee (CC)

6. The Coordinating Committee's purpose is to ensure that there is a mechanism to support the partnership and the constellations that evolve from the partnership. The Coordinating Committee will support and enable the activities of the constellations as an extension of the Guiding Principles for the CCEHP.
7. The Coordinating Committee will have 8 founding members including:
 - Canadian Association of Physicians for the Environment
 - Canadian Child Care Federation
 - Canadian Environmental Law Association
 - Canadian Institute of Child Health
 - Health Promotion and Environmental Protection Office – City of Toronto
 - Learning Disabilities Association of Canada
 - Pollution Probe
 - South Riverdale Community Health Centre
8. The Coordinating Committee is responsible to make decisions about the work, direction and development of the partnership as a whole and the secretariat. It will have primary responsibility for projects and activities that support the partnership as a whole. The Coordinating Committee will oversee the work of the Secretariat directly.
9. The process for joining the CC would require that an organization first volunteer to sit on the CC. This position would have a term of not more than 2 years. In order to be ratified as a member of the CC, the existing CC will require a 2/3 vote to add an additional member.
10. In the case where a member is not acting in good faith or the interests of the partnership as defined in this governance model, a vote of 4/5's of the CC will be required to remove an organization from the CC.

Roles and Responsibilities of the Constellations

11. A constellation is a self-governing, activity-based group. This means that although it is based in the partnership and shall benefit from the broader group, it will make its own decisions about how it wants to work together. It may take the form of a coalition, a caucus or a separate organization.
12. The constellations will make decisions about their own activities and will direct their own work as it relates to the constellation objectives. The constellations will be the primary decision-

makers with regard to project objectives, deliverables, budgets, contracts, implementation and administration of various projects. In most cases, a lead organization will be identified within the constellation to administer the work of the constellation and to liaise with funders.

13. A constellation is responsible to report its activities to the Coordinating Committee on a regular basis so that the CC may play a role in coordinating the activities and leveraging the skills, assets and expertise of the partnership for the benefit of the constellation.
14. New constellations will evolve out of the Coordinating Committee with the support of the partnership and the secretariat. These new constellations will be the result of strategic planning and coordinated communications strategies of the Coordinating Committee. Any partner may suggest the creation of a constellation. It will be up to the Coordinating Committee to allocate priority and resources to the new constellation.

Advocacy

15. No group will take positions on issues on behalf of the partnership, constellation or other organization without the consent of the members. Groups will clarify how they would like to advocate with one another on a project-by-project basis in advance. Only the leadership from the organizations may take positions on issues.
16. Neither the Secretariat nor the Coordinating Committee will take positions on issues on behalf of an organization of the Partnership unless clearly decided by the CC.
17. Any initiative or project within the partnership may invite the other partners to “opt-in” to specific campaigns.

Decision-Making and Conflict Resolution Process

18. The CC and the Partnership will work to consensus. Consensus is defined as “a collaborative process where a decision has been developed in ways that seek to meet the needs and interests of all the group members.” In other words, everyone can live with the final agreement without compromising issues of fundamental importance.
19. If consensus is not possible to achieve, the Coordinating Committee and Partnership will use standard Roberts Rules wherein a 2/3rd vote of the members present is needed to pass a decision.
20. Members need not agree on all issues. The constellation model enables members to “opt-out” of a given project or process at any time without offence and for their own reasons.
21. Given the nature of collaboration and the fiscal responsibilities associated with grant administration, the lead organization will have financial and legal responsibilities associated with grant administration. The lead organization will most often be the constellation lead, however, this may not always be true.
22. If there is a discrepancy or disagreement between any of these groups, a meeting will be held between the affected parties and the Secretariat, with the goal of reaching consensus on the issue.

Ultimately, the funding lead is responsible for financial and legal decisions and will have veto power over legal and financial decisions affecting the project.

Dissolving the Partnership

23. The partnership may decide at any time to dissolve the partnership or a constellation with a unanimous vote of the SC members. The partnership may also cease to operate given a lack of funding or initiative within the members. Any member may choose to re-ignite the constellation with the support of at least 2 of the original members.