



**Ontario Public Health Association**  
l'Association pour la santé publique de l'Ontario  
Established/Établi 1949

The mission of OPHA is to provide leadership on issues affecting the public's health and to strengthen the impact of people who are active in public and community health throughout Ontario.

700 Lawrence Ave. W., Suite 310  
Toronto, Ontario M6A 3B4

Tel: (416) 367-3313  
1-800-267-6817 (Ont)  
Fax: (416) 367-2844  
E-mail: [info@opha.on.ca](mailto:info@opha.on.ca)  
[www.opha.on.ca](http://www.opha.on.ca)

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The Hon. David C. Onley  
Lieutenant Governor of Ontario

**President**

Carol Timmings  
E-mail: [ctimmings@opha.on.ca](mailto:ctimmings@opha.on.ca)

**Executive Director**

Connie Uetrecht  
E-mail: [cuetrecht@opha.on.ca](mailto:cuetrecht@opha.on.ca)

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*The following text was sent as Letters-to-the-Editor to The Toronto Star, The Ottawa Citizen, and the CanWest News Service c/o The National Post in response to their coverage of Minister Watson's call to combat obesity.*

July 15, 2005

Letter to the Editor  
The Toronto Star

*Re: Obesity now on Ontario's hit list: Health Promotion Minister's new job. Overweight need help like smokers  
The Toronto Star , July 14th, 2005, A3*

On behalf of the Ontario Public Health Association, I would echo Minister Watson's sentiment that obesity represents a challenge comparable to the tobacco issue for public health authorities in this country.

It is my sincere hope that the new Ministry of Health Promotion will support and enhance the public health system in this province whereby a number of programs exist to promote healthier eating, physical activity and overall chronic disease prevention. The Eat Smart Program is funded by the Government of Ontario and delivered through the majority of public health units in the province. It is an award program for restaurants, school cafeterias and workplace cafeterias that offer healthier food choices, have excellent food safety records and exceed current tobacco legislation. Since 2001, the Eat Smart Program and local health units have worked with partners in restaurants, the foodservice industry, workplaces and schools in the implementation of this program – all with limited human resource and financial capacity. Enhanced funding support for a province-wide coordination, implementation and marketing is needed to increase the effectiveness of this unique program.

It is exciting that Minister Watson is taking initiative in this area and we strongly encourage him to include the enhancement of existing initiatives.

Sincerely,

Connie Uetrecht  
Interim Executive Director  
Ontario Public Health Association  
Tel: 416-367-3313 ext. 226  
Toll-free: 1-800-267-6817 (Ontario)