

What **public health**
does for you!

2015 Annual Report



Algoma
PUBLIC HEALTH
Santé publique Algoma

MESSAGE FROM BOARD OF HEALTH, CHAIR

Algoma Public Health has 200 dedicated employees who are passionate and committed to improving health and reducing social inequalities in health through evidence informed practice.

The Algoma district covers a land of almost 49, 000 square kilometres. We have employees spread throughout Algoma with offices in Blind River, Elliot Lake, Wawa and Sault Ste. Marie that plan and deliver health programs that impact the whole population.

This annual report gives you a snapshot of the public health work being done in our communities on a day-to-day basis. From teaching about healthy lifestyles to advocating for healthy policy, employees work with municipalities and a cross section of individuals, families, and community partners to help each and every one in Algoma live a healthy life.

As the new chair of the Board of Health, it is an honour to serve all our municipalities in our region. All the great work of Algoma Public Health could not be done without the funding we receive from our municipal and provincial government and other community partners.

I applaud our dedicated employees for their commitment and dedication to your well-being and I ask that you read our report to learn more about how Algoma Public Health is an important and vital part of the health system in Algoma.

Lee Mason

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lee Mason". The signature is written in a cursive style with a small flourish at the end of the name.

Highlights of 2015 - Helping you Live a Healthy Life



Algoma Public Health (APH) and Maamwesying, North Shore Community Health Services Inc. established a partnership to develop a breastfeeding awareness campaign, and to increase access to community resources and supports.

The campaign, 'Doodooshaaboo – It takes a community to breastfeed' ensures that mothers and their families have access to breastfeeding supports and resources in their community.

In December 2015, The Infant Child Development Program held a Christmas Party for children ages 0-6 with developmental delays and their families. The children and their families had the opportunity to celebrate Christmas and receive a donated gift.

Families also had the opportunity to network and meet other families that are in similar situations. The Christmas party allowed the children to engage with one another and create crafts with senior and youth volunteers.



The Canada Prenatal Nutrition Program (CPNP) provides support to vulnerable pregnant women and their families across Algoma.

In 2015, **275** women participated. Public Health Nurses, Registered Dietitians and Family Support Workers offer help with food, education, support and referral.

CPNP aims to improve maternal and infant health, increase rates of healthy birth weights and promote and support breastfeeding.

The Community Kitchens provided nutritious meals to **26 children and 20 adults** (average) per month.

The goal is to provide families with easy, low cost, nutritious meals, to socialize and develop food skills (i.e. chopping, reading a recipe and learning cooking terms).

The Healthy Kids Community Challenge was launched in partnership with the City Sault Ste. Marie and key stakeholders. The Sault is one of 45 municipalities in Ontario that is participating.

This initiative is part of Ontario's Healthy Kids Strategy and aims to create communities where it is easier for children to lead healthier lifestyles.



The Oral Health Services Program provided dental screening in all childcare centres in the Algoma district. A total of **738** children were screened in 2015.

Early childhood tooth decay is preventable through early assessment and education. All children benefit from a dental visit by their 1st birthday.

In July 2015, the Preschool Speech and Language Program provided half day summer sessions to **53** children ages 3-4 years with speech and language difficulties.

The children learned skills such as: asking and answering questions, receptive and expressive vocabulary, speech production, print awareness, phonological awareness and literacy, sequencing, story retell, social communication skills, expressing feelings were targeted in the group.



To celebrate Oral Health month a social media photo contest was launched to get people interested in the importance of oral health as part of overall health.

The Smile campaign focused on three key messages:

- Brush your teeth twice a day for 2 minutes each time.
- Avoid sipping sweet drinks between meals.
- Visit a dental professional regularly.

103 tobacco vendors were inspected for display/promotion of tobacco products. Two rounds of test shopping were completed at all tobacco vendors resulting in 15 charges for selling to persons under 19 years of age.

Smoking is one of the leading preventable causes of death and discouraging youth from taking up the habit is not only the law, it prevents early exposure to a cancer causing agent.



The 10th Annual Kidz Summer Safety Festival was held in collaboration with Safe Communities Partnership and a number of other community partners. APH staff provided injury prevention and sun safety awareness to children and their families.

This annual event encourages and promotes safe and healthy play through fun, interactive and free activities.



The Northern Fruit and Vegetable Program (NFVP), provides fresh Ontario-grown fruits and vegetables to all students in grades JK-8 in the Algoma District. It reaches over **10,000** students.

The program helps to provide children essential personal health and coping skills that will enhance their health now and in the future. This is accomplished by educating children on the importance of vegetables and fruit, providing them the opportunity to try new foods, and increasing fruit and vegetable consumption in children.

The Communicable Disease team conducted a campaign targeting Grade 7 students with messaging about hepatitis C. The key message was "there is no vaccine for hep C."

In a previous survey, we discovered that 40% of youth between the ages of 16 to 24 believed they were immunized against hepatitis C. In Algoma, we have a higher incidence of newly reported hepatitis C cases among youth than the provincial average.

The health benefit of this initiative is teaching youth about hepatitis C and preventing new cases. Students learn about risk behaviour and how to protect themselves against hepatitis C.

Public health inspectors inspected over **1,200** facilities and held **27** food handler courses certifying over **550** individuals

Prevention and education are important to avoiding food borne disease. Routine inspection of premises that sell to the public ensure food is prepared, cooked and served safely.

Over **55 community service providers** attended the "Supporting Families Dealing with Mental Health Issues" workshop with a focus on Postpartum Mood Disorders.

Common mental health concerns, positive communication strategies between service provider and family and how service providers can support families to seek and accept professional help were topics discussed.



The Genetics program provided counselling to over **600** individuals/families through genetic consultations with

Medical Geneticists and Genetic Nurse Counsellors. Genetic counselling services encompass all age groups from preconceptional, prenatal, paediatric, adult, and the elderly.

There are many health benefits to genetic counselling and/or testing. One of the biggest impacts on health promotion/disease prevention is in the area of cancer counselling. If a client tests positive for a hereditary cancer syndrome, we can provide counselling regarding screening and risk-reduction strategies.

As part of the Community Homelessness Prevention Initiative (CHPI), we partnered with the Algoma District Services Administration Board to serve approximately **590** people in East and North Algoma.

Services and activities provided with the CHPI funds included: food banks, outreach services, good food boxes, community gardens/community kitchens, blankets/clothing, mental health/illness/substance use supports and services.

The Community Alcohol/Drug Assessment Program provided services to **725** individuals who benefited from individual and group services.

Within a client centered care and harm reduction approach, individuals accessing substance misuse support and counselling have access to varied services that through self-directed goals help to reduce the risk of chronic disease and enhance overall wellbeing.

The Sexual Health Program participated in Sault Pridefest by:

- offering a drop-in sexual health clinic
- providing information displays and resources
- walking in the parade to support the participants and our community partners

As a sexual health program we promote healthy sexuality across the lifespan.

Nicotine Replacement Therapy was added into existing cessation services to aid high risk smokers making quit attempts.

Quitting while you are young reduces your health risk more, but quitting at any age can give back years of life that would be lost continuing to smoke.



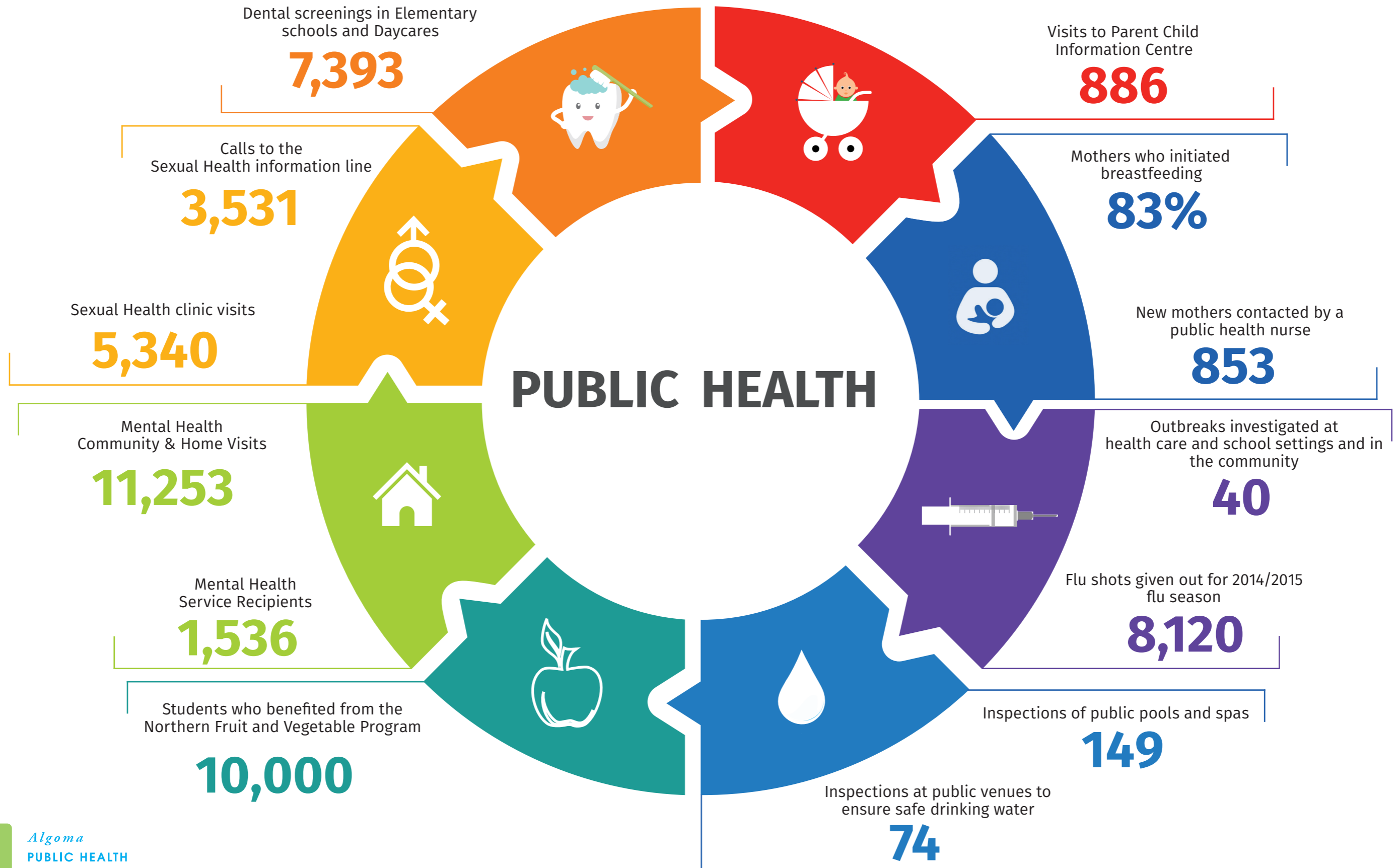
The Stay on Your Feet Initiative was responsible for the delivery of Stand Up! exercise classes for older adults in the Algoma District. This exercise program supports the prevention of falls in older adults.

Community Mental Health Support Services sponsored 6 individuals with lived experience of mental illness in obtaining and completing formal peer-support training and certification. We added Peer Support Programming to our recovery oriented services.

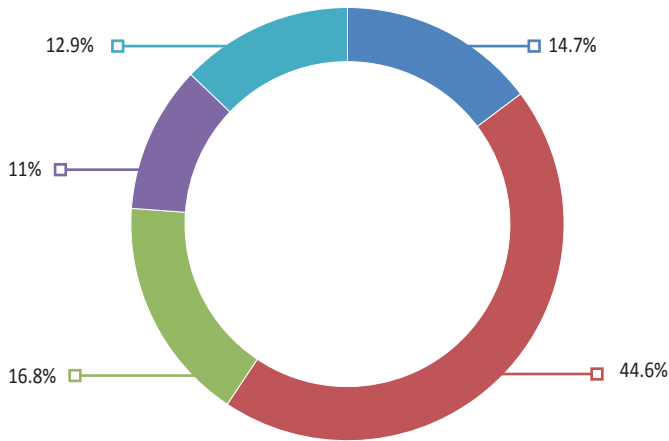
Use of mutual support = better recovery outcomes.






By the Numbers

Algoma Public Health works in our communities everyday with individuals, families and community partners to promote and protect health and to prevent disease. This is a snapshot of what we accomplished in 2015.



Thank you to our Funders



Sources of Funding	
	Municipal Levies (District of Algoma) \$3,263,000
	Ministry of Health & Long-Term Care \$9,875,000
	North East Local Health Integration Network \$3,717,000
	Ministry of Children & Youth Services \$2,429,000
	Community Partners, Fees and Recoveries \$2,847,000

MISSION:

Together with our communities, Algoma Public Health is a leader in promoting and protecting health and well-being.

VISION:

Together, we create and sustain healthy communities.

WEBSITE:

algomapublichealth.com

JOIN THE CONVERSATION:



/AlgomaHealth



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