



## **Underlying problem and evidence:**

*What was the motivation behind this initiative? What evidence was used to inform this initiative? If applicable, provide links to relevant literature, documents, and other resources used to inform this initiative.*

Individuals, community groups and health professionals in New Brunswick had expressed concerns about the consumption of energy drinks by children and youth. The Department of Health and the OCMOH was also concerned about the potential risks on the health of children and youth when too many are consumed, when they are combined with alcohol or when they are used during or after intense exercise.

Energy drink sales are on the rise in North America and research shows that children and teens are consuming energy drinks in excess of a level recommended for their age and size.

## **Description of the initiative:**

*What was your initiative? Who was involved? What was public health's involvement or role? Report on your unique context.*

The Department of Health recognized a need and interest in bringing stakeholders together to discuss the issue of energy drink use among children and youth in New Brunswick. The Office of the Chief Medical Officer of Health was asked to provide leadership for coordinating an opportunity to discuss these issues with key stakeholders.

A planning team was identified and included two staff from OCMOH, one Public Health dietitian from Horizon Health Network, one Public Health dietitian from Vitalité Health Network, an RCMP officer involved with a local community action group, a student from St. Thomas University and a wellness consultant from the Department of Healthy and Inclusive Communities. The OCMOH staff filled the role of project coordinator and facilitated the planning team teleconferences.

Public Health staff from OCMOH, Horizon and Vitalité were highly involved in informing the direction of the stakeholder event, identifying panel presenters, communicating information about the event with their Public Health colleagues and community partners, hosting stakeholders during the event and developing an evaluation form.

There were two primary objectives that the planning team wanted to achieve: 1) provide general information about energy drinks from the perspectives of key stakeholders such as federal health officials, provincial health officials, education, industry and healthcare providers; and 2) provide an opportunity for all stakeholders to learn, network and share ideas about reducing health risks for children and youth.

The OCMOH provided leadership, coordination support and financial support for this event. OCMOH staff worked closely with the planning team and OCMOH management to deliver an effective and engaging dialogue.

<b>Describe the extent to which your intervention integrated the strategic directions identified in the New Brunswick Public Health Nutrition Framework for Action 2012-2016</b>	
<b><i>Capacity-building</i></b>	<p>The Energy Drink Dialogue provided 5 panel presentations that were designed to give stakeholders an overview of current regulations, approaches, research, market trends, policy initiatives and health concerns related to energy drink use among children and youth. The goal of this activity was to increase awareness among stakeholders of the key issues and provide an opportunity for questions with panel presenters.</p>
<b><i>Partnerships and collaboration</i></b>	<p>Partnerships were strengthened between planning team members in the six month planning period for this event. Planning team members collaborated to develop and deliver the Energy Drink Dialogue by providing time, energy, facilitation skills, survey data and access to their individual network of partners and contacts.</p> <p>The Energy Drink Dialogue was a venue for stakeholders to network and identify potential areas for partnership and collaboration with other sectors.</p>
<b><i>Knowledge management and communication</i></b>	<p>Knowledge exchange and communication were primary objectives of the Dialogue. The entire dialogue was designed to meet these objectives by providing panel presentations along with ample time and space for small group discussions.</p> <p>A webpage on the OCMOH website was developed to share information about energy drinks. All of the panel presentations are available on the website along with OCMOH publications on energy drinks (ie. NB Student Drug Use Survey, Health Indicators Bulletin).</p> <p>A variety of media interviews were conducted during the event and with Dr. Cleary, the Chief Medical Officer of Health, prior to the event.</p> <p>Live tweeting was encouraged throughout the Dialogue and the OCMOH provided French and English tweets throughout the day.</p>
<b><i>Comprehensive approach</i></b>	<p>The Energy Drink Dialogue was a one-time event, however a <a href="#">summary report</a> has been developed that summarizes the information and ideas that were discussed during the event. This report may be used to stimulate further action by stakeholders.</p> <p>The Dialogue provided an opportunity to learn what strategies different sectors are using to reduce risks associated with energy drink use.</p>

**Describe the extent to which your intervention integrated the strategic directions identified in the New Brunswick Public Health Nutrition Framework for Action 2012-2016**

<b>Policy</b>	<p>The OCMOH has developed a policy analysis to be used by OCMOH management to determine possible policy directions.</p> <p>Policy, regulation and legislation are concepts that were explored during the Dialogue and one of the main areas for potential action identified at the end of the day.</p>
<b>Surveillance, monitoring, evaluation</b>	<p>An evaluation survey was circulated to all Dialogue stakeholders during the event (results are shared in <a href="#">Appendix A</a>).</p>

**Outputs:**  
*Please share links to any resources, reports, or other materials emanating from this initiative. Please indicate if you have already shared this initiative with others or provide links to any presentation, articles, or other materials you used to share your work.*

[Energy Drinks – Government of New Brunswick website](#)

[New Brunswick Health Indicators, Issue 9 – Energy Drink Consumption Among Youth](#)

Dialogue:

- [New Brunswick Stakeholder Dialogue on Energy Drinks Summary Report](#)
- [Office of the Chief Medical Officer of Health Presentation](#)
- [Health Canada Presentation](#)
- [Canadian Beverage Association Presentation](#)

[Policy Analysis: Energy Drinks and the Health Risks for Children and Youth](#)

**Resources required:**  
*Describe the resources that were required (human and capital) and who provided them.*

**Human:**  
 Project coordinator (OCMOH)  
 Planning team (OCMOH, Horizon, Vitalité, RCMP, Dept HIC, university student)  
 Facilitator (RCMP)

The project coordinator worked on this project over a period of approximately nine months which included planning the event, delivering the event, preparing summary report and policy analysis. The planning team members were involved in the planning and delivery of the event which took place over a period of six months. The facilitator was also a member of the planning team.

**Capital:**  
 The OCMOH covered financial costs associated with the dialogue including:

- Venue
- Simultaneous translation
- Catering
- Other administrative costs

**\*Cost ~\$10,000**

## Outcome measures, indicators, and evaluation:

*Describe the outcomes of the initiative and the results of any evaluations completed to date. If outcomes or evaluation data are unavailable, describe any plans for evaluation, and outcome and indicators you plan to monitor.*

Over 170 stakeholders were invited to attend this event and approximately 120 stakeholders participated.

There was national interest in this event with provincial Department of Health representatives from British Columbia, Quebec, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island, the Public Health Agency of Canada and Health Canada contacting the OCMOH for information. In the end, there were representatives from PEI, Health Canada and the Public Health Agency of Canada who were in attendance.

At the end of the event, participants identified four areas for action:

- Education and awareness
- Research
- Legislation, regulation and policy
- Engagement

Evaluation results from the event were very positive and complementary. Overall, participants appreciated the diversity of stakeholders that were present, the opportunity for discussion and sharing of information. The main criticisms from the event were the lack of youth in the room, the lack of research available and that there wasn't enough time for Q&A with the panelists.

For more detailed evaluation results, please see [Appendix A](#).

## Lessons learned:

*What lessons have you learned? What are your impressions of why the initiative succeeded or failed?*

1) It is important to have or develop a clear vision for what you want to achieve. This includes spending time developing a purpose statement that the project coordinator, planning team and senior managers/officials all understand and agree with. This made planning much easier.

Engaging a planning team with members from a variety of organizations was very important to the success of this event. Planning team members informed the development of the event based on what they are experiencing in their work and communities around the province. Members brought a larger network of contacts to approach and invite to the event.

2) A main criticism of the event was the lack of youth present. This was not intentional and in fact many efforts were made by the planning team to have youth participate in the day. There could have been better communication to participants about the challenges of having youth participate in events such as this one (i.e. during school time) and recognition of efforts made to include youth.

3) The planning team and project coordinator had a lot of discussion about involving certain stakeholders that may have competing agendas or perspectives about the health impact of energy drinks on children and youth. In the end, we decided to be inclusive of a variety of perspectives and participants appreciated the opportunity to hear this. It was a difficult decision to make, but I think having sometimes opposing views made for a well-rounded event and helped participants understand the different perspectives on this issue.

## **Recommendations and next steps:**

OCCMOH has identified potential areas for action based on the themes that were identified during the Dialogue and a review of current evidence. Next steps by OCCMOH include:

- Developing an OCCMOH Position Statement on Energy Drinks
- Advocating for federal review and action on the consumption of energy shots by children and youth
- Developing and sharing key Public Health messages on energy drink use
- Partnering with other organizations to support the development and implementation of policies that support healthy environments related to energy drinks
- Exploring opportunities to support research to develop, and make use of, evidence-based methods to reduce harms associated with children and youth's exposure to energy drinks

**APPENDIX A:  
Evaluation Results**

Overall, participants felt that the event partially or fully met the goals of bringing stakeholders together and providing opportunities to learn and share ideas. More specifically:

- 92% of participants agreed or strongly agreed that there was an appropriate mix of panel participants.
- 90% of participants agreed or strongly agreed that the panel presentations helped their understanding of the issue.
- 94% of participants agreed or strongly agreed that the afternoon dialogue session was useful.
- 91% of participants agreed or strongly agreed that they know what the key themes from the afternoon dialogue session were.
- 86% of participants agreed or strongly agreed that they are going to use knowledge gained today in their work and/or community.
- 83% of participants agreed or strongly agreed that they have been connected with people / groups that they can collaborate with.

What participants liked <u>most</u> about the event	What participants liked <u>least</u> about the event
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Diversity of stakeholders in the room</li> <li>○ Opportunity for discussion</li> <li>○ Sharing of information</li> <li>○ Increased knowledge and awareness of issues</li> <li>○ Panel presentations and the diversity of information and perspectives</li> <li>○ Diversity of stakeholders in the room</li> <li>○ Opportunity for discussion</li> <li>○ Sharing of information</li> <li>○ Increased knowledge and awareness of issues</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Lack of youth in the room and on the panel</li> <li>○ Lack of research available / presented</li> <li>○ Not enough time for Q &amp; A with panel</li> </ul>

Participants indicated that they had been inspired to take the following actions in their community or organization:

- Provide more information and education for students in the classroom
- Outreach and collaboration with other groups to fully understand the issues
- Education for parents in community settings
- Engage more people in discussions about energy drinks

- Raise awareness with key stakeholders
- Share information with my family, community, recreation centre, etc
- Educate youth on the difference between energy drinks and sports drinks

## Sample of comments:

- Very informative day
- Great job and timely information. Thanks for the opportunity to have input.
- Should have been youth present
- Good exchange
- More political leaders, decision-makers and other groups need to be involved
- Representation from the beverage industry was frustrating but eye-opening to see how these drinks are portrayed in a more positive manner.
- A good day and enlightened my perspective of energy drinks. Not sure that regulation is the way to go. Perhaps build attainable guidelines with industry.
- Need to push for more research around energy drinks.
- Excellent. A good day.