

COLLOQUIUM SERIES

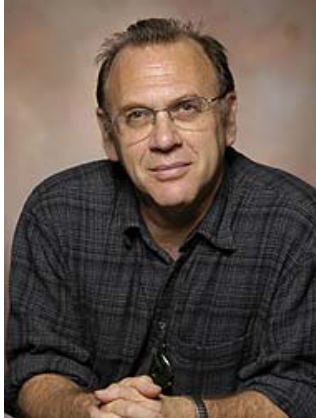
EARLY HUMAN DEVELOPMENT AS A SOCIAL DETERMINANT OF HEALTH

Date: March 5th, 2010

Location: Somerville House, Room 3345

Time: 3:00 - 4:00 p.m.

(Please join us after the talk for light refreshments.)



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ABSTRACT:

The early stages of human development have long been a priority in the field of psychology but, beyond a concern with prevention of mortality and infectious disease, have not been a priority for the health system. This is changing with new understandings of the contribution of early childhood to lifelong socioeconomic inequalities in health (as well as learning and behaviour). In 2008 the WHO International Commission on the Social Determinants of Health canonized early child development as a 'social' determinant of health because it was convinced by the evidence that early physical, language-cognitive; and social-emotional development influence subsequent outcomes and, in turn, are heavily influenced by the nurturant qualities of the environments where children grow up, live, and learn. This bridge to the world of population and public health has brought with it three important trends. First, new measures have been created to monitor the state of early child development at the level of the population, and its patterns over space and time. Second, there has been a search for how early human experiences become embedded in human biology, such that the life course influences of the early years are biologically plausible. Finally, adding a population and public health voice has broadened the coalition that supports larger scale public investment in the early years. In Ontario, the Pascal Report and its aftermath are one important example. This presentation will trace the progress of the early stages of human development as a social determinant of health and describe in detail the three trends mentioned above.

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