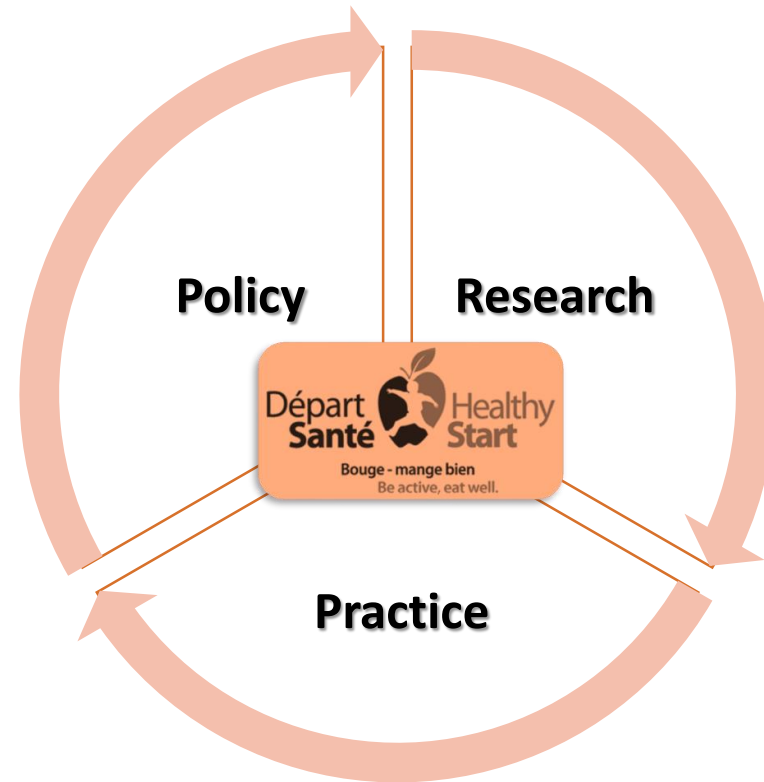


# The value of multi-sectorial collaboration in improving nutritional health of early years children



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# Outline



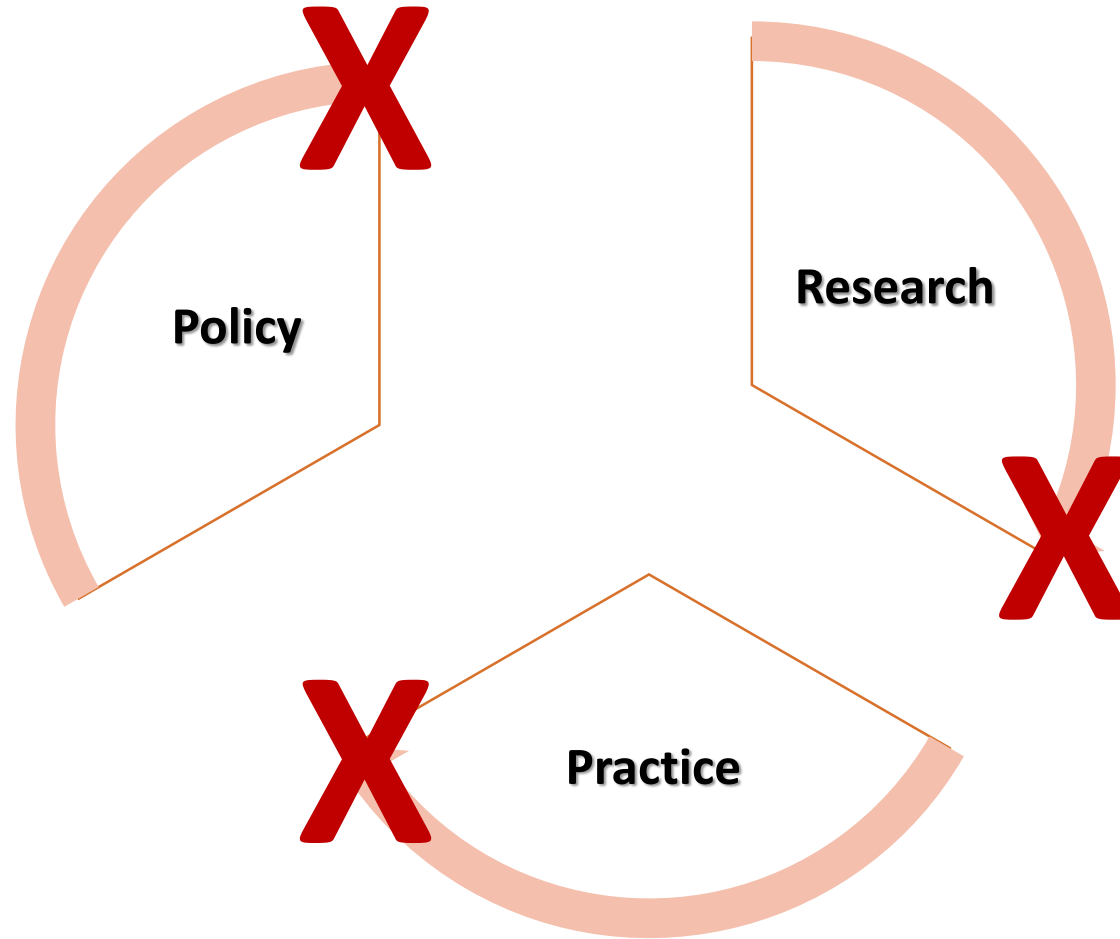
- Why early years children, an overview
- Policy, practice and research connection/disconnection
- Healthy Start as example of successful multi-sectorial intervention
- Menu planning initiative

# Why early years children

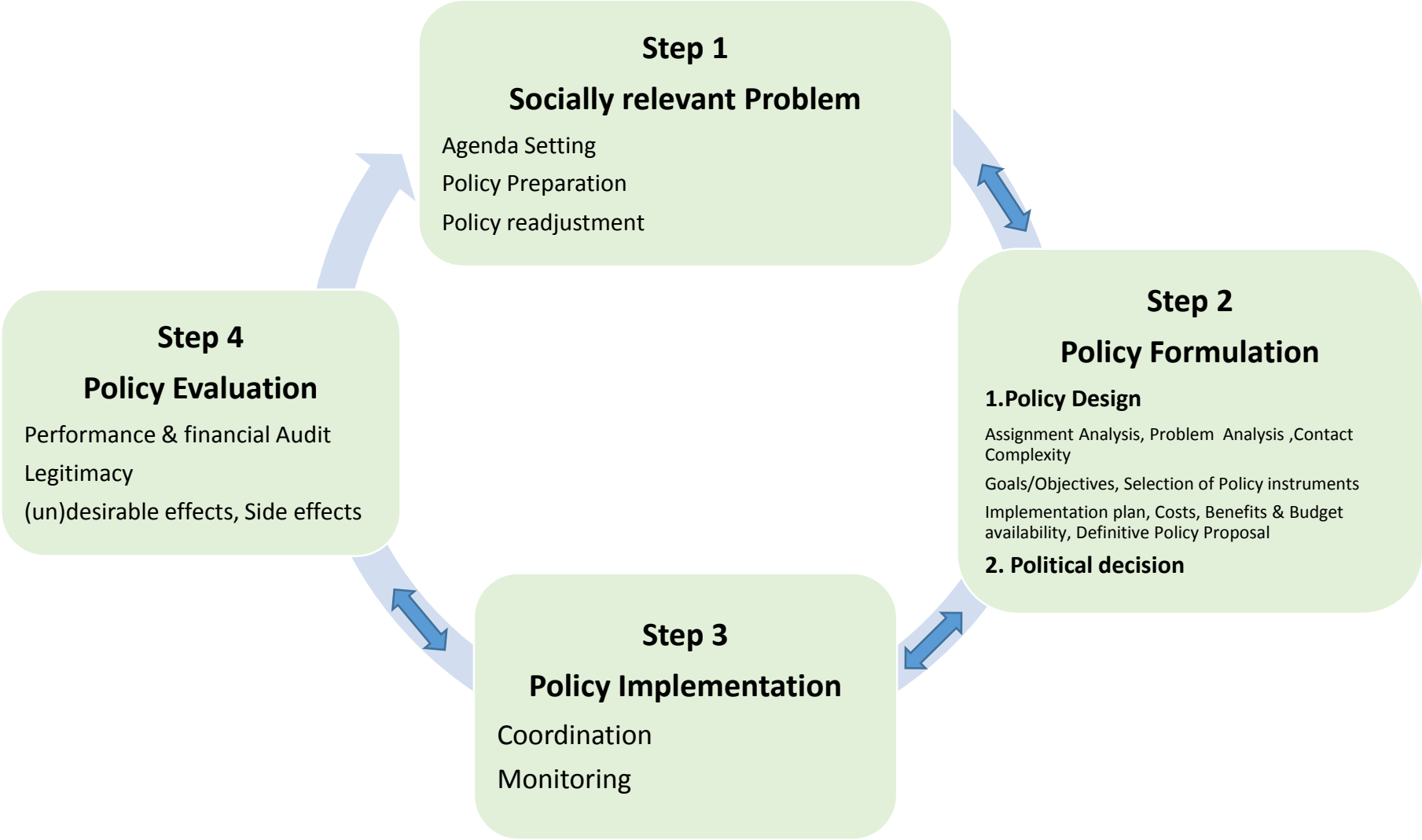


- **High prevalence** of overweight and obesity
- Healthy dietary habits **established** in childhood likely **maintained** to adulthood
- “The first years of a child's life, may be **the optimal** window for promoting the development of healthy eating behaviours in children”
- Child care settings should **provide appropriate** food to meet 1/2 to 2/3 of children's daily energy and nutrient requirement
- In an international perspective; **the major limitation**: insufficient attention is being placed on improving **preschool & childcare environments**
- The important role of Healthy Start/Depart Santé

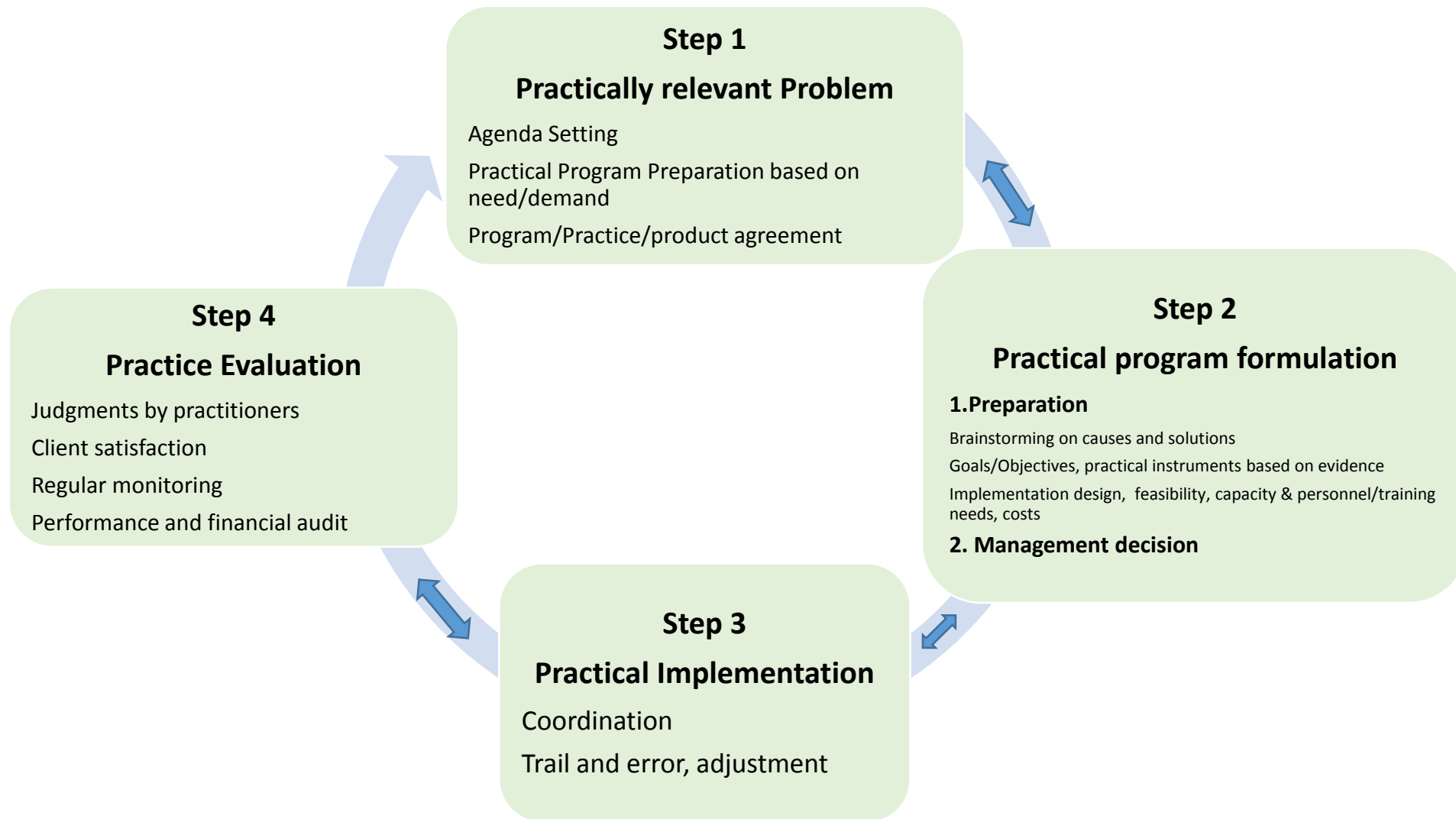
Major Public Health Issue:  
**Disconnections** between policy, practice & research



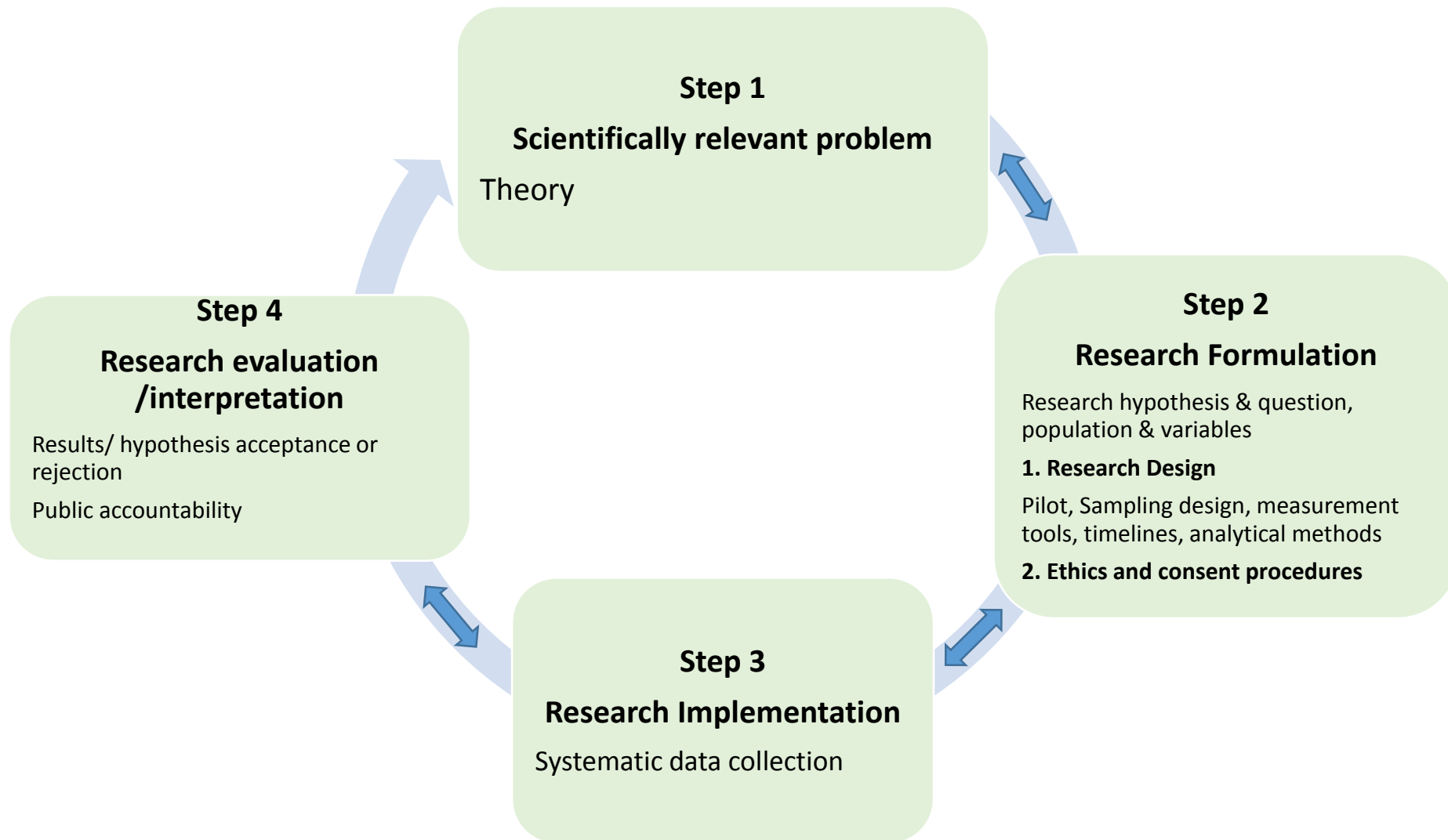
# The regulatory **policy cycle**



# The regulatory **practice cycle**



# The regulatory **research cycle**



# Disconnections

- **Exist in all steps**
  - **Step 1. public health problem**
    - Policy makers: Relevance to political ideology & public opinion
    - Practitioners: perceived need and demand
    - Researchers: relevance to evidence/interest
  - **Step 2. (formulation)** no power by research & practice on formal policy
  - **Step 3. (implementation)** The issue of interim adjustment in research
  - **Step 4. (Evaluation)** Life span – Sustainability
- **How to overcome disconnections:**
  - Face to face encounter: most efficient way
    - Knowledge transfer
    - Personal relations
    - Mutual dependence

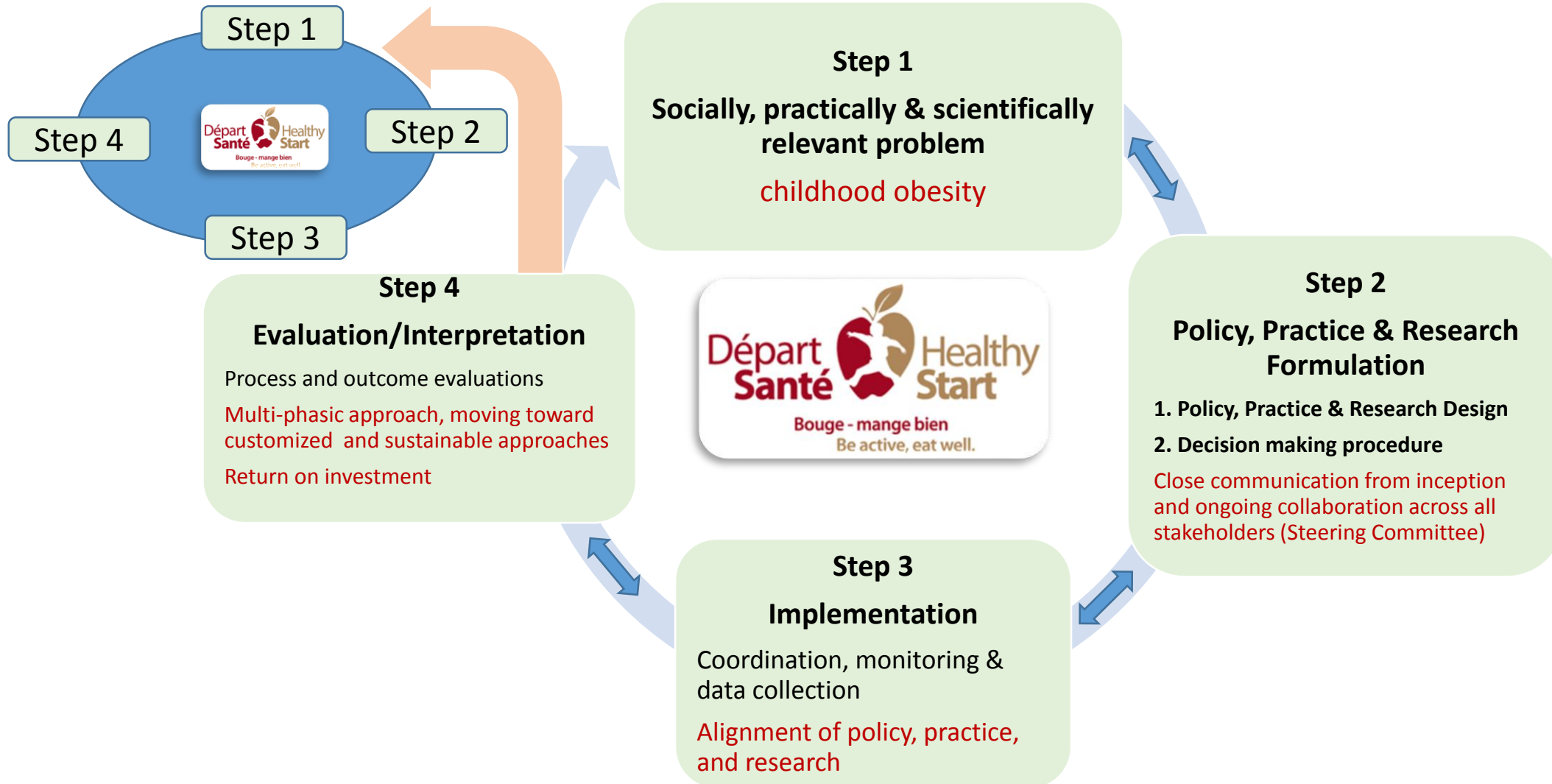


Example of successful multi-sectorial collaboration between policy makers, practitioners and researchers



# The regulatory **policy, practice & research cycles**

## Our Healthy Start/ Départ Santé experience



# Healthy Start/Depart Santé

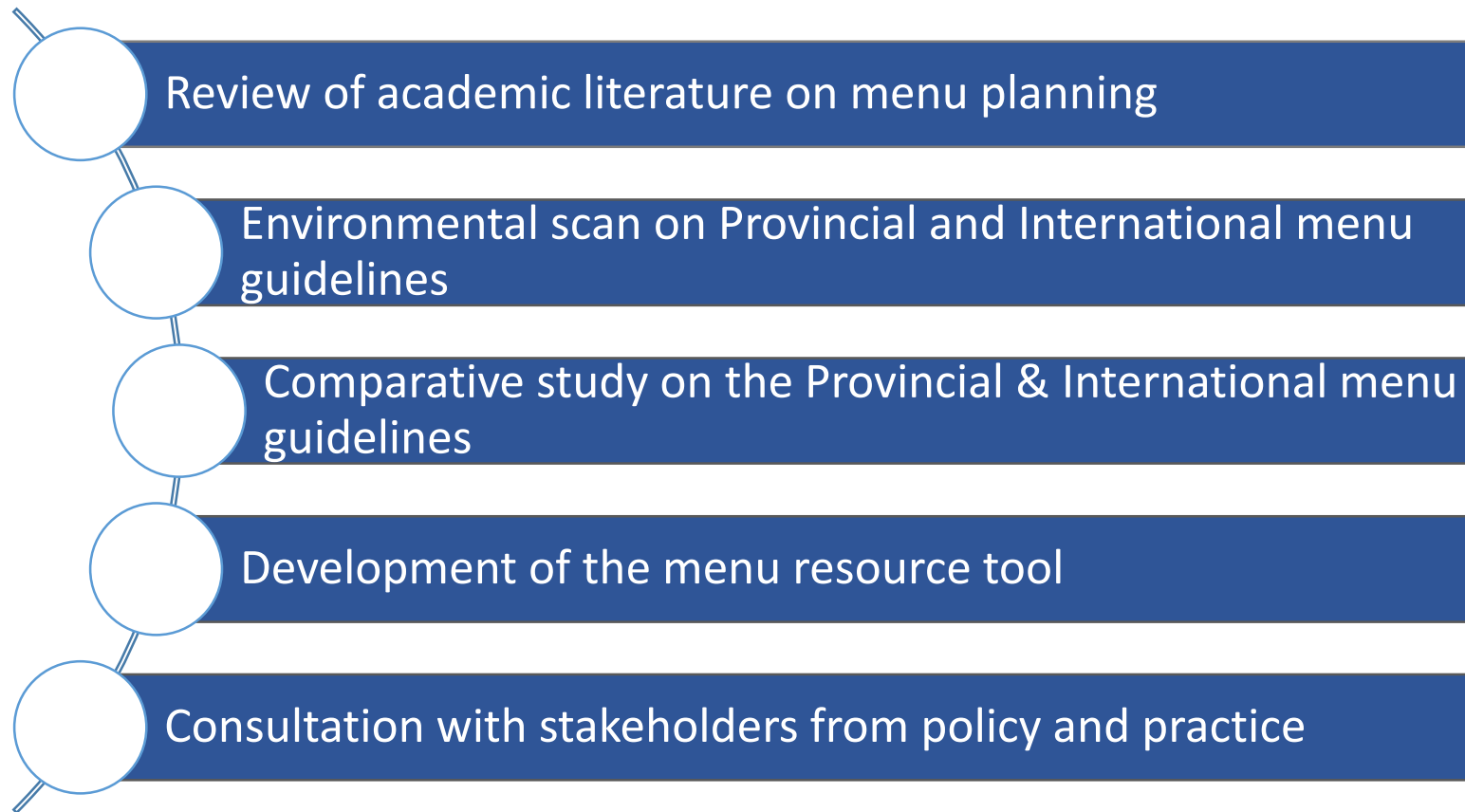
## Examples of successful multi-sectorial intervention

- Collaboration between policy, practice & research in:
  - **Defining the Problem**
    - Partnerships initiated at or before inception
  - **Formulating practice, research and policy**
    - Some policy was already in place (i.e., nutrition/menu planning guidelines); practice and research aligned
  - **Implementation**
    - Close collaboration with SK Ministry of Health in finalizing the implementation manual
    - Active presence and providing consultation services to Healthy Start team
    - Public health nutritionists providing technical support to the childcare centers
  - **Evaluation**
    - Engagement at various stages of research evaluation

# Menu planning initiative

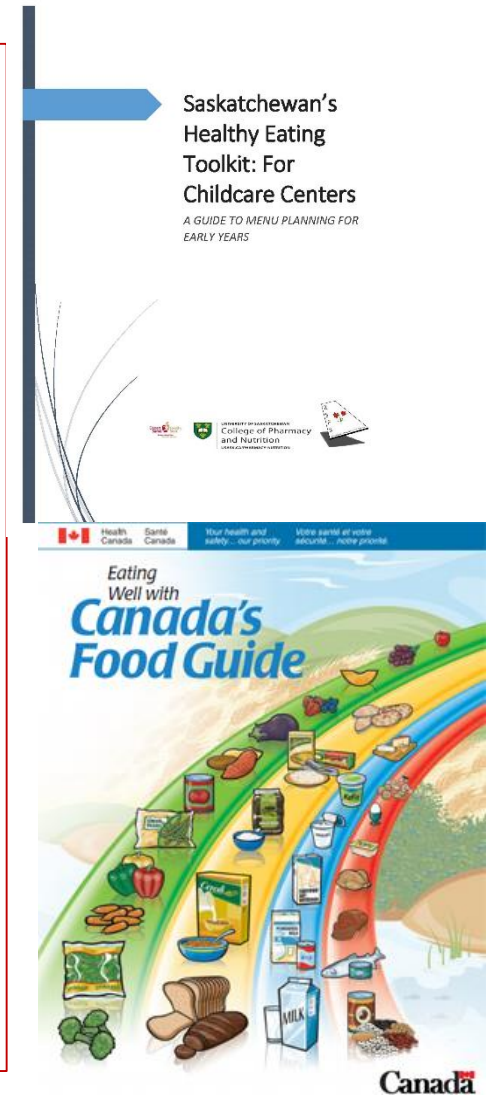
- **Goal:** To enhance the nutritional standards in Childcare centers & promote basic awareness of early years' nutrition among caregivers.
- Need a standardized & comprehensive menu resource tool
  - **Research:** How is the status of current cycle menus? How it can be improved
  - **Policy:** Revisit the existing policies taking to account the cultural and geographic diversity in Saskatchewan
  - **Practice:** Work closely with the centers to provide nutritious food
- ***Forming the menu planning committee***
  - *Policy, research & practice representation*
  - *Several meetings from early 2016*

# Methods



# Results

- A total of 28 guidelines were reviewed.
- Two key limitations consistent in the guidelines:
  - Insufficient information on **cost-effective** menu planning
  - **Cultural diversity** not reflected during menu planning
- Menu resource toolkit developed using Canada's Food Guide & the reviewed guidelines as references.



# Results

- Based on the feedback from the stakeholders, the following components were added in the **revised toolkit**:
  - **Pictorial description** of food groups in Canada's Food guide & its recommended serving sizes
  - **Ten steps** in nutritious menu planning
  - Menu planning based on **dietary restrictions & cultural considerations**
  - **Weekly menu samples**, menu evaluation **checklists & healthy recipes**
  - **Cost-effective** menu planning for rural and remote areas
  - **Food allergens**, choking hazards, food safety.



# Taking to account believes and practices

Food	Jewish	Hindu	Sikh	Muslim	Buddhist
Eggs	No blood spots	It varies	It varies	Yes	It varies
Milk/yoghurt	Not with meat	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Cheese	Not with meat	It varies	It varies	In low quantity	Yes
Chicken	Kosher only	It varies	It varies	Halal only	No
Mutton/Lamb	Kosher only	It varies	It varies	Halal only	No
Beef products	Kosher only	No	No	Halal only	No
Pork products	No	No	Rarely	No	No
Fish	Fish with scales and fins only	Fish with scales and fins only	It varies	Fish with scales and fins only	It varies
Shellfish	No	It varies	It varies	It varies	No
Butter/ghee	Kosher only	It varies	It varies	Yes	No
Lard	No	No	No	No	No
Cereal foods	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Nuts/pulses	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Fruits and vegetables	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes



# Moving ahead

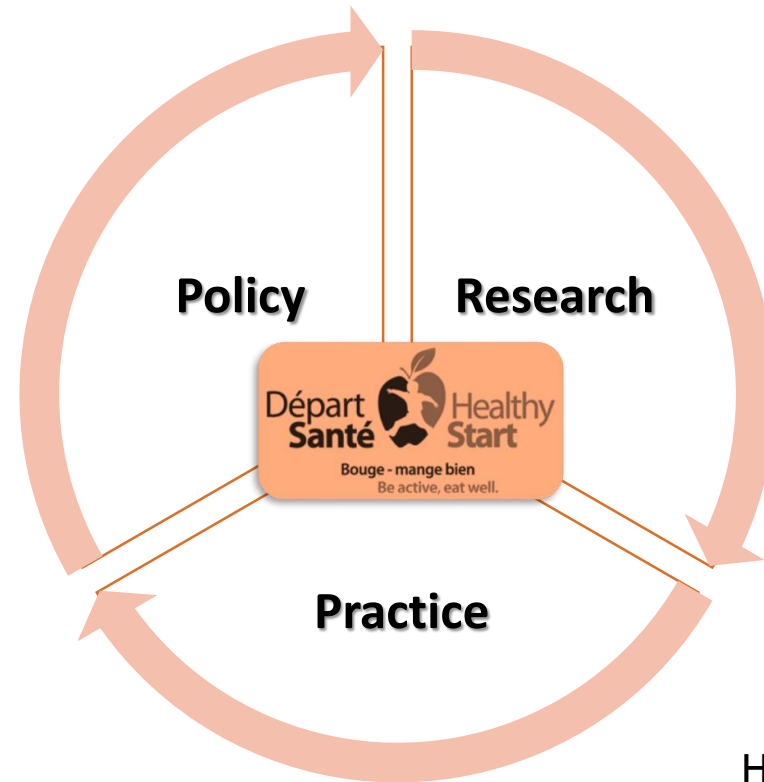
- The menu resource toolkit was designed to guide caregivers in providing nutritious meals & snacks necessary for developing healthy eating habits among preschoolers.
- With further consultation with public health nutritionists/registered dietitians, policy-makers, Healthy Start team... the newly designed toolkit could help improve nutritional practices within the childcare centers.

# Moving ahead

- Working with NB partners in developing the online course
- Creating an interactive **online menu planning tool** that will assist in:
  - Developing customized menus considering geographical location & cultural diversity
  - Monitoring & evaluating the practices at center and provincial levels
- Implementing Healthy Menu Certificate



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