

The background of the slide is a dense, close-up photograph of numerous white marshmallows. The marshmallows are piled together, creating a textured, soft appearance. They are the central focus of the slide's design.

# **Ways of using evidence**

## ***A fireside chat***

**François-Pierre Gauvin, PhD  
NCC Summer Institute  
Winnipeg, June 29, 2010**



## **Ways of using evidence?**

- What kind of evidence?
- Who is using it?
- Why?

How to support the **public** use  
**scientific evidence** to  
**influence policy-making?**



# Why use scientific evidence?

1. To put issues on the governmental agenda (or block an issue from reaching it)
2. To think differently about problems and policy options
3. To propose policy options that are scientifically, politically, and socially robust
4. To defend (or block) decisions that have been made



# Challenges of using scientific evidence

1. May not be valued by the public
2. May not be relevant or contextualized
3. May not be easy to 'use' (e.g., low level of literacy, not communicated effectively, not timely)
4. May not be the only factor influencing the public (and policy-makers)
5. May not be strong (e.g., limited body of evidence, inconclusive, controversial)
6. May not be known by the public





A few promising  
examples...



[<http://scienceshop.ca>]

## **Science shops**

Facilities that provides independent participatory research support in response to concerns experienced by civil society



[<http://www.mcmasterhealthforum.org>]

## **Deliberative dialogues**

Dialogue that aims to ensure relevant evidence on pressing health concerns is used to fuel action for improving health outcomes through collective problem solving



# Questions

1. What should we do when **science is not consistent with prevailing public views** regarding a public health issue?
2. Are there circumstances in which public views or prevailing public attitudes **should or should not be given greater consideration** than what the science of the day has to offer?



Centre de collaboration nationale  
sur les politiques publiques et la santé

National Collaborating Centre  
for Healthy Public Policy

*Institut national  
de santé publique*

Québec 

## **François-Pierre Gauvin, Ph. D.**

945, avenue Wolfe, local A5-52

Quebec City (Quebec) Canada G1V 5B3

**Tel.:** 418-650-5115 ext. 5544

**Email:** [francois-pierre.gauvin@inspq.qc.ca](mailto:francois-pierre.gauvin@inspq.qc.ca)