



The Early Development Instrument



The EDI ...

- is a Canadian-made research tool, developed at Offord Centre for Child Studies at McMaster University
- has been used in BC since 1999
- has been used around the world, including Australia, Chile, and Egypt
- is used to measure developmental change in populations of children – it is a bit like a child development census
- is **not** used to assess or diagnose individual children

a place of mind



“Reducing inequality in child development will require us to bring about enduring social change...” - Clyde Hertzman, Director, Human Early Learning Partnership

ABOUT THE EDI

The EDI is a questionnaire that has been used province-wide in B.C. since 1999. It includes 104 questions about a child’s normal development and measures five areas of early child development. It is completed by kindergarten teachers for all children in their classes. EDI questionnaires are completed after teachers have known their students for a few months, normally in February.

EDI results allow us to understand trends in child vulnerability across the province (see *Vulnerability Fact Sheet*). Knowing how children are actually faring in the province means that communities and governments are able to provide better supports and services for families and young children.

The EDI:

- Increases awareness of the importance of the early years;
- Identifies areas where children are doing well or experiencing challenges;
- Provides evidence to support community initiatives towards healthy child development;
- Strengthens relationships between researchers and communities;
- Provides communities with information to support future planning and service development.

CREATING POSITIVE SOCIAL CHANGE THROUGH RESEARCH

HELP creates maps, graphics, and reports that summarize EDI results. EDI results are reported annually for the province, school districts and neighbourhoods. The results give every community in B.C. a snapshot of their children’s development in the years before they begin school. HELP works with

EDI SCALES

sample questions

Physical Health & Well-Being

Can the child hold a pencil?

Is the child on time for school each day?

Social Competence

Does the child share with others?

Is the child self-confident?

Emotional Maturity

Is the child able to concentrate?

Is the child aggressive or angry?

Language & Cognitive Development

Is the child interested in reading and writing?

Can the child count and recognize numbers?

Communication Skills & General Knowledge

Can the child tell a short story?

Can the child communicate with adults and children?



Children
thrive
when
families
thrive.

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community stakeholders who use the data along with their own local knowledge and resources to better support children and families in their area.

HELP's commitment to putting research into action contributes to positive social change for B.C.'s children.

INFORMING GOVERNMENT

The EDI results are widely used by our government partners to inform their program and policy decisions. Provincial initiatives, like the Strong Start Early Learning Centres, have used EDI data to assist in the planning and implementation of the program. Building on the principle of "children thrive when families thrive", HELP's researchers have provided government with recommendations for policy investments. These investments will enable parents to best balance their responsibilities for caring and earning, therefore contributing to improved child development outcomes. Targets for reducing childhood vulnerability have also been integrated into the provincial strategic plan.

LEADING RESEARCH IN CHILD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

HELP takes pride in the quality of its research and constantly reviews its systems to ensure that EDI results can be trusted. HELP works collaboratively with a network of trainers and teachers in every district to ensure that there is consistency in the way that they assess the children in their classes.

COMMUNITY STORIES

DAWSON CREEK

In Dawson Creek, early child development stakeholders Gloria Cleve and Heidi Kux-Kardos used EDI data and local resources to educate the municipal government on the need to create an indoor play space for young children to use throughout the long winters.

NORTH VANCOUVER

In North Vancouver, EDI results provided the catalyst to create better supports and services for families. The results allowed community early child development stakeholders, like Fran Jones, to show that even in B.C.'s most affluent neighbourhoods there were a number of vulnerable children. Because of this recognition, the North Shore was able to provide increased services and supports for vulnerable and hard to reach families with young children. The WHEELS Outreach Project is one of several successful such programs.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT

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