

Interaction

VOLUME 20, NUMBER 3, FALL 2006



The Child's Right to be Heard

A Seamless Day

**Update of the National
Statement on Quality**

PUBLICATION OF THE CANADIAN CHILD CARE FEDERATION

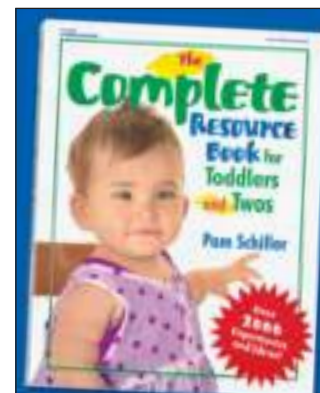
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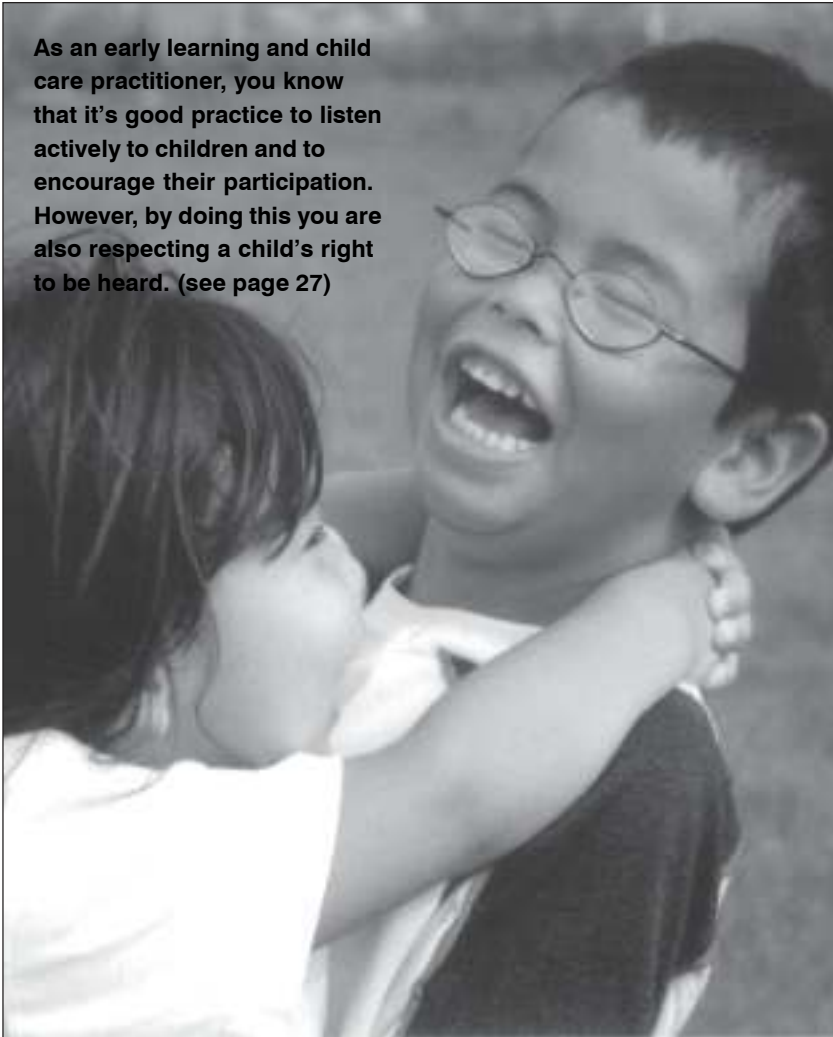
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As an early learning and child care practitioner, you know that it's good practice to listen actively to children and to encourage their participation. However, by doing this you are also respecting a child's right to be heard. (see page 27)



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A new resource sheet (#81) accompanies this issue – *Supporting and Encouraging Children's Participation*



The photo on the front cover was taken by Shoot for Cover winner, Nadine Girard.

Behind the Scenes

One friend, one person who is truly understanding, who takes the trouble to listen to us as we consider our problems, can change our whole outlook on the world. — Dr. Elton Mayo

It seems obvious to state that listening and being heard is important to all human beings. It's the cornerstone of good communication, the topic of self-help books and a major part of all of our relationships – at work and home. Why then do we often feel frustrated that we've not been heard? It seems that even friends and colleagues find it hard to be good listeners at times. No wonder it can be so difficult to untangle what young children are telling us, given their lack of communications tools. As this issue of *Interaction* shows, however, it's worth the effort to truly hear the children in our care.

Respecting a child's right to be heard sows the seeds for participation in citizenship, for modelling constructive communication and for a wide range of developmental benefits. The right to be heard is the focus of this issue of *Interaction* – and is the theme of the National Child Day activities for November 20. You'll find a wide range of articles speaking to the importance of the child's right to be heard and practical tools on how to respect this right in practice. Former Senator Landon Pearson sets the tone in *From Where I Sit*, suggesting that by respecting a child's right to be heard, we can expand the culture of respect for human rights.

Truly "hearing" can begin in early childhood, but it's something we can strive to extend to our peers. Alan Pence's article challenges us to find space to hear "other voices" when discussing quality and best practice. How can we help families of other cultures and backgrounds feel they've been heard? This is a question that will be opened up in this issue and explored in more depth in the next issue of *Interaction*.

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Interaction

VOLUME 20, NUMBER 3, FALL 2006

PUBLISHED BY THE CANADIAN CHILD CARE FEDERATION, 383 Parkdale Avenue, Suite 201, Ottawa ON K1Y 4R4; Tel: (613) 729-5289 or 1 800 858-1412; Fax: (613) 729-3159; Email: info@cccf-fcsge.ca; Web: www.cccf-fcsge.ca

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Advertising	Lana Crossman
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	Martine Leroux/SMART Communication
Printing	St. Joseph Print Group

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The mission of the Canadian Child Care Federation is to achieve excellence through early learning and child care. Its core focus areas are best and promising practice; capacity building; and collaborations, networks and partnerships.

CCCF/FCSGE receives funding from Social Development Canada.

Publication Mail Agreement #40069629
GST Registration No. – 106844335 RT
ISSN 0835-5819





Inside the Federation

CCCF Announces New ED

The Canadian Child Care Federation (CCCF) is pleased to announce that Brigid Rivoire will become its new executive director, effective September 25, 2006. As head of Canada's largest early learning and child care organization, Rivoire will lead CCCF through a pivotal period for child care in this country.

"I look forward to the opportunity to guide CCCF as it heads into its 20th anniversary," said Rivoire. "I'm impressed with how much the organization has already accomplished in its mission to achieve excellence in early learning and child care, and I understand there is still much to do. I share CCCF's commitment to work together with those concerned about healthy child development – practitioners, policy makers, trainers and other NGOs – to meet the needs of today's families and the early learning and child care needs of Canada's youngest citizens."

Rivoire brings to CCCF a wealth of skills and experience from her previous position as executive director of the Canadian Federation of Agriculture, where she represented the organization to internal and external stakeholders, and managed the administration and business affairs of the organization. Rivoire also worked for over 10 years in the federal government for Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada.

"I'm delighted to welcome Brigid to CCCF," said Don Giesbrecht, CCCF President. "Her experience working for a national member-based non-profit organization will guide us to continue to improve the services we offer to our members across Canada. Her deep understanding of policy and of the importance of investing in quality early learning and child care — not just extra money to parents — will benefit us as we work closely with the federal government to make quality child care a priority."

CCCF Welcomes New Board Members and Member Council Reps

At the June meeting of Board and Member Council, CCCF said goodbye to a number of dedicated individuals who completed their staggered terms of office and welcomed new members to take up leadership roles in the organizations.

Linda Skinner replaces Natalie Weller as treasurer of the Board of Directors.

Cyndi Desharnais replaces Michele Campbell as representative of the Yukon Child Care Association.

Caryn LaFlèche replaces Don Giesbrecht as representative of the Manitoba Child Care Association.

Marni Flaherty replaces Linda Skinner as representative of the Home Child Care Association of Ontario.

Toni Hoyland replaces Dianne Tannahill as representative of the Early Childhood Educators of British Columbia.

A new national member, **Monique Laprise**, was elected at the annual general meeting held in June. Monique has been involved in child care for over 30 years. Presently, she is the ECE program coordinator at St-Jérôme CEGEP where she has been teaching for 15 years. She has an extensive background working with and developing training materials for others who work with high-risk children with special needs. She has served on the board of provincial organizations. She is excited to contribute to CCCF's member council and looks forward to the opportunity to help exchange success stories between Québec and the rest of Canada. Monique replaces Karen Chandler, a former CCCF president who has served as national representative for several years.

National members (those who have joined CCCF directly – not through an affiliate organization) can contact Monique through the CCCF office at info@cccf-fcsge.ca or (613) 729-5289. Other members can contact their representatives through their provincial/territorial affiliate organization.



INSIDE THE FEDERATION

Member Council Gives Federal Government Rep Overview of Child Care Across Canada

CCCF was pleased to welcome Shawn Tupper, director general of Children's Policy with Human Resources and Social Development Canada, to the June 18 Board and Member Council meeting held in Calgary, Alberta. Tupper gave an overview of the federal government's child care plan, and Member Council reps shared stories with him about the child care situation in their respective regions. They impressed upon Tupper the importance of a strong federal role in building quality early learning and child care across the country.



Leading the Way to Quality Conference

The June 2006 national co-hosted conference was a great success, bringing together close to 800 delegates from across Canada.

Participants enjoyed inspiring keynote speeches by Alan Pence, professor, School of Child and Youth Care, University of Victoria, and Cindy Blackstock, executive director, First Nations Child and Family Caring Society. They also experienced engaging workshops on a broad range of topics and warm Albertan hospitality. Presentation notes from the keynotes and photographs of some of the conference highlights are posted on the CCCF website at www.cccf-fcsge.ca. See the centre spread of this issue of *Interaction* for some snapshots of conference highlights.

Many thanks to the co-hosting organizations: the Early Childhood Professional Association of Alberta, the Alberta Family Child Care Association and the Alberta Child Care Network Association.

We look forward to seeing everyone next year (June 15–17, 2007) in Halifax, Nova Scotia, where the conference will be co-hosted by CCCF, the Certification Council of Nova Scotia and the Nova Scotia Child Care Association.

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INSIDE THE FEDERATION

Make Your Voice Heard on Children's Environmental Health!

The Canadian Child Care Federation (CCCCF) and the Canadian Partnership for Children's Health and Environment (CPCHE) have developed a national online survey for early learning and child care practitioners to measure current knowledge, attitudes and needs of the sector related to children's environmental health. We invite you to include your voice by participating in the survey. Visit the CCCC website at www.cccf-fcsge.ca for more information.

The survey is one part of a three-year CPCHE project led by CCCC, *Engage, Enable and Empower: Advancing the Children's Environmental Health Agenda*. Launched in October 2005, the project will deliver a national health promotion campaign with the goal of raising awareness and literacy of children's environmental health among child care practitioners, prenatal educators, public health workers, medical professionals and other health intermediaries (e.g., family physicians, pediatricians).

CPCHE is an affiliation of groups – including CCCC – with overlapping missions to improve children's environmental health in Canada. Working across traditional boundaries, CPCHE provides common ground for organizations working to protect children's health from environmental contaminants. For more information about CPCHE, visit the website at www.healthyenvironmentforkids.ca.

For more information on the Engage, Enable and Empower project, contact Jeanine Plamondon at jplamondon@cccf-fcsge.ca.

– Jeanine Plamondon

Register Now for the Winter 06/07 Session!

Meeting the Challenge Online

Are you feeling challenged by the children in your care? Do you need some practical strategies to help you in your daily interactions with these children?

Meeting the Challenge Online is a nine-week e-learning course that will provide you with tools to deal with challenging behaviours in young children. Pilot tested by child care practitioners from a range of settings, this course will help you develop effective intervention strategies and enhance children's prosocial behaviour. It will also give you the opportunity to share your experiences with practitioners across Canada in an online learning environment – at your own pace and from the comfort of your home or child care facility.

To learn more, visit the *Meeting the Challenge Online* sub-site at www.cccf-fcsge.ca.

I was surprised that you could feel close to people through cyberspace!
– pilot participant

This course has given me so many more "tools" that can help me plan ahead for behaviours and challenges that may occur.
– pilot participant

Cost: \$449



INSIDE THE FEDERATION

New Resources Build Resiliency in Young Children

Reaching IN ... Reaching OUT (RIRO) is an evidence-based skills training program designed to promote resilience in children six years and younger. It helps adults help children cope more effectively with life's inevitable stresses and challenges.

RIRO adapts the renowned Penn Resiliency Program (PRP) school-age model to help children reach "in" to think more resiliently about daily challenges and reach "out" to others and opportunities.

RIRO is dedicated to making resources and training about resiliency promotion widely available to professionals, paraprofessionals, parents and students. Its skills-training program and curriculum modules are now available for dissemination across Canada.

RIRO's website (www.reachinginreachingout.com) offers visitors a number of downloadable print and video resources including the new *Resiliency Guidebook* and *College Curriculum Modules*.

Hard copies of the guidebook and curriculum modules including a DVD containing the PowerPoints and videos can be ordered from CCCF: orders@cccf-fcsge.ca; e-store at www.cccf-fcsge.ca

Also watch upcoming issues of *Interaction* for articles on resiliency that will help you in your everyday practice!

— Jeanine Plamondon

New Bulletin on Early Learning to be Mailed with *Interaction*

Watch for your copy of the first Bulletin of the new Early Childhood Learning Knowledge Centre (ECLKC). It will focus on transition to school and will be mailed in December with your winter issue of *Interaction*.

In the meantime, be sure to read two excellent papers prepared by the ECLKC: *Why is high-quality child care essential? The link between quality child care and early learning* (an excerpt from this paper was published in the summer issue of *Interaction*) and *Learning through play*. You can access these documents on the website at www.ccl-cca.ca/childhoodlearning.

In June, the ECLKC began building awareness of its work at two key early learning events. Claire Gascon Giard, general coordinator of the Early Childhood Learning Knowledge Centre, presented a workshop on supporting early learning practices at the Leading the Way to Quality Conference, in Calgary, Alberta. Also in June, the ECLKC had its first exhibit booth at the Canadian Language and Literacy Research Network's 5th Annual Network Conference in Charlottetown, P.E.I.

— Valérie Bell

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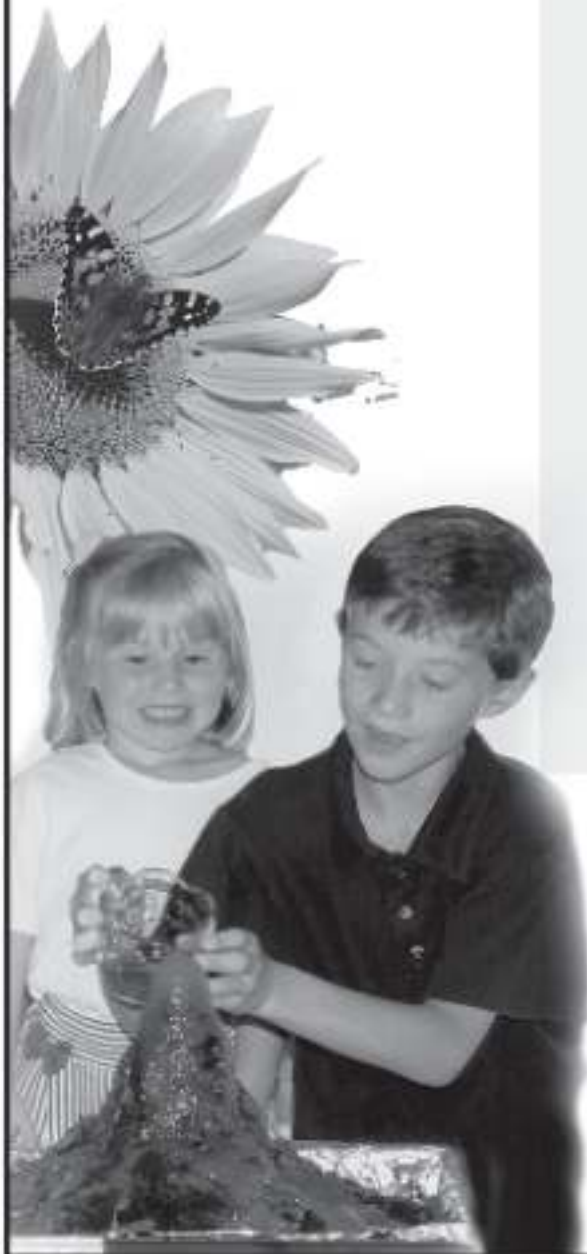
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FROM WHERE I SIT

The Child's Right to be Heard

by Landon Pearson

Children are born to communicate; their very lives depend on it. New parents know this very well as they struggle to make out why their infant is making those noises. Just as loving parents pay close, sometimes agonized attention to their babies' cries in order to respond appropriately, so every caring adult should listen to children carefully and learn to decipher their various modes of communication in order to mentor them on the challenging road to maturity. The child's right to be heard springs from our common humanity and, when respected, sets in motion that marvellous dance between child and adult that can guide children through happy and productive lives.

From a survival perspective, it is easy to accept that there is no minimum age limit for the right to be heard. The problem is that as children grow older they communicate in ways that may be difficult for adults to untangle or may be socially unacceptable (e.g., temper tantrum). So we tend to disregard what they have to say about issues that affect them directly, such as child care or public education. We tend to believe that children cannot possibly comprehend what is "in their best interests."

The *UN Convention on the Rights of the Child* recognizes this clearly in the second half of Article 12 (1) by stating, "The views of the child [are] given due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child." However, the first half of the article reads, "States parties shall assure to the child who is capable of forming his or her views the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting the child," and only then adds the qualifiers about age and maturity. To my mind, this strikes

"A child's right to be heard springs from our common humanity and, when respected, sets in motion that marvellous dance between child and adult that can guide children through happy and productive lives."

the proper balance with respect to the child's right to be heard. The child's status as a person with inherent rights is set out first and only then do the child's age and stage of development become factors in how the child's views are interpreted. Children's rights, like all human rights, are universal, indivisible, interdependent and interrelated – or as UNICEF puts it more simply "all rights for all children." What this means in a child care setting is that a young child's rights must be fulfilled in a way that respects the rights of other children to feel safe and secure. The difficulty posed by disruptive children is not solved by denying them the right to be heard but by helping them express themselves in more constructive ways. This involves first "hearing" what the children have to say by being very attentive to why they are acting out and then creating with the other children the circumstances that will draw the best, not the worst, out of them.

A structured (though not regimented) environment for small children in group settings is very helpful because children, like all human beings, are fundamentally pro-social and will adapt easily to structures that promote positive social interaction (and rebel, of course, in contrary situations). The structure, however, must be primarily imposed for the best interests of the child, not those of the adult.

I strongly believe that respecting the child's right to be heard is crucial for the realization of all the other rights of the child as defined by the Convention. When adults make the necessary effort to listen to children, we expand the culture of respect for human rights beyond the adult



population to encompass all members of the human family, including children. And, as we learn to see even the youngest children as persons, then there can be no further justification for trampling on their rights – abusing, exploiting or neglecting them, which fosters within them an anger that can turn them into unhappy or destructive adults.

I know we will never construct a perfect world in which no child suffers, but respecting the child's right to be heard is a good start.

Landon Pearson is a devoted child rights advocate. Recently retired from the Senate of Canada, she has created the Landon Pearson Resource Centre for the Study of Childhood & Children's Rights at Carleton University in Ottawa. © CCCF 2006

On June 1, 2006, the Landon Pearson Resource Centre for the Study of Childhood and Children's Rights opened its doors at Carleton University in Ottawa. The centre offers a comprehensive collection of documents, books, audio-visual and electronic materials as well as cultural artifacts, collected by Pearson over a lifetime of work with children and children's issues. It will be supported by an endowment established in Pearson's name.

2007 Preschool Language and Literacy Calendar

Helping educators & parents improve the language & literacy skills of preschool children

This colourful, illustrated calendar* features tips for both parents and educators. Each month features fun, practical ideas based on the weekly themes: *Daily Activities*, *Reading Books*, *Pretend Play* and *On the go...*

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Voluntary Sector Launches Initiative to Raise Awareness of its Value to Canadians

by Melissa Roy

A new program has just been launched that will help Canadian charities and nonprofits to inform and educate the public about our incredible contribution to quality of life.

By adopting a single slogan, backed up by statistics and descriptions of what we do and who we are – collectively – each one of the 161,000 individual organizations has an opportunity to benefit from the combined impact of this national effort.

Participating in the *Values Added* initiative does not compete with or replace all the ways that we currently promote our work. In fact, this program is intended to complement those efforts by providing simple, straightforward tools that raise awareness about individual organizations, inside the larger – and incredible – context of Canada's charities and nonprofit sector. Together, we create an extraordinary collective.

Raising Awareness Together

For a long time, leaders and thinkers throughout the charities and nonprofit sector have observed that we are not well understood in the Canadian public. Too often,

policy makers and funders overlook our collective impact and underestimate the breadth of our reach.

During the Voluntary Sector Initiative (a federally sponsored and nationally led series of projects that sought to support the sector, increase capacity, and extend our abilities), the idea of a shared public awareness initiative emerged. Many felt that if charities and nonprofits could come together and speak with a single voice about our impact and importance, that our influence with, and support from, Canadians would be strengthened.

In 2004, seven pan-Canadian organizations came together to deliver the Voluntary Sector Awareness Project. They produced a Discussion Paper (on the pros, cons and challenges of awareness-raising), they consulted across the country, and they created the Values Added initiative in keeping with what they heard, and learned, during that process.

Why “Values Added”?

Finding a way to describe a sector as diverse as ours has been no easy feat. While the range of interests and activities across the sector is enormous, we all share a strong set of *values* that fuel our passion and drive our desire to make things better.

Values that bind us together. Values that add strength and purpose to our collective voice.

Values Added reminds Canadians of the value we deliver to the community, to individuals, to the economy and to society as a whole.

Values Added defines who we are, what we do and the difference we make.

The seven organizations leading the Voluntary Sector Awareness Project are committed to bringing Values Added to life. All have started to integrate the graphic elements and text

tools into their existing communications products.

Visit www.valuesadded.ca to download the User Guide, which contains all of the graphics and ideas on how you can help support this important initiative.

Melissa Roy is a project coordinator with Imagine Canada — one of the Values Added project partners. For more information on Imagine Canada, visit the website at www.imaginecanada.ca.





The Investigating ‘Quality’ Project: Challenges and Possibilities for Canada

by **Alan Pence & Veronica Pacini-Ketchabaw**

Much has been written to date on the subject of quality child care in Canada, with a history that goes back approximately three decades (for example, Fowler, 1975; Pence & Goelman, 1985; Goelman & Pence, 1987; Doherty, 2005). The starting point for most of this work has been a view of quality child care derived from developmental psychology and research that highlights the relationships between child development outcomes and variables such as group size, child-staff ratios and the physical environment (McCartney, 2004). An initiative currently underway in Canada – the Investigating Quality (IQ) Project* – suggests that questions of quality care are larger and more complex than this view allows. The IQ Project’s focus is to identify and work with diverse streams of research and practice in order to broaden and deepen early childhood discussions in Canada.

The reasons for seeking to expand discussions of early childhood learning in Canada are numerous:

- Current North American discussions are based on a particular social and academic history that focuses on certain issues while missing others.
- History and context are not uniform around the world – indeed, they are not homogeneous within U.S. or Canadian borders.
- Particular social and cultural groups (for example Indigenous Peoples) have determined that their voices

have not been heard by the dominant discourse and are exploring other ways of understanding.

- A vigorous body of research and theoretical work has emerged in the U.S. and in other parts of the world that are challenging established perspectives.
- Other disciplines, most notably sociology, have developed interests in the child and are providing alternative approaches to understanding children’s care and development.

And the list goes on. Those of us involved in the IQ Project believe that these other approaches and understandings constitute vital contributions to a broader, more critical and creative discussion that should take place in Canadian early childhood care and education.

In its early stages (2005), the project identified various streams of research and practice as well as individuals who were playing key roles in advancing these other ways of seeing and understanding quality (see sidebar for more details). To a considerable degree, many of the streams operate in semi-isolation from the others – the ideas put forward or texts cited by one article were not present in others. The opportunity to learn about diverse views was not readily available through reading any particular discussion of research or practice. The IQ Project decided to host a series of small forums in 2006 that would bring together several key members of various streams to explore in greater detail core ideas and perspectives and how those might contribute to a broader, richer and deeper understanding of early childhood care and development and quality of care issues.

To date the forums have addressed such topics as indigenous approaches to quality child care, international development perspectives on quality and policy and innovative approaches to pedagogy. The public presentations associated with the forums have been well attended and proved stimulating and useful for early years practitioners, government officials, instructors and researchers alike. Funds are being sought to continue and to expand the broadening and deepening work of the forums.

Interrogating Practices: Re-Conceptualizing Professional Development

Another objective of the IQ Project is to promote the active engagement of early childhood educators in discussions and actions that lead to the formation of innovative spaces for young children and families. Veronica Pacini-Ketchabaw is currently working collaboratively, through a participatory



Investigating Diverse Quality Streams

Indigenous Approaches to Quality Child Care. The focus of this stream, represented at the first forum held in February 2006, is Indigenous perspectives on quality. International Indigenous leaders share views of quality child care defined in a holistic way with particular emphasis on life principles of relationality, respect, wholeness, sacredness, continuity, connections between the past and the future, relationships with nature, and the pursuit of spiritual well-being. Indigenous communities are in the process of reclaiming the concept of quality care and re-defining it to reflect their cultural values.

International Development Perspectives on Quality and Policy. A second stream of interest is the international development and ECCD work that has been generated by the Consultative Group on ECCD (CG). Started in the mid-1980s by Dr. Robert Myers, the CG has taken a broad, intersectoral (health, social welfare, education, nutrition, sanitation, etc.) approach to ECCD. The current trend promotes a level of uniformity in assessments, standards, programming and various other aspects of ECD that many committed to local sensitivity and the importance of diversity see as problematic.

Beyond Quality and Other Critiques. A third stream, reflected in a forum held in August 2006, is one represented by several authors of the *Contesting Childhood* book series and participants in the Early Childhood Education Reconceptualist Group (RECE). These groups discuss challenging practice and innovative ways of engaging with pedagogy in early childhood education, including the use of pedagogical documentation and learning stories.

The Winter 2007 issue of *Interaction* will focus on some of the concepts and practices highlighted at the Re-thinking Pedagogy, Training and Practice Forum (representing views from *Beyond Quality and Other Critiques*).

action research model (i.e., the “subjects” of the research contribute to its design, implementation and evaluation), with a group of early childhood educators from a variety of settings, including Aboriginal, multicultural, rural, urban, college and university-based, preschool, full-time day care, infant-toddler, family child care. The initiative aims to build capacity in and bring innovation to the field of early childhood education in British Columbia.

This work with educators is based on characteristics of effective professional development linked to enhanced pedagogy and children’s learning (Mitchell & Cubey, 2003):

- It incorporates participants’ own aspirations, skills, knowledge and understanding into the learning context.
- It provides theoretical knowledge, content knowledge and knowledge and information about alternative/innovative practices (e.g., learning stories, pedagogical documentation).
- Participants are involved in investigating pedagogy within their own early childhood settings. Professional development advisers engage in these investigations and work directly with early childhood educators to help them question practice, beliefs, understanding and/or attitudes.
- It incorporates critical reflection, enabling participants to investigate and challenge assumptions and extend their thinking.
- It supports educational practice that is inclusive and respectful of diverse children, families and communities.

A complete evaluation of this component of the project will be conducted in the fall of 2006. Evaluation data to date indicate that the participating early childhood educators are transforming their practice and gaining greater awareness and insight into their work with children and families. They are focusing their work on issues of children’s learning that are rooted in innovative theoretical understandings (see accompanying sidebar).

Challenges as well as exciting opportunities lie ahead for British Columbia and Canada regarding early childhood education. Our ways of understanding children, care, development and participation – as well as quality – are broadening and deepening. Truly, “the future is not what it once was.”

* The Investigating Quality Project, funded by the British Columbia Ministry of Children and Family Development, is one of several quality-oriented initiatives that were undertaken in various parts of Canada in response to the federal government’s Early Learning and Child Care (ELCC) agreements with the provinces (see, for example, Friendly & Beach (2005), “Quality by Design”; and Whitty & Nason’s (2006) work in New Brunswick on developing a provincial curriculum). These have augmented earlier projects, such as the *Partners in Quality* Project of the Canadian Child Care Federation (CCCCF).

For more information about upcoming events within the *Investigating Quality* Project, please visit <http://reach.uvic.ca>. Information about the Early Years Specialization at the School of Child and Youth Care, University of Victoria, can be found at www.cyc.uvic.ca.

Alan Pence, Ph.D., is professor of child care at the University of Victoria, co-director of the Investigating Quality Project, founder of the First Nations Partnerships Program, and director of the Early Childhood Development Virtual University. He has published extensively. Co-authored or co-edited books related to this article include *Valuing Quality in Early Childhood Service* (1994); *Beyond Quality in Early Childhood Education and Care: Postmodern Perspectives* (1999); and, most recently, *Supporting Indigenous Children’s Development: Community-University Partnerships* (in press).

Veronica Pacini-Ketchabaw, Ph.D., is an assistant professor at the University of Victoria, co-director of the Investigating Quality Project, and coordinator of the Early Years Specialization at the School of Child and Youth Care. She has authored and co-authored many journal articles in the areas of migration and child care. Her most recent publication is a co-edited volume with Dr. Pence entitled *Canadian Early Childhood*



Education: Broadening and Deepening Discussions of Quality, published by the Canadian Child Care Federation.

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Pence, A. R., & Goelman, H. (1985). A report on the Victoria day care research project. *Canadian Journal of Research in Early Childhood Education*, 1(1), 15.

Whitty, P. & Nason, P. (June 2006). Developing a curriculum framework for early learning and child care in New Brunswick. Canadian Child Care Federation conference presentation, 'Leading the Way to Quality'. Calgary, Alberta.

Rinaldi, C. (2001). A pedagogy of listening: A perspective of listening from Reggio Emilia. *Children in Europe*, 1, 1–5.

A Teacher's Story: "Listening to Bubbles"

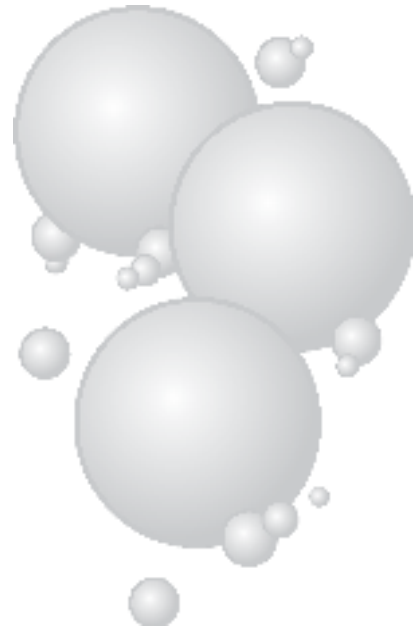
Here is an example of how an early childhood educator participating in the Investigating Quality Project reflects on her own practice, her own assumptions about what learning is and how we respect children's voices. She refers to the pedagogy of listening, as understood by Rinaldi (2001). Rinaldi explains that "listening plays an important part" in the search for meaning.

"The idea of a 'pedagogy of listening' is a great way to get staff not to jump in without listening first. This week I had an experience that changed the way I understand what it means to listen to children. I set up a large table for bubbles, with large trays of soapy water and watched. Right away, I heard the children saying: 'Don't!' 'Stop!' I was about to jump in and stopped myself. My first thought was, 'This isn't going to work. They are too young.' Then I remembered what we had discussed in the last workshop about listening with all the senses and seeing the whole context, before making assumptions."

"It turned out the four-year-olds wanted to build a mountain of bubbles, while the two-year-olds wanted to pop the bubbles. The two-year-olds weren't even answering the pleas of the four-year-olds, 'Don't!' 'Stop!' They just kept popping the bubbles! I held myself back and watched to see what would happen. While all of this was happening I was consciously aware of my staff watching. I could sense they wanted to jump in and were wondering why I wasn't intervening at the first cry of 'Stop!' from the children."

"I reminded myself that they were only playing with soap and water, that they couldn't hurt themselves. I looked at the whole situation and asked myself what was going on besides the warnings of 'Don't!' and 'Stop!' I waited to see what they would do about the situation. I held back on my underlying judgment about the children's ability to deal with this and was happily surprised to see that the kids sorted it out amongst themselves, quickly and without further conflict. The two-year-olds moved to the other end of the table and the four-year-olds got to build their mountain of bubbles."

"It's hard to admit it but I keep hearing and seeing how our (staff) own underlying judgments, preconceived ideas and hidden motives might be hindering change both in ourselves and in our centres. Listening to the children opened up a whole new world of meaning for me and it's leading all of us to a place of change, sometimes uncomfortable, but change nevertheless. It's really amazing, we are holding ourselves back from jumping in too soon; we are allowing the children to lead us to new and exciting projects with them and we are getting excited by this new perspective. We are all learning together, the children and the staff."





CCHRS Releases Occupational Standards for Child Care Administrators

By Samantha Peek

Leadership in the early learning and child care sector is critical to overall quality. Because effective leadership helps create a knowledgeable, stable staff team, a supportive workplace, and directly benefits children and families, it is important to develop tools that support and enhance leadership capacity. The *Occupational Standards for Child Care Administrators* – developed by the Child Care Human Resources Sector Council (CCHRS) – are designed to do just that.

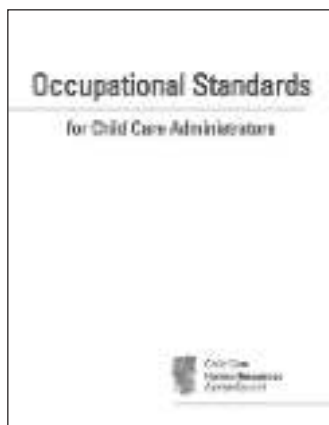
“Studies like *Working for Change* identified skills gaps and the need for leadership supports, but without a clear definition of the occupation, addressing those gaps was challenging,” says Diana Carter, executive director of the CCHRS. “The standards clearly define the skills, abilities, and knowledge required to be an administrator in an early childhood setting and provide the foundation for future work, including curriculum development.”

Released this past summer, the standards were developed via extensive consultation with 140 administrators from across the country. They reflect best practices in the administration of early childhood settings and can be used in a variety of ways:

- Employers can use the standards to identify key skill sets and job tasks when recruiting, hiring and creating job descriptions.

- Educators can use the standards as the foundation for developing curricula and training programs.
- Child care administrators, directors and managers can use the standards to identify skills gaps and areas for their own professional development.
- Sector organizations can use them for developing and evaluating certification and accreditation programs.
- Governments can use them as a nationally recognized set of best practices to inform the development and delivery of regulations and child care programs and training.

After a workshop on the administrator standards at the Leading the Way to Quality Conference (June 2006), facilitator Mary Goss-Prowse noted, “It was empowering for participants to see in print just how critical and complex a role they play as administrators of early learning and child care programs.” Given the level of participant interest and engagement at the workshop, the sector council plans to conduct several more workshops and presentations in various regions across the country in the coming months.



Where do we go from here?

Currently there are few post-secondary programs aimed at early learning and child care administrators in Canada. With the standards now complete, the CCHRS hopes to move forward on a project designed to identify gaps and develop curriculum. The goal is to begin the project in early 2007.

Visit the CCHRS web site for more information on our projects and to order your copy of the standards: www.cchrs-cssge.ca.

Did you know... ?

The *Occupational Standards for Child Care Administrators* is a companion document to the *Occupational Standards for Child Care Practitioners* developed by the Canadian Child Care Federation in 2003. For more information or to order the practitioner standards, e-mail CCCF at orders@cccf-fcsge.ca or visit the CCCF's e-store at: www.cccf-fcsge.ca.





Supporting Premature Babies through Early Childhood

by Penny Davies

The rate of premature birth has been steadily increasing over the past two decades. A typical pregnancy lasts 40 weeks, but approximately 6 per cent of Canadian infants are born before 37 weeks gestation. Over half of babies born at 24 weeks now survive and by 30 weeks, the odds increase to 95 per cent (Jones et al, 2005).

Most preemies born later than 32 weeks will do well and be virtually indistinguishable from their peers by the time they enter kindergarten. However, there is important new research about developmental risks for younger preemies, particularly if they weighed less than 1500 grams at birth. We have known for a long time that roughly 20 per cent of these children will have significant disabilities such as cerebral palsy, hearing or vision problems or chronic lung disease (Mikkola et al, 2005). This number has remained fairly constant over the years, but we are becoming increasingly aware of the more subtle difficulties faced by the remaining 80 per cent.

Do preemies catch up?

In the past, educators and physicians have believed that most children born premature “catch up” within the first year or two of life. We now know that this is not true. While many preemies achieve normal physical size, the majority experience qualitative differences in their developmental abilities that appear to be the result of minor brain injuries or abnormalities visible on MRI and CT scans (Inder et al, 2005; Harvey, O’Callaghan & Mohay, 1999).

Research now suggests that 2/3 of preemies that escape major disabilities will have other problems that interfere with their ability to learn in school (Mikkola et al). Although they often score within the normal range on developmental assessments, their IQ scores are 10 points lower than children born full term and they are more likely to have problems with learning disabilities, behaviour, attention, sensory processing, social development, emotional regulation, language development and motor planning and coordination (Litt, Taylor, Klein & Hack, 2005; Kamaya & Kasiro, 1996; Farel, Hooper, Teplin, Henry & Kraybill, 1998; Luoma & Martikainen, 1998; Palta, Sadek-Badai, Evans et al, 2000; Goyen & Woods, 1998; Sykes, Hoy, Bill et al, 1997).

What does this mean for early childhood educators?

Monitor development closely and make prompt referrals for early intervention services.

The earlier we can identify subtle problems, the more effective we can be in preventing them from affecting school performance and self esteem. For preterm children, it is not generally helpful to take a “wait and see” approach. Teachers should trust their instincts and make referrals if something seems questionable, even if developmental milestones are being met.

Delays in expressive language development and phonological awareness are strong predictors of later difficulties with learning to read and write (Scarborough, 2001). Behaviour problems may be related to difficulties with attention, sensory processing or emotional regulation. Poor coordination and motor planning issues are other common problems that can be helped.

Spread the word that high quality preschool programs are good for premature children.

A very recent study (Olds, 2006) found that preemies who participated in educationally enriched day care in their first three years of life had higher math and reading scores and fewer behaviour problems than preemies who did not attend such programs. Early childhood educators need to get the message out to families that most preemies will be better prepared for school if they attend a good preschool program, and parents should be encouraged to consider waiting until senior kindergarten to enroll their children in public school.

Parents are often advised by physicians to keep their preemies out of group child care because of immature



immune systems. There does not appear to be any evidence that reduced immunity persists beyond the first or second year of life for children without chronic health conditions. There is actually growing evidence that for most children, early exposure to common infections will boost a child's immune system and reduce the incidence of illness when they are older (Ball et al).

Children who are prone to problems with sensory processing, emotional regulation, behaviour and attention are likely to do best in programs with small class sizes, low student to teacher ratio, calm, low stimulation environments and predictable routines.

Listen to the parents.

Parents are the experts on their own children. Strong, trusting relationships with parents are essential to helping children grow and learn. When a preemie's mother tells you that her child won't be able to cope when wearing the wrong socks or if there is a fluorescent light in the classroom, believe her. For some children with sensory issues, these things can be as distracting as fingernails on a chalkboard for others.

Be supportive, but also honest and direct with parents.

Giving birth to a baby that is not much heavier than a pound of butter is a terrifying experience. Months of the emotional ups and down of neonatal intensive care can be exhausting and sometimes traumatic. These are miracle babies born to parents who have gained a new respect for the fragility of life. There is a natural tendency for physicians, friends, family members and others to try and help alleviate parents' anxiety by reassuring them that their children are "fine."

Most parents prefer honesty in the context of trusting relationships. They know when something is wrong and they are often relieved to have the opportunity to talk about their concerns. As an early interventionist and the mother of two preemies myself, I believe that early childhood educators need to learn more about prematurity because we have a tremendous opportunity and a responsibility to help these children do as well as they possibly can.

Penny Davies is an early interventionist working in Peel Region, near Toronto. She has a Master's degree in psychology, a degree in early childhood education and has worked as an ECE in centre-based child care. © CCCF 2006

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Take Part in the Review of the Updated National Statement on Quality Child Care

by Anne Maxwell

The Canadian Child Care Federation's *National Statement on Quality Child Care* was published in 1991 and one amendment was made in 1992. Since that time, the National Statement has remained a popular resource, particularly for early childhood development college programs. With the expertise of Gillian Doherty as author and with the support of a review committee some of whom participated in the development of the original statement, CCCF has developed a new draft version of the National Statement.

The draft has been posted to the CCCF website and until December 22, 2006, you can contribute your feedback using an online survey tool. After that date, the review committee will look at the feedback and a final version will be prepared for approval at the February 2007 Board and Member Council meetings. If passed, the statement will be submitted for a ratification vote at the 2007 Annual General Meeting in Halifax – appropriately coinciding with the celebration of the CCCF's 20th anniversary.

This updated National Statement describes a vision of quality child care that applies in all service delivery models. It begins with a summary of the nine components that may be used as a one-page document and continues with more in-depth information on each of the nine areas: ELCC practitioners; collaborative partnerships with children's families; indoor and outdoor physical and learning environments; a purposeful learning program; an ELCC environment that supports the rights of children; a supported workforce; leadership at the program level; administrative practices at the program level; and an effective infrastructure.

Please encourage colleagues across the country to visit the CCCF website (www.cccf-fcsge.ca) to review the document and answer the survey.

Review Committee Members

- Karen Chandler, Strategic Initiatives Branch, Government of Ontario
- Ann Gedrose, Yukon Government
- Pat Hogan, Certification Council of Early Childhood Educators of Nova Scotia
- Karen Isaac, BC Aboriginal Child Care Society
- April Kalyniuk, chair of CCCF Member Council
- Olie Lee, Saskatchewan Early Childhood Association
- Debra Mayer, consultant and trainer, Teachable Moments
- Joanne Morris, Child Care Human Resources Sector Council
- Anne Rundle, Aboriginal liaison to CCCF Member Council
- Linda Skinner, Home Child Care Association of Ontario
- Gail Szauner, Saskatchewan Early Childhood Association

Anne Maxwell is director of Projects, Programs and Services at the Canadian Child Care Federation. © CCCF 2006

Quality Environments and Best Practices to Support Physical Activity in the Early Years

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HEALTH WATCH

Small Magnets

Health Canada is alerting parents and caregivers of the hazards small, loose magnets pose to young children. A wide range of children's products such as magnetic building toys, alphabet and number magnets, science or craft kits, board games, vehicle sets, even plush toys, may contain small magnets. In addition, small magnets attached to other items, such as magnetic jewellery and fridge magnets, pose a potential problem if they become disengaged from the item.

This advisory is prompted by the recent death of a 20-month old child in the United States as well as three other US reports of multiple magnet ingestion incidents and one multiple magnet inhalation incident. These serious incidents required surgical intervention and involved children aged three to eight years.

Tips to avoid such incidents:

- Keep products with small magnets out of the reach of young children. Also, look for any small magnets that may have been separated from toys and other products and immediately remove the magnets from the reach of young children.
- Seek immediate medical care for any child who has swallowed, or is suspected of having swallowed, one or more magnets.
- Follow the safety warnings and manufacturer's age recommendations on children's toys, and keep toys intended for older children out of the reach of younger children.
- Children under three years of age frequently mouth objects – small toys, small balls or small loose toy parts are dangerous choking, ingestion and inhalation hazards to children at this vulnerable stage – they must be kept out of reach. Similarly, keep small household items such as coins, magnets, batteries, pen caps, paper clips and jewellery out of the reach of young children. Know how the children in your care play – this guidance can apply to some older children who may still frequently mouth objects.

For more tips on choosing and using toys safely, visit Health Canada's Toy Safety Tips web page (www.hc-sc.gc.ca/cps-spc/pubs/cons/toy_safe-jouet_secur_e.html).

Source: Canadian Paediatric Society



www.caringforkids.cps.ca / www.soinsdenosenfants.cps.ca

LOOK! BOOKS TO SHARE!

Concept Picture Books

Baker, Alan. *White Rabbit's Color Book*. New York: Grisewood & Dempsey, 1994.

Fleming, Denise. *Alphabet Under Construction*. New York: Henry Holt, 2002.

Hoban, Tana. *Exactly the Opposite*. New York: Greenwillow Books, 1990.

Hoban, Tana. *I Read Symbols*. New York: Greenwillow Books, 1983.

Jocelyn, Marthe. *Over Under*. Toronto: Tundra, 2005.

Martin, Bill. *Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See?* New York: H. Holt, 1995.

Martin, Bill. *Chicka chicka 1, 2, 3*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 2004.

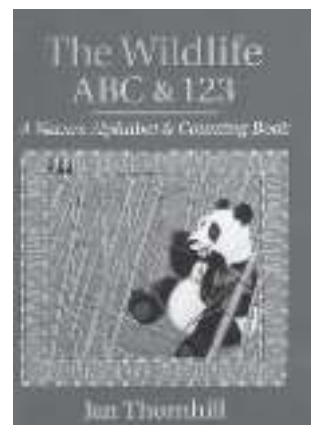
Milich, Zoran. *City 1 2 3*. Toronto: Kids Can Press, 2005.

Miller, Margaret. *Big and Little*. New York: Greenwillow Books, 1998.

Schwartz, David M. *How Much is a Million?* New York: Lothrop, Lee & Shepard, 1985.

Shannon, George. *White is for Blueberry*. New York: Greenwillow Books, 2005.

Thornhill, Jan. *The Wildlife ABC & 123: a nature alphabet & counting book*. Toronto: Maple Tree Press, 2004.





Toronto First Duty Model Shows Promising Outcomes for Children

by Kerry McCuaig

In 2002, five schools partnered with community organizations to become Toronto First Duty (TFD) sites. They brought together the three early childhood streams of kindergarten, child care and family supports into a seamless service. The idea was to create a “single stop” where parents could access family supports and children could participate in a range of quality early learning and care activities.

The design draws on the expertise of kindergarten teachers, early childhood educators and family support workers who together form a professional team that jointly plans and delivers the program. In combining the resources of the separate early childhood entities, the sponsors¹ anticipated that the new program would better respond to two pressing social needs – giving children the “smart start” they need for school and for life while at the same time supporting parents to do their job as parents as they pursue work, training or the care of other family members.

Cathy Laing enrolled her two daughters in the Bruce/WoodGreen Early Learning Centre at Bruce Public School. The family participates in the child/parent drop-in or the children attend on their own for both part and full days depending on Laing’s work schedule. “This is one of the pluses of First Duty. Unlike a traditional

child care program, the girls do not have to stop their activities or lose touch with friends when my situation changes,” says Laing. Jane Bertrand, TFD’s resource and development director adds, “The model recognizes that the well being of children is directly linked to how their families and communities are doing.”

The school site² provides the core learning, care and parenting supports. If a child has health or developmental challenges, the TFD team draws on the resources of all its partners – the school, school board, community agency, city’s children’s services department and Public Health – to provide the appropriate supports. If more assistance is needed, staff link the family to specialized resources. Partnerships also bring the community into the



A parent volunteer in the program.

school to conduct health screening, provide speech and language supports and health programs on site.

Schools were chosen as Toronto First Duty sites to facilitate family access. Bertrand explains, "They are established community institutions serving children 4 to 12 years old. With a few modifications, they can become the neighbourhood hub for families with children from birth to high school, taking the guesswork out of where parents go to find the resources they need." The design recognizes that family circumstances change as families and children grow. "A single site keeps siblings together and avoids the dash between the school and caregiver that is too common for so many working parents," Bertrand adds.

The model also works well for parents who are not in the paid workforce. Mahmoud Adulwahed's mom says goodbye to him at the centre and then walks down the hall with his two younger brothers to a colourful room filled with adult-sized easy chairs and children's play areas. Entesar, the mother of five boys under eight years old, says having the parenting program on site makes it possible for her to participate. "I couldn't imagine taking the older boys to school and then getting on a bus with an infant and a toddler to attend a playgroup elsewhere."

Bertrand explains, "We are applying the lessons learned by other countries with successful child development systems by breaking down the barriers between child care, education and family supports. The program responds to the whole child and the whole family, rather than compartmentalizing."

The model was inspired by the recommendations of the McCain-Mustard *Early Years Study*. Margaret McCain describes one of these recommendations:



Lynn Blanche from the TDSB early years team works with staff on program development.

During the Early Years Study we were confronted by the array of services – child care; drop-in play groups; nursery schools; kindergarten; head start; family resource and parenting centres among others. It may sound as if the field is covered but in fact it was scattered with disconnected, poorly resourced programs. Few parents knew what services existed or what they did. In response, we mapped a plan to capture a community's early childhood assets by blending them into a single program with a common mandate to provide early learning, care and parenting supports.

While it may seem easier to start a new program rather than reorganizing what is already there, the benefits are worth it. Bertrand notes, "New programs can often destabilize existing ones, while blending existing services draws on the collective expertise."

Toronto First Duty set out to show McCain's ambitious vision was

doable and beneficial. The hope is all three levels of government will expand the model across Canada. Ontario's children's ministry has taken up the challenge by initiating three new demonstration sites outside Toronto as part of its Best Start strategy, which sees schools as community hubs for child and family services. Expert panels comprised of representatives from education, child care and family resource programs are ready to report their recommendations for an integrated early childhood curriculum and staffing model.

The project has attracted national and international attention. "Provincial children's and education ministries were keeping us busy with tours particularly before the federal election," states Penny Morris, the co-ordinator at the Bruce/Woodgreen Early Learning Centre. With the termination of the federal-provincial child care agreements, many provinces slowed down, or shelved, their expansion plans. Undeterred Toronto's Best Start network is advancing the model within its existing service delivery structure. Bertrand remarks,

“Initiating change in a context of growth is preferable but the benefits of integration can be realized without expansion.” Research supports her claim. Academics from the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education and Ryerson University have followed the project’s development. Their work has tracked interesting changes in parent involvement, program quality and child outcomes.

Parent Engagement

The project has shown the greatest success in encouraging parent engagement. There is a significant body of evidence indicating parent involvement in their child’s education – reading to the child, overseeing school assignments and meeting with staff to assess student progress – influences school success (e.g., Willms, 2002; Shonkoff & Phillips, 2000). To assess parent participation, researchers surveyed a sample of parents of kindergarten-aged children in all five TFD sites. To provide a comparison, parents were also surveyed in nearby schools where either only kindergarten was offered or kindergarten and either child care or a family/child resource program. Dr. Carl Corter, leader of the First Duty research team, states, “The results suggest that overall parents at TFD sites are more actively engaged in their children’s early learning and are more likely to participate in school activities and communicate with staff.” According to Corter, “Parents desire meaningful input into their child’s program. The findings indicate the First Duty design facilitates this.”

Universal Access

Programs are open to all families while striving to reach families who do not traditionally use early childhood programs. First Duty wants to avoid the stigma that can be associated with services targeted

to at-risk families. The First Duty strategy tackles the flaw in the current organization of children’s services that focuses on disadvantaged communities to catch at-risk children. Bertrand explains:

Extensive mapping tells us that the majority of children experiencing difficulties come from middle-class and advantaged families. This is a key argument for a universally accessible early childhood system. We have a far greater chance of catching children at-risk by serving all children.

Researchers tracked enrollment to help answer whether TFD programs engaged families who are representative of the communities they serve. Using maternal education as an indicator, researchers found this was the case. For example, the Queen Victoria site has participants with somewhat lower levels of education compared to the other four. More than 20 per cent of the mothers have not completed high school, yet almost the same percentage have completed university. This suggests the TFD model has universal appeal. Similar patterns for diversity in language are seen across sites.

The universal reach of TFD is also illustrated by the YEY-Wilcox site. This site is of particular interest because there is a demographic divide between east and west. On the east is an affluent area while the west has concentrations of families living below the poverty line, more lone parent families, and more language minority and immigrant families. Enrollment figures show families from both areas using TFD services. “The fear that open access in the absence of sufficient supply would see the clever middle classes squeeze out more disadvantaged

families has not materialized,” comments Corter.

Quality Improvements

Integrating early childhood services has also enhanced quality. Using the Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale Revised (ECERS-R), researchers twice assessed the sites. In 2003, the kindergarten, child care and parenting programs showed pretty good quality, but there was room for improvement. By 2005, quality improvements were found in all seven areas on ECERS-R, with the biggest advances made in use of space, program activities and parent/staff communication. This can be explained in part by the sites’ efforts to incorporate the TFD goals that emphasize parent participation and using space in new ways to accommodate the integrated program.

Staff Team

The success of service integration depends on the staff team. Key informant interviews and anonymous staff surveys captured the barriers to and benefits of team building. Staff views of integration evolved over time. In its earliest stages, integration was a new concept for both professionals and administrators. The absences of clear direction and supports lead to fears over the loss of professional integrity. The differences in compensation and working conditions among the team members contributed to an internal hierarchy. Improved leadership and support including the development of protocols, joint professional development opportunities, designated program planning time and collective problem solving helped to build the teams.

Despite the struggles, the final staff survey in year four shows every kindergarten teacher, early

childhood educator and family resource respondent "would like to see the TFD project continued at my school." Team members also cited professional benefits from integration, including increased support from administrators and system managers, more access to program resources, better communication with families, enhanced professional development opportunities and peer learning and support.

Improved Child Outcomes

Reports from staff and parents suggest the model shines when it comes to early intervention. Graduates once earmarked for special education classes are in mainstream classes by grade 1. Morris states, "Children having trouble in other programs have made great strides since enrolling full time at the Centre."

The advantages of the integrated program for children played a big part in overcoming staff reservations. The program's benefits for children were assessed using the Early Development Instrument (EDI). The EDI is a rating scale that kindergarten teachers complete for each child in their class. It is made up of over 100 items categorized into five domains measuring physical health/well being, social knowledge and competence, emotional health/maturity, language and cognitive development, and communication skills and general knowledge.

EDI scores can indicate changes in child development outcomes in a specific neighbourhood. The Toronto District School Board has used EDI assessments for a number of years providing baseline information for school comparison. Data was collected for all sites early in the project and again in 2005.

Total EDI scores improved significantly in three of the five sites and were unchanged in two.

Total score is a blunt way of looking at child development; it is more informative to examine change within the five subscales. For all sites combined, significant improvements were seen in three of the five dimensions: social, emotional and language. Changes were not seen in physical development or communication/general knowledge. Physical development was generally not a target in programming at the sites. Communication/general knowledge is strongly and negatively associated with minority language status. Nearly 60 per cent of the children in TFD programs have English as a second language and this may have moderated improvements in this area. The improvement on the EDI scores in social-emotional and language development may be a result of several sites' explicit aims for improvements in these areas. This further suggests causal connections between TFD programs and improved outcomes for child development.

During the spring of 2003 direct child measures were collected on a sample of 76 children across the sites. Measures were repeated in the spring of 2005 with a sample of 125 children from three of the sites. The measures included the Vocabulary-Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test (PPVT-III), Test of Early Reading Ability (TERA-III), Number Sense and Social Understanding. Although the children tested were reflective of their community, the sample size was small. Nevertheless, the findings were consistent with the EDI data indicating significant

improvements across the three sites sampled.

Costing analyses have also confirmed that the integrate model serves more families more flexibly for the same cost as traditional service delivery. Corter summarizes the benefits of integrated services:

Overall we can conclude that integrated professional supports improve the quality of early childhood programs and reduce risks for all parents and children. By engaging parents in the school and their child's early learning, children's social, emotional and academic readiness for school is enhanced.

For more information about Toronto First Duty, visit www.city.toronto.on.ca/firstduty or contact, TFD Communications Manager, Kerry McCuaig: kmccuaig@rogers.com; TFD Program Development Coordinator, Jane Bertrand: jbertrand@councilecd.ca; TDSB TDF Superintendent, Jill Worthy: Jill.Worthy@tdsb.on.ca; City of Toronto, First Duty Manager, Pamela Musson: pmusson@toronto.ca; Best Start Coordinator for the City of Toronto, Joanne Murrell: jmurrell@toronto.ca.

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Footnotes

1 Toronto First Duty Partners: City of Toronto; Toronto District Board of Education; Atkinson Charitable Foundation; Canadian Autoworkers Child Care Fund; Atkinson Centre for Society and Child Development, OISE/UofT; The Child Development Institute; Macaulay Child Development Centre; N.Y.A.D. (Community Inc.); East York East Toronto Family Resources; Woodgreen Community Centre; Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario; Elementary Teachers of Toronto; Toronto Coalition for Better Child Care.

2 First Duty Site Locations: Bruce Public School; Corvette Public School; JR Wilcox Community School; Queen Victoria Public School; Secord Public School

A Seamless Program of Early Learning and Care at Bruce/WoodGreen

by Penny Morris

Hannah starts junior kindergarten this year at Bruce Public School. Hannah's kindergarten is delivered within an all day program of learning and care. There will be no need to get accustomed to a whole new routine or new teachers or friends. Bruce Public School has been "her school" since before she could talk.

When the Bruce/WoodGreen Early Learning Centre was developed as a Toronto First Duty site, the Parenting & Family Literacy Centre operated by the Toronto District School Board was integrated with the kindergarten program. At the same time, WoodGreen Community Services' Child Care Unit came on board to create a full day of seamless care and education for kindergarten-aged children. Last year, the expanded options of integrated services became available for children as young as 2.5 years. Hannah and her family have participated to varying degrees as the family's schedule and care needs have changed.

The Core Program

As one element of an interconnected system of support and learning, the parenting centre continues to offer a free program of play and learning for parents or caregivers and their children. Every month between 30 and 50 adults attend with children ranging in age

from newborn to six years. Older children often join their parents and younger siblings in the parenting room for lunch.

The parenting worker (an ECE employed by the school board) implements a play-based program in a supportive environment for adults. She is part of an early childhood team and meets regularly with the ECE preschool staff (employed by WoodGreen Community Services), the project manager (a WoodGreen Child Care manager) and the kindergarten teachers (school board employees) to coordinate joint activities, share

programming ideas and brainstorm to meet the individual needs of children and families.

Access to the full range of resources in the school makes the parenting centre different from any other family drop-in program. Parents and children have many opportunities to join other staff and children for in-and-outdoor play, music, storytelling, theatre and other activities. Many of the older children attending the parenting centre also spend time with or without their parents or caregivers in the preschool room down the hall. For some children this may only be two or three mornings or afternoons each week while for other children it's a daily event.

At the Bruce/WoodGreen Early Learning Centre, parents and children are welcome in all of the rooms all of the time. Both the preschool and kindergarten rooms offer many choices: a free 2.5-hour morning or afternoon program as well as full-time (9 am – 3:30 pm) or extended-day (7:30 am – 6 pm)



Meeting the dentist on health screen day.

options with affordable fees. Parents register their children for the program hours and number of days that work for them.

Since the needs of families change, a child does not have to be registered for the same program hours every day. For example, a family may need the full day for two days a week and extended hours for three days. Other parents want the benefits of a full-day program for their child but don't want this option five days a week. The centre accommodates these requests and also responds to last-minute requests for emergency care. The program is, therefore, able to reduce parental stress and avoid the patchwork of care experienced by many children. Although this may sound like an administrative nightmare, in reality, it is quite manageable because most families have a set schedule.

Children begin arriving as early as 7:30 am. A core group of children taking part in the free half-day program arrives at 9 am. At 11:30 am – unless they are staying for lunch – some in that group go home. The children staying for the full and extended day go off for lunch followed by a nap or creative activity. Meanwhile, the afternoon group begins arriving at 1 pm and will leave at 3:30 pm. From 3:30 pm – 6 pm, the program continues with a smaller mixed-age group of children spending the last hour of their day in the kindergarten room.

To help the transition from one room to another, children in the preschool and parenting rooms will spend increasing amounts of time in the kindergarten rooms without their parents. This allows them to develop relationships with different staff and eliminates the need for a school readiness program.



Mothers in the child/family program.

A summer program is also available for a reasonable fee, either all day or mornings only, staffed by the same ECEs who work during the school year. Each September, children who are at least 3.8 years old start in the kindergarten program. As with the preschool children, some students leave at 11:30 am while others stay all day and still others join the classes at 1 pm for the afternoon program. Parents decide if their child should have a nap. For the few children who do, they rest in the preschool room.

The children experience a seamless day without the need to adjust to the differences of kindergarten or child care – they are just in school. Activities are planned and delivered by a staff team of school board teachers, early childhood educators and assistants and meet both provincial requirements for the kindergarten curriculum and

day nursery standards. Students share in outdoor play, gym time, library, reading buddies with a Grade 5 class, self-directed activities and snack. The program is designed as a whole and not broken down into separate kindergarten and child care programs.

Additional Program Components

Bruce/WoodGreen Early Learning Centre has endeavoured to provide one-stop shopping for families in the community. The partnership between Bruce Public School and WoodGreen Community Services provides daily care, education and parenting supports. In addition, since WoodGreen is a multi-service agency, families can also be referred to immigrant services, housing, career and educational counselling, adult and school-age recreation or senior programs.

Other community partners include the Child Development Institute, which delivers a social skills training group for some of the kindergarten children as well as parenting programs. Toronto Public Health provides monthly visits and also participates in Healthy Child Screening days. Twice a year, community professionals offer screening services where stations are set up and parents with their children are able to access a wide variety of professional advice (audiology, dental, behaviour, nutrition, speech and language and vision) at their local school in a single morning. Early identification, translation and follow-up support are provided.

The Early Learning Centre has been able to continue to meet some of the needs of the families by implementing a Grade 1 transition program, which offers early-morning, lunch and after-school programming. The ECE staff work closely with the Grade 1 teachers to continue the successful team approach started in kindergarten.

The Child's Perspective

When asked what they like about their school, children in the preschool room said that they like to play. They also pointed to special friends. Kindergarten students like three things: they "get to play with their friends, do what they want and not have to do homework." These children are unaware of the fragmented days and inconsistent adult-child relationships that many children their age experience. They come to school each day for whatever time and duration they are registered. They know that some of their friends go home at lunch and others stay longer than they do, but the routines and room rules stay the same and there is always time to play with a friend of their choice and initiate their own activities.

The Parents' Perspective

Parents are part of their child's early learning team. Their participation is welcomed and facilitated by everyone. Many parents have already built relationships with centre staff prior to their child's kindergarten year. They have spent time in the school and observed the school staff interacting with the older students and have worked with staff on particular issues of concern to them. Some will have participated on the various committees or volunteered in the program.

When asked to share what makes this program different, one parent said the team approach and expertise has contributed to her children's educational successes and has made her life less stressful. Another parent wrote:

The combined program provides continuity in my children's day, making it easier for their teachers and caregivers to balance intangibles, such as energy levels and social issues, so that their entire day goes well. As the program pioneered internal

integration, they have also addressed the need for external integration, such as the affordability of the program, helpful pre- and post-care hours, and holiday care programs. These services are key to me as a parent and they have occurred as a result of conscientious parent consultations, flexibility and sheer will.

For parents, one of the bonuses of the integrated program is how it facilitates communication. Instead of separately informing the school, child care and perhaps a babysitter, parents need only to share information with one staff member, knowing the information will be relayed to anyone else on the staff team or in the school who needs to know. For example, if a child has had a difficult morning or is going to be picked up early, this information will be written in the common staff communication book or verbally shared with the room team. Families have grown to appreciate this integrated approach and are comfortable accessing support from any member of the staff team. A parent of a kindergarten child who



Kindergarten teacher Nick Rada has been with the program for three years.

attends the extended day program wrote:

I love BWELC. My son loves BWELC. When the school has a PD day or March Break he doesn't want to stay home with me, he wants to go to school. My biggest concern when my son was getting ready for school was whether or not he would like it. I truly believe that if children have a good start in school it will continue throughout their education. My worries were put to rest when he started at Bruce. Not only are the teachers great but all of the extra-curriculars like the early morning care and the afternoon care help me to work. I depend on this program and I'm very grateful to have it. I hope that one day all children and parents will have what we have here at Bruce.

The Staff Perspective

Professionals in this centre work with the whole child within his or her family context. What makes an integrated program so alluring for the staff is the ability to work closely with the all professionals as well as parents. Asked what is different about this program, one ECE replied, "with everyone working together we can maximize the best possible outcome for each child." The positive energy that is a result of working together and the multiple "little things" that are accomplished make an integrated program so professionally rewarding.

Staff brainstorm about curriculum, room rules and difficulties that individual children may have. With each teacher's slightly different training and experiences, the team draws on everyone's expertise. Activity preparation and

implementation as well as daily housekeeping are shared responsibilities. One of the kindergarten teachers sums up the team experience as "being more than an extra set of eyes. It is holistic – a richer, more satisfying experience for everyone." There is also comfort in knowing that if one staff member is away, there will be at least one or two adults in the room who are familiar to the children and parents. The children seem to be more comfortable and confident, socially, emotionally and academically. This makes intuitive sense when the consistency of program delivery and the degree of communication in the staff team and between parents and the staff is considered. The grade 1 teachers have noted improvements in confidence levels, social skills and the ability to focus of students who are graduates of the early learning centre.

The team approach is also used for report card writing and parent conferences. The report cards include input from all staff who work with the child and formal parent interviews include an ECE as well as the school board teacher. When supporting children with special needs, staff members work closely with the WoodGreen community services resource teacher. Monthly staff meetings, observations and meetings with parents are all part of the support. The resource teacher also attends meetings with school resource staff thus minimizing service duplication and ensuring continuity of support. The principal of Bruce Public School reflects on the power of integration:

Good educators are always asking themselves how can I improve learning for the students under my care? Strong partnerships from all sectors of our social system are necessary to weave the

fabric of a nurturing learning environment, which will foster life skills in our children. Every day we are working together to make a better society.

As manager of the Bruce/WoodGreen Early Learning Centre, I have found that parents are more comfortable and spend more time in the school. The children are more confident, grounded, and they learn with joy. The staff are more focused and energized in their work. I hope that policy makers will use our example to build a comprehensive system of early learning and child care for all of Canada's children.

Penny Morris is project manager of Bruce/Woodgreen Early Learning Centre.



The Canadian Child Care Federation publishes IDEAS twice a year in partnership with George Brown College, Centre for Early Childhood Development and the Hinks-Dellcrest Institute. For submission to IDEAS please contact Rachel Langford. Phone (416) 415-5000 extension 2566, fax (416) 415-2566, email rlangfor@gbrownc.on.ca.

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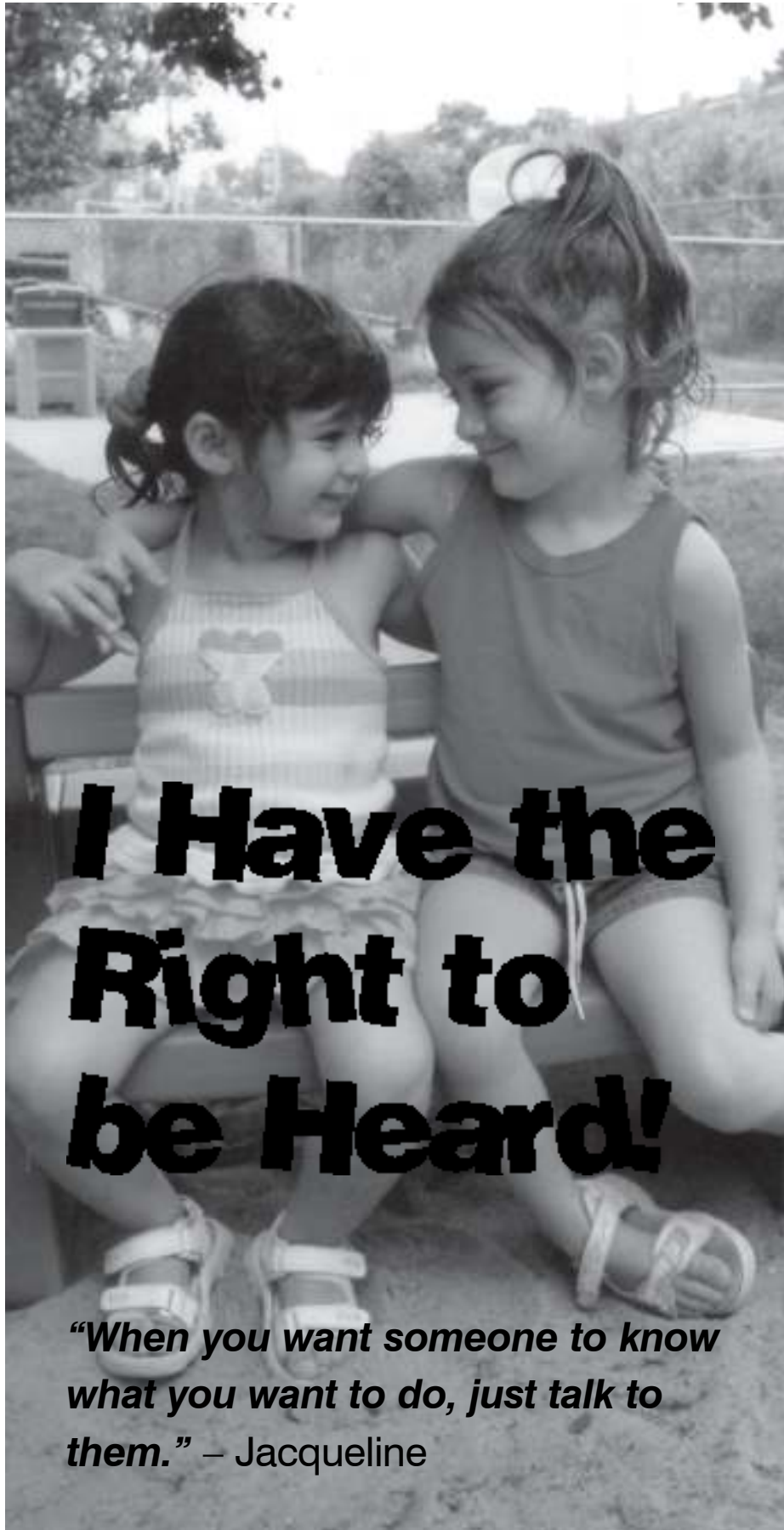
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I Have the Right to be Heard!

“When you want someone to know what you want to do, just talk to them.” – Jacqueline

As an early learning and child care practitioner, you know that it's good practice to listen actively to children and to encourage their participation. However, by doing this you are also respecting a child's right to be heard.

According to Article 12 of the *United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child*, children have the right to be heard. This right is seen as so fundamental that on September 15, 2006, the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child hosted a Day of Discussion on the subject, Speak, Participate and Decide – The Child's Right to be Heard.

The Canadian Child Care Federation was one of several non-governmental organizations around the world to submit papers to this event. This focus section includes an excerpt from the paper and other thought-provoking articles that will inspire you to reflect on your own practice and the important role of quality early learning and child care in supporting children's right to be heard.

Sprinkled throughout this section are several comments on the right to be heard, contributed by preschool children during a circle time discussion. *Interaction* thanks the children and staff at the Kanata Research Park Child Care Centre for participating in this activity.

I HAVE THE RIGHT TO BE HEARD

Seeking the Other 99 Languages of ECE

A Keynote Address by Alan Pence

Alan Pence, a professor at the School of Child and Youth Care at the University of Victoria, delivered a keynote address at *Leading the Way to Quality*, the June 2006 national conference in Calgary, Alberta, co-hosted by the Canadian Child Care Federation with its Alberta affiliates. His address, *Seeking the Other 99 Languages of ECE*, challenged the early learning and child care sector to make space for other voices in its programs, training and policy development.

Pence's keynote drew inspiration from Loris Malaguzzi, the founder and sage of Reggio Emilia, who wrote that "the child has a hundred languages . . . but they steal ninety-nine" Pence made the point that the ECE field may have become too narrow in its understanding of children – closing itself off from a multitude of other possibilities in ECE.

"When I read our literature, consider our policy discussions, and review our research I do not hear about a hundred, hundred possibilities – I hear and see something much more narrow. I see and hear about the child as a future primary grade student, the child as a future worker, the child as a cipher in a vast global economy. And while these are aspects of children and their future, they are not the whole child."

Pence gave an overview of some of the "other" voices on childhood and learning that need to be heard. He presented a diverse range of historical perspectives on early childhood from early 19th century to present. He also highlighted cross-



cultural perspectives that he first became sensitized to through his work with First Nations communities, commencing with an invitation from the Meadow Lake Tribal Council to cooperatively develop an on-reserve training program as the basis for creating the Council's own early childhood services in its nine reserve communities.

Drawing from these examples, Pence proposed that "childhood is a social construction – it varies over time and it varies across cultures and contexts. And as different peoples and parents around the world work to create appropriate care for their children, they do this differently – not just because the materials, environments and technologies are different, but because their understandings of children, who they are and what they can do, are different. And because of these inherent differences, when we speak of 'quality of care' there can be no single definition of what this thing called quality is, that there can be no single instrument or single method that captures it."

Pence also highlighted a number of initiatives around the world that are attempting to hear other voices, such as Margaret Carr's and Helen May's work in New Zealand.

Did you know... ?

Alan Pence and Veronica Pacini-Ketchabaw are currently involved in a project to organize international forums to discuss diverse perspectives on quality. The project – *Investigating Quality* – is outlined in more detail in an article on page 11 of this issue of *Interaction*.



Carr and May worked with Maori advisors to develop the Te Whariki curriculum, which has become the country's national curriculum for early childhood services.

"In each of these examples ... there is a profound respect for what is 'not known' and an appreciation of the need to open up to, and create spaces for, other voices, other possibilities; and often those voices are the ones which are both closest to the child, but most distanced from power."

Pence urged the conference delegates to make space for other voices from their communities and to ensure that these voices are reflected in programs, training and policy development. He closed his keynote by inviting the delegates to reflect on the following questions as they returned to their professional context:

- Whose voices are heard in your program, training or polity development activities – whatever your particular context is?
- Are they heard as responses, or do they initiate their own agendas?
- Whose voices are not heard?
- How might you create a space where other voices can come and be heard?
- Are you prepared to have your voice challenged?
- Are you prepared to wait without thought?
- Ask yourself, what things do I know? How do I know them? How do they keep me from learning other things?
- How many languages of ECE do I have?

For a copy of the complete keynote address, visit the CCCF website at www.cccf-fcsge.ca and click on the Leading the Way to Quality logo.

The Hundred Languages of Children

*The child
is made of one hundred.
The child has
a hundred languages
a hundred hands
a hundred thoughts
a hundred ways of thinking
of playing, of speaking.
A hundred always a hundred
ways of listening
of marveling, of loving
a hundred joys
for singing and understanding
a hundred worlds
to discover
a hundred worlds
to invent
a hundred worlds
to dream.
The child has
a hundred languages
(and a hundred hundred hundred more)
but they steal ninety-nine.
The school and the culture*

*separate the head from the body.
They tell the child:
to think without hands
to do without head
to listen and not to speak
to understand without joy
to love and to marvel
only at Easter and at Christmas.
They tell the child:
to discover the world already there
and of the hundred
they steal ninety-nine.
They tell the child:
that work and play
reality and fantasy
science and imagination
sky and earth
reason and dream
are things
that do not belong together.
And thus they tell the child
that the hundred is not there.
The child says:
No way. The hundred is there.*

Loris Malaguzzi (translated by Lella Gandini), Founder of the Reggio Emilia Approach



"The people that are talking to other people – you have to wait because they're speaking. You can't speak because . . . you'll make their feelings sad." – Ryan

Child Rights Resources on the Canadian Health Network

The Canadian Health Network (CHN) is a valuable tool when seeking out information on early learning and child care, and children's healthy development in general. In fact, its collection has grown to more than 2,500 English and French resources on a variety of topic areas to assist child care practitioners in their work with young children.

For example, many useful children's rights resources on CHN, to complement National Child Day activities, such as

- Respecting children's rights in practice
- Respecting children's rights in the home
- Rights of the child in the health care system
- Respecting the children in our care
- HIV/AIDS and children's rights

Simply go to the website at www.canadianhealthnetwork.ca and enter "child rights" in the search bar. For more information on the work of the Children's Affiliate of CHN, contact Kim Tytler, health promotion manager, ktytler@cccf-fcsge.ca.



I HAVE THE RIGHT TO BE HEARD

To Speak, Participate and Decide

The Child's Right to be Heard

by Kim Wilson

The following article is an excerpt from a paper that the Canadian Child Care Federation (CCCCF) prepared on the occasion of the United Nations Day of General Discussion on "The Child's Right to be Heard," September 15, 2006.

In the CRC, children's participation rights are contained in the cluster of Articles 12 through 17, which refer to civic participation: right to have voices heard and considered (Article 12), right to freedom of expression (Article 13), right to beliefs (Article 14), right to association (Article 15), right to protection of privacy (Article 16), and the right to access appropriate information (Article 17). While the CRC identifies children's participation rights contained in Articles 12 through 17, the children's participation in this paper is especially focused on Article 12. In an attempt to demonstrate the linkages between Article 12 and other articles of the CRC, references to related articles have been noted in parentheses.



The Right to Be Heard

Article 12 of the *United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child* (ratified by Canada in 1991) states:

States Parties shall assure to the child who is capable of forming his or her own views the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting the child, the views of the child being given due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child.

The right to be "heard": A fundamental concept in quality early learning and child care

Article 12 acknowledges that children have abilities to share insights about their lives, process information, develop opinions and make decisions. In order for children to develop these abilities to their full potential they need access to developmentally appropriate



opportunities to try, explore and learn actively. Quality early learning and child care encourages this active learning through play-based, child-directed programming (Article 31).

Beginning an early learning and child care program is often children's first experience socializing with peers and adults outside of their family unit. In ELCC environments, groups of children lay the groundwork for successful social interactions throughout their lifetime. The children share similar experiences, communicate and compromise with one another. They learn to express themselves in order to make their needs and wants known, and they learn to listen to others and to share (Article 29). If children's experiences in ELCC are positive they feel good about themselves and more confident to explore their environments and to interact with others in a positive way. It is through these experiences that they learn about themselves and the world.

In quality early learning and child care programs practitioners and parents are partners, sharing their observations of the child to gain a broader perspective of the child's thoughts, feelings, talents and areas where he might need extra support. With this information, parents and practitioners increase their understanding of how they can help the child to reach his potential.

To be "heard" refers to the child's right to speak, participate and decide. The child has the right to be "heard" during all types of activity. This means that adults are listening, observing and respecting the child's viewpoints when she is speaking, gesturing, playing, creating and choosing.

"Speaking" and Being Heard

Quality early learning and child care programs are those in which practitioners strive to inspire children to realize their potential and recognize that in order to do this, children need to feel "heard" (Article 6). "To be heard" implies that the child is not merely expressing himself, but that someone is listening to him, attempting to understand him and responding to what he is expressing.

Children need to be "heard" during all stages of development, *beginning in infancy*. Babies and toddlers do not use formal language, but attempt to express their needs by crying or through gestures and expressions. They feel heard when an attentive adult responds to their participation.



"Teacher and parents have to listen to children. To their ideas about art and things we want to do in the classroom." – Alison

Young children depend on the adults around them to care for their needs. In order to develop a sense of security that these needs will be met, they need to feel that the adults understand them. When children feel heard they develop a stronger sense of self-esteem. They realize that others value what they have to say and thus feel accepted as individuals with their own feelings and thoughts. There are many ways that early learning and child care practitioners can help children to feel heard. During circle times children can be encouraged to share their personal stories, opinions and feelings. The child who is not comfortable speaking in front of the group may find channelling her voice vicariously through a puppet to be a more comfortable way to express herself. Practitioners can encourage children to speak by posing open-ended questions, which will give them the chance to speak and to elaborate.

If a child demonstrates interest in something, practitioners can follow up by offering more opportunities for him to try activities related to his interests and competencies. For example, during circle time a practitioner reads a book about a boy who lives on a farm. A child asks the practitioner why the chicken in the story is not flying. The practitioner explains to the group that chickens can only fly for short distances and thanks the child for asking the interesting question. The next day, the observant practitioner brings in information on flightless birds. By following up on the discussion initiated by the child's question, it shows the child that the practitioner has heard and appreciated his expression of interest. When children's questions are taken seriously they feel validated and comfortable to seek answers. Empowering children to seek answers engages them in the learning process.

Participating

It is the responsibility of early learning and child care practitioners to not just present children with facts, but to offer children opportunities to experiment, and to support them as they explore. In fact, the CRC specifically addresses direction and guidance for children in the exercising of their rights (*Article 5*).

When children are involved as participants, they are engaged and learn from the experiences. For example, when children participate by helping with cooking activities, they learn how ingredients are measured, the science of mixing substances to create a new substance, and how heating the mixture changes the substance. They also have an important opportunity to learn safety rules; for example, they learn that a hot oven can burn them and that they need to wear oven mitts when picking up a hot container.

When children participate in singing and dancing, they may learn new vocabulary from the song. They start to gain physical awareness through dancing; they learn that they can move in original and creative ways to the music and express themselves through dance. Even the youngest children can be encouraged to participate through creative art.

In quality ELCC settings, practitioners create environments that help children to participate and consider their views and input when deciding what opportunities to offer the children. They include a variety of activities and opportunities so that children can choose what to participate in, within their capacities to do so (*Article 3*). For example, by having several activity stations available, children can choose to participate in the dramatic arts area, the reading corner, the construction area etc. Quality early learning and child care environments are set up in a way that encourages participation among all children. Practitioners ensure that materials are accessible to everyone and consider how activities need to be adapted to encourage children with disabilities to participate.

Deciding

To “decide” does not mean that children will not have to follow rules and will make all decisions for themselves regardless of their welfare and the welfare of others. It means that they will be consulted and that their views will be considered. The CRC includes the right of children to express views freely and to obtain sufficient information



“If children are arguing, the teacher has to listen to both of them to find out what’s happening.” – Lauren

to make informed decisions, although it does not imply an obligation for children to express their views (*Article 13*).

In quality ELCC, to “decide” means providing children with choices and opportunities to make some decisions for themselves. For example, young children can be given the choice between a number of nutritional snacks and to serve themselves or to choose the book or activity for circle time. Such opportunities to choose are easy for the child care practitioner to implement, but can have profound effects on a child’s sense of empowerment and self-esteem. Practitioners consult with children by asking them to voice their feelings, ideas and opinions.

Both in the ELCC setting and in the home, being involved in the decision-making process gives children a sense of ownership of the outcome. For example, toddlers can have input into what clothes they wear, activities they participate in and if they want to play with others or participate in solitary play. Preschoolers can be encouraged to discuss ways to resolve conflicts, and suggest rules and changes to equipment or routines.

By being given opportunities to make decisions, children learn to discuss choices and consequences. Even if their proposed option is not the one selected, they will learn to express their opinion and recognize that others might have different views. The consultation process is fair if everyone has a chance to share their ideas and if the reasons for the final decision are explained well.

Children who are encouraged to communicate and share their needs, thoughts and feelings learn that they can



influence their environment (*Article 13*). The sense of security fostered by healthy, reciprocal communication helps children to develop trust and feel safe to explore and learn about their world.

Nurturing children to become active, engaged citizens

Many First World democracies are currently struggling with low participation in elections and consultations at all political levels. Youth disengagement is an issue of great concern in Canada. In order to reverse these trends and nurture our children to become active, engaged citizens, we can help them learn to participate effectively during the early years. Children need to be empowered to develop leadership skills; to learn to negotiate, to persuade and to influence right from the start – to foster citizenship skills (*Article 15*).

Every society hopes and expects that its children will grow up to be capable and responsible citizens who contribute to the well being of their communities. This development is not something that occurs overnight, when the child suddenly reaches the age of majority. As with other aspects of growth and development, it is a gradual process that must be nurtured. (UNICEF Canada, 2005, p. 94)

Supporting a child's right to be heard in the early years is integral to nurturing citizenship over the long term. Early learning and child care practitioners are uniquely positioned to take on this supportive role. They have the potential to be valuable contributors to the growth of healthy caring communities, sowing the seeds for more engaged populations in the future.

Kim Wilson was a project coordinator who worked on contract for the Canadian Child Care Federation. © CCCF 2006

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"Mommies and daddies and teachers have to listen." – Kevin

The Right to be Heard . . . the Responsibility to Listen

In order to foster rights-respecting environments in early learning and child care, children need to learn about their right to be heard. However it's just as important that they learn their responsibility to respect the rights of others to be heard.

Promote the capacities of children to show respect by carefully listening to others. Sit in a circle with the children and have a special item – a rock or stick or stuffed toy that is at hand – to pass around. Explain that the person holding the rock or stick gets everyone's attention. We show that person respect by not speaking and by carefully listening to what he or she has to tell us. Ask the question: *What would you like to say right now about something really special to you?* Ask for a volunteer to start and allow for responses. This learning activity gives preschool children an opportunity to learn about listening to others.

Adapted from *Learning Activities* by Ellen Murray, in the *Children's Rights in Practice Learning Kit*, published by the Canadian Child Care Federation, 2005. For more information on the Learning Kit, contact CCCF at (613) 729-5289 ext. 234 or orders@cccf-fcsge.ca.



I HAVE THE RIGHT TO BE HEARD

Children's Voices around the World

The Right to be Heard in an International Context

by Sandra Braun

When babies are born, they cry, giggle and coo to show when they are upset, happy or tired. As they develop and grow, their abilities to communicate become more advanced and complex. They begin to use speech, drawing, play and other activities to let us know what they are thinking and feeling. All children are capable of communicating, even though their means of expression change at every age and stage of development. But are we always listening?

The right to be heard is a fundamental concept in quality child care, but there is much confusion about what it really means in practical terms. Encompassed in Article 12 of the *UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)*, the right to be heard, which is also sometimes referred to as "participation," demands that children be allowed to express their views to the degree that they are capable on matters affecting their lives, including family, school, health care and local community issues as well as national politics. As Gerison Lansdown, an international children's rights consultant, explains, "it has an impact both in terms of individual decisions (religious choice and medical treatment, for example) as well as the obligation to consult and involve children in matters of public policy or broader decision making."



*"Other people shouldn't talk
when someone else is talking."*

– Aidan

For many people, granting children the right to be involved in decision-making processes that have been traditionally thought of as solely adult responsibilities can seem like a radical idea. This is especially true when we talk about the participation rights of very young



children, who are often thought of as being less capable than youth of participating in any meaningful way. This misperception has been a major stumbling block in the effort to further children's rights around the world.

However, awareness of the right of children of all ages to be full participants in society is growing on an international level. People are beginning to understand that the early years in a child's life are not just a preparation for childhood and adulthood; we – as parents, caregivers, educators or policy makers – need to value children as people *now*. This involves consulting with children on matters that affect them, listening to and respecting their voices and giving serious consideration to their views. Article 12 does *not* give children full adult rights; nor does it ask us to give children complete control over their health and well being, disregarding any risk that may arise as a result.

Lansdown notes that in most countries, children do not have any established rights to be involved in decision making with regards to personal issues, such as health or education, let alone broader public policy. She does, however, point to several international examples of the ways in which decision makers are beginning to recognize the rights of children to contribute their views on issues that affect them.

Nepal has been traditionally a very hierarchical society in which children are not expected to have opinions about community development or policy. Recently, the creation of child clubs in thousands of villages all over the country has allowed children to become more involved in decision-making processes. In the beginning, the clubs focused on



*"You have to tell them
(the teachers) something
to make them listen to
you." – Aidan*

making space for children to create their own activities (mainly for sports or art). But more and more, Nepal's child clubs are getting involved in community development and advocacy. "They have been a very key development in creating a space for children to articulate and to begin to build confidence about understanding their rights and what needs to change in order to realize those rights," Lansdown says.

The Philippines presents another example of increasing child involvement. As Lansdown explains, "There are municipalities where the government has agreed that a certain per cent of the municipal budget has to be allocated by children themselves." Children set up their own discussion groups, which are then responsible for the allocation of the funding. The municipalities receive funding only if these child groups exist to direct the money.

Hearing Everyone's Voice: Educating Children for Peace and Democratic Community

Hearing and respecting the unique voices of every individual is a major building block of peaceful and democratic communities. Differences in age, ethnicity, gender, culture and economic background can often result in barriers to understanding. Often children recognize the unfairness inherent in these barriers, but they need to be taught how to address their concerns and take action. *Hearing Everyone's Voice: Educating Children for Peace and Democratic Community* (2006), published by Child Care Exchange, presents stories from teachers, parents and children about their struggle to develop social equality, respect and community. It functions as a guidebook for teaching children how to take responsibility for their actions, value diversity and difference, share with and help others and apply problem-solving strategies. More information is available at www.childcareexchange.com.



In many countries, progress is slow. Convincing policy makers to take the right to be heard seriously can be a challenge. When the CRC was first established, Lansdown was involved in setting up a non-governmental organization to promote its implementation in the UK. As she remembers, "It was met in the early 90s with a very considerable level of dismissive contempt. The idea of giving children any say...was seen as so utterly absurd that you couldn't possibly take it seriously."

Gradually, attitudes have begun to change, and the idea that part of developing children's services involves consultation *with children* is starting to gain acceptance. In the UK, the municipal government of London has set up a national children's forum to advise on broad matters of policy and keep policy makers in touch with the views of young people. "It's now built into local authority practice that they are required to consult with children

as a matter of obligation when they're developing new services," says Lansdown. "We have made some progress in the last 15 to 18 years, but it has been hard work."

Perhaps one of the biggest obstacles to securing for children the right to be heard is framing it as a fundamental human right on its own and not just as a developmental issue. "We need to shake the view that participation is only something that kicks in when children are eight or nine; it's something that starts from birth," Lansdown stresses. Much of what is involved in respecting a child's right to be heard – communication, dialogue, respect and listening – is already considered good practice in early learning. But in Lansdown's view, "You don't just do it for developmental reasons. If it wasn't developmentally advantageous, it would still be an important part of respect for the child's human rights."

Sandra Braun is communications specialist at the Canadian Child Care Federation.
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RESEARCH UPDATES

Report Calls for Trilateral Cooperation on Environmental Pollutants

Many factors – social, biological and environmental – can affect the health of children. A report released by the Commission for Environmental Cooperation takes a look at toxic chemicals, one environmental factor, to determine what can be done to minimize the negative effects of industrial pollutants on child health in North America. Using data obtained from the national pollutant release and transfer registers (PRTRs) in North America, the document stresses the importance of reporting of chemical carcinogens, developmental toxicants and neurotoxicants. It touches on the impact of industrial pollutants, drawing links to common issue in children's health, including asthma, infections, developmental and learning disabilities and behaviour problems.



Finally, it advocates strong trilateral action (among Canada, the United States and Mexico) to prevent and reduce children's exposure to harmful chemicals. To view the full report, visit www.cec.org.

Inequalities Put Health of Canadian Children at Risk

Inequalities threaten the health of Canadian children and youth according to *Their Future Is Now*, a report undertaken by the Health Council of Canada. These inequities include but also stretch beyond socio-economic factors – children from all income brackets experience difficulties.

The study, which is based on consultation with experts on child and youth health and well being, presents examples of effective initiatives that are working to improve child and youth health in Canada. It presents 10 key ingredients for a successful health program, such as involving community, family and youth; using a variety of approaches; making programs accessible, equitable and adaptable to local needs; and maintaining political commitment to sustaining good programs. The full report is available online at www.healthcouncilcanada.ca.



Income Levels Affect Child Development

A report released by Statistics Canada entitled *Income and the Outcomes of Children* finds that a higher family income is almost always associated with better outcomes for children. Using data from the Statistics Canada National Longitudinal Survey of Children and Youth (NLSCY), the study examined outcomes in four areas of development: cognitive, social/emotional, physical and behavioural. It found that income had a greater effect on some areas than others. For instance, there are strong associations between income and cognitive development (based on reading and math scores) and behavioural outcomes. Although the link to social/emotional outcomes was not as strong, income ups and downs were found to be especially important for child emotion scores. The study also concluded that there is almost no ceiling above which income no longer matters in child outcomes; however, the relationship between income and outcome seems to flatten out as children age. To view the full report, visit www.statcan.ca.



RESEARCH UPDATES

Canada Repeats Poor Grade in Childhood Physical Activity



One year after Active Healthy Kids Canada released their first report card on child physical activity behaviours and opportunities, Canada is still showing poor results. In the *2006 Report Card on Physical Activity for Children and Youth*, the country earned a “D” for the second year in a row, showing that little progress has been made in increasing the physical activity of our children and youth. The report calls for a national initiative to increase parental awareness of the importance of unstructured physical activity to children’s health, guidelines and information to limit inactive time spent in front of the computer or television, and a national commitment to quality physical education programs in Canadian schools. For more information, view the full report card online at www.activehealthykids.ca.

ACROSS CANADA AND BEYOND

INTERNATIONAL

Newly elected Chilean president, Michelle Bachelet, has promised to triple the country’s child care centres in 2006, and continue creating more spaces until free, universal preschool care is available from infancy through age 4. Chile’s first female president, Bachelet has said that reducing the gap in opportunities for the country’s children is one of her most important goals for her term in office. In addition to creating new child care spaces, Bachelet advocates for investments in infrastructure, nutritional programs, learning materials and training for early childhood educators.

On June 7, California voters rejected a ballot initiative that would have brought universal pre-kindergarten to the state. Had the initiative been passed, it would have resulted in a constitutional guarantee to preschool by 2010–2011. Funds for the new program would have come from a 1.7 per cent tax increase on taxable income over \$800,000 for couples and \$400,000 for individuals.

On July 1, 2006, the Australian government implemented major child care initiatives aimed at making the system more accessible and responsive to Australian families. Limits on the number of (Child Care Benefit) CCB-approved places for Outside School Hours Care (OSHC) and Family Day Care (FDC) were removed. This means 99 per cent of child care places will be uncapped and parents using them will be able to access CCB. Previously, the Australian Government determined how many OSHC and FDC places could be set up in a particular year and in a particular area. Now, services will be able to set up or expand when and where they want, which means more child care centres and providers for parents to choose from when selecting care for their children. The government has also increased funding for Jobs, Education and Training (JET) Child Care Fee Assistance, which provides assistance with child care fees to some families on income support payments. A third program, the Child Care Access Hotline, provides users with

information on the availability of child care in their area.

NATIONAL

Results of an Environics poll asking 2,000 Canadians their views on child care show that 76 per cent support a national affordable child care strategy such as the 2005 federal-provincial bilateral agreements. The majority of participants considered the lack of affordable child care to be a serious problem in Canada. Almost half stated that child care will likely influence how they vote in the next federal election, while one-quarter said that it will definitely have an impact on whom they support. The poll found no significant difference between the opinions of rural and urban respondents.

UNICEF is changing its treat-or-treat campaign for the first time in over 50 years. This fall, participating kids will no longer collect change along with their treats. Instead, schools will receive fundraising kits that can be used throughout the month of October. UNICEF created this new program in an effort to foster closer partnerships with schools and create enhanced learning opportunities for children.

A new study examining the availability of child care in 11 Canadian cities found services lacking in each municipality – especially in neighbourhoods serving poorer families. *Learning from Each Other: Early Learning and Child Care Experiences in Canadian Cities* looked at child care, kindergarten, out-of-school care and recreational programs in St. John’s, Halifax, Montreal, Sherbrooke, Toronto, Sudbury, Winnipeg, Saskatoon, Calgary, Vancouver and Whitehorse. It found a wide range in the percentage of children who had access to licensed child care spaces in each city – from 6.9 per cent in Saskatoon to 45 per cent in Montreal. To increase and universalize the availability of child care spaces, the study advocated for increased federal and provincial funding and greater collaboration among levels of government as well as between government and community organizations.



The federal government's Universal Child Care Benefit (UCCB) was launched July 1, along with some confusion over whether and how parents with one or more children under six should apply for the program. Parents already enrolled in the in the Canada Child Tax Benefit (CCTB) program (about 90 per cent of Canadian parents) should receive their \$100 monthly cheques automatically beginning July 20. They will not have to apply for the program separately. However higher income parents, who do not receive CCTB, will have to sign up for the UCCB, either online at www.universalchildcare.ca or by calling 1-800-959-2221. Payments are retroactive for all parents who apply before December.

The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) has released its *Economic Survey of Canada 2006*, an assessment of the main economic challenges facing Canada, along with some recommendations for future action. The report suggests that Canada could gain from ensuring all children have access to

free high-quality early education from an earlier age. Currently, most provinces offer free education in the form of kindergarten beginning at age five, which is later than in most OECD countries. The report suggests that early education gives a significantly higher social return than post-secondary education, which currently receives more funding.

ALBERTA

The declining number of child care spaces in Alberta (down 7 per cent since 1988) may be partly to blame for the province's labour shortage, according to the June 2006 issue of Statistics Canada's *Canadian Economic Observer*. "From She to She: Changing Patterns of Women in the Canadian Labour Force," an article by analyst Francine Roy, reports that from 1999 to 2005, the share of women with children younger than six who were participating in the Alberta labour force fell from 67.9 per cent to 64.9 percent. This bucks the national

trend, which shows participation rates for women in the same situation rising from 67.6 per cent to 71.8 per cent. Some point to the high cost of child care in the province and the shortage of spaces as possible reasons why more women are opting out of the labour force. If Alberta's participation rate of women in the workforce matched the Canadian rate, its labour force would increase by 11,275 workers.

BRITISH COLUMBIA

The BC government has decided not to count the \$100 per month federal child care benefit as income when considering other family benefits. Due to this decision, parents with children under six receiving income assistance from the provincial government will not have their benefits clawed back.

MANITOBA

The provincial government has announced the provision of \$85,000 in funding to the In Motion program, in the



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form of 32 new grants. Launched in 2005 in response to a key recommendation of the Healthy Kids, Healthy Futures Task Force, In Motion aims to reduce barriers to physical activity and promote activity as a health strategy. The grants are available to local partnerships consisting of municipalities and non-profit community organizations and coalitions for projects that help increase physical activity in communities, schools, child care facilities and workplaces.

The Manitoba government has introduced legislation proposing that the Manitoba Tax Credits not be reduced as a result of the Universal Child Care Benefit. The province has three tax credits – personal tax credit, education property tax credit and school tax credit for homeowners – that would otherwise have been reduced by the money received under the \$1,200 federal child care benefit. The province's eligible recipients will save an estimated \$1-million as a result of the legislation.

NEW BRUNSWICK

The government of New Brunswick has pledged over \$48-million toward the development of early learning and child care services in 2006–2007. The money will fund the establishment of an \$8-million trust fund, which will be used for a variety of programs, including the creation of a pre-kindergarten program, training for child care workers and incentives for new child care spaces in rural areas. The government will also add \$3-million to the \$10-million it had already earmarked to increase average wages of child care workers. Another \$1.1-million will be directed towards increased subsidies to parents to increase access to quality services at an approved facility.

NEWFOUNDLAND

In May, the Newfoundland government released its plan for early learning and child care in the province. The plan aims to make child care more affordable by increasing subsidy amounts and making more families eligible and to attract and retain qualified care providers by extending educational supplement amounts to a larger number of workers, providing funding to College of the North Atlantic's ECE program, and formulating a province-wide recruitment and

retention strategy. It also aims to create quality child care spaces in rural areas, provide professional training and dedicate additional annual funding to staff child care services for children with special needs.

ONTARIO

A study of Northumberland county residents shows that a lack of affordable child care is a significant barrier to finding sustainable long-term employment in the area. The report, *Removing Barriers and Enabling Financial Independence*, surveyed recipients of Ontario Works (the province's financial and employment assistance program) benefits on factors that may affect their attempts to find employment. Eight out of ten respondents ranked child care as their number one concern. Many also cited the deduction of the Child Tax Credit from Ontario Works cheques as a major issue.

Communities across Ontario are grappling with reductions in the number of child care spaces they were promised under the province's Best Start program. The principal early learning and child care plan had to be scaled down as a result of the federal government's cancellation of its early learning and child care agreement with the province. For example, Ottawa had created 776 spaces and had plans for several thousand more, but with the cancellation of federal funding, the city will no longer be creating additional spaces. Currently 8,000 Ottawa children are waiting for child care spaces (4,000 of whom are waiting for one of the city's 6,500 subsidized spaces). In Toronto, plans for a child care centre that would have created 88 new spaces in the city will be scrapped unless the province can cover the cost. The centre was to be constructed as part of the only new elementary school being built in Toronto this year. Kingston, which has yet to spend the \$2.3-million it received as a result of the previous federal government's early learning and child care agreement, has reduced its target number of new child care spaces. Child care centres that do receive funding are being warned that the funding will not be sustained by the city.

PEI

MP and cabinet minister Peter MacKay has said the federal government's hands are tied when it comes to the rates set by private child care centres. His comments

came in response to the news that many child care centres in Prince Edward Island plan to raise their rates to match the federal government's child care benefit of \$1,200 annually in payments to parents with children under six.

QUEBEC

As a result of the passing of Bill 124, home-based child care in the province will now be recognized by a coordinating office as of June 1, 2006. Most coordinating offices are child care centre permit holders who are accredited to act as a coordinating office in a defined region. They will also offer support to home child care providers and ensure that standards regarding home care are upheld. Previously, home child care services were affiliated directly with individual centres de la petite enfance (child care centres).

SASKATCHEWAN

Saskatchewan Learning Minister Deb Higgins announced that the government will fund the creation of 15 more pre-kindergarten programs in the 2006–2007 school year. Originally the provincial government had planned a universal pre-kindergarten program, but had to scale back the plan when the federal government cancelled its bilateral early learning and child care agreement with the province. Most of the new spaces will go to urban areas, such as Saskatoon, Regina and Prince Albert.

CALENDAR

SEPTEMBER

28–29

Winnipeg, Manitoba

Celebrating the Power of Families and Communities

This year, Family Service Canada's (FSC) conference aims to highlight community initiatives, agency programs and research that look at the strengths and power of families and communities. The conference will draw attention to the strengths, assets and power for positive change in all families, even those that seem most disadvantaged and vulnerable. For more information, contact FSC at 1-800-668-7808 or visit www.familyservicecanada.org.



OCTOBER

5–7

Vancouver, British Columbia Childhood and Adolescent Obesity 2006

This conference will foster discussion on practical, evidence-based issues around obesity in children and adolescents. An update on existing programs and new initiatives will also be presented, as well as interventions for prevention and/or treatment of childhood obesity. Visit our website www.interprofessional.ubc.ca for updated information. For additional information, email ipad@interchange.ubc.

14

Halifax, Nova Scotia Fall Convention and Annual General Meeting

A convention held by the Nova Scotia Child Care Association, a non-profit association for child care practitioners in Nova Scotia and an affiliate member of CCCF. For more information, visit the NSCCA website: <http://pages.istar.ca/~cccn/NSCCA/home.html>.

15–18

Fredericton, New Brunswick 2006 Recognizing Learning

This is the Sixth International Forum on Prior Learning Assessment and Qualification Recognition at the Delta Fredericton Hotel. You will find inspiring speakers, important networking opportunities, key initiatives, innovative practices, and public policy discussions. For the Call for Presenters and Contact Information, check the Canadian Association for Prior Learning Assessment (CAPLA) website at www.capla.ca or call 1 877 731-1333.

17–20

Montréal, Québec 8th International Child and Youth Care Conference

The theme of the Conference is "Beyond Borders: Caring for the Future of Children, Youth and Families." For those engaged in professional caregiving with children, youth and families, this conference promises to be a truly collaborative experience. Practitioners from a range of "helping professions"

from around the world will come together to share their desire to work to improve future conditions for children, youth and families. Visit www.icycc2006.com for more information.

23–27

Montréal, Québec Journées annuelles de santé publique

The Journées annuelles de santé publique (JASP), Québec's annual public health conference, is celebrating its 10th anniversary with a five-day international edition. This major training and information-sharing event will unite about 2,000 people working in public health or with an interest in public health interventions, to share knowledge, build bridges between research and practice and promote cooperation – all in a spirit of improving health and well-being. For more information, visit the JASP website: www.inspq.qc.ca/jasp.

NOVEMBER

3–4

Saskatoon, Saskatchewan The Future Generations

This conference, hosted by the Saskatchewan Early Childhood Association, will explore the future of early learning and child care in Saskatchewan. For more information, email saskcare@sasktel.net, visit the website www.skearlychildhoodassociation.ca or call (306) 975-0875.

19–22

Vancouver, B.C. World Forum 2006: Future Directions in Child Welfare

This conference will explore and share knowledge, information and data on promising practices and innovative approaches to child abuse and neglect. New trends and developments in child welfare practice, research and networking will be emphasized. The presentations will highlight practical and innovative solutions, cutting-edge research and evidence-based practice. For more information, visit the World Forum website: www.worldforum2006.ca.

RESOURCES

Cruel but Not Unusual: Violence in Canadian Families (2006)

Violence affects a wide range of people, and its effects are far-reaching. And yet much of the literature on this topic considers issues of violence in isolation. This unique resource by Ramona Alaggia and Cathy Vine addresses the multiple sources of violence in families, revealing the links between different forms of abuse. It gives a Canadian context, drawing the ties between family violence and broader social, legal and political structures. Intended for students, educators and professionals, this book combines theory, research and practice to provide a comprehensive exploration of violence in families – past and present – from many different angles, taking cultural and socio-political factors into consideration. For more information, or to order the book, visit www.wlupress.wlu.ca.

Social Inclusion Toolkit (2006)

Social isolation can be a debilitating problem. Many parents of children who are excluded may also feel lost and unsure of where to turn for support. The MAWIW Council Incorporated and NB Association for Community Living (NBACL) partnered together for an initiative called *Investing in Children, Families and Communities – It's Time*. The three-year project brought together First Nations, francophone and anglophone families to share experiences and address issues of social inclusion. The result is this toolkit, which offers stories, strategy cards, a video and other tools for developing full social inclusion in our communities. Visit www.nbacl.nb.ca for more information.

A Sense of Belonging: Supporting Healthy Child Development in Aboriginal Families (2006)

Drawing on the expertise of Aboriginal service providers and parents from diverse regions (north, south, urban and



rural environments), Best Start has produced this manual to guide service providers in their support of Aboriginal families. It seeks to increase awareness of Aboriginal people and their traditional approaches to raising children by educating workers on Aboriginal parent beliefs and teachings. The manual provides information about areas of risk and concern as well as effective approaches to providing support, such as how to connect parents to helpful resources in a respectful and caring manner. The full manual can be downloaded at www.beststart.org/resources.

CanChild Centre for Childhood Disability Research

McMaster University's Centre for Childhood Disability Research recently launched CanChild, a website featuring comprehensive studies, reports and resources on a wide range of themes relating to children and youth with physical, developmental or communicative disabilities. The site provides targeted content for families and service providers, researchers and students, and policy and decision makers, covering topics such as diagnosis, assessment, attitudes and perceptions, care giving, service delivery, and participation of children and families. To access the full range of content, visit www.canchild.ca.

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Leading the Way to Quality À l'avant-garde de la qualité



Outgoing CCCF executive director Barbara Coyle was honoured at a special tribute during the conference gala.

La directrice générale sortante de la FCSGE, Barbara Coyle, a reçu un hommage spécial durant la soirée de gala.



Don't let the hard shell fool you. The 2007 conference committee has a soft heart! They look forward to welcoming you in Halifax, Nova Scotia, from June 15 to 17. *From left to right:* Catherine Cross, Nova Scotia Child Care Association; Sherrill Brown, finance chair of the 2006 conference; Pat (lobster) Hogan, Certification Council of Nova Scotia; Traudi Kelm, chair, 2006 conference; Bronwein Richardson, Nova Scotia Child Care Association; and Francine Fortin, CCCF business operations assistant and meeting coordinator.

Ne vous laissez pas berner par la carapace. Le comité du congrès 2007 a le cœur tendre! Il espère vous accueillir à Halifax (Nouvelle-Écosse) du 15 au 17 juin. *De gauche à droite :* Catherine Cross, Nova Scotia Child Care Association; Sherrill Brown, directrice des finances pour les congrès 2006; Pat Hogan (le « homard »), Certification Council of Nova Scotia; Traudi Kelm, président du comité du congrès 2006; Bronwein Richardson, Nova Scotia Child Care Association; et Francine Fortin, coordonnatrice de réunions et adjointe aux affaires opérationnelles de la FCSGE.



Tiana Knight, 13, gave an inspiring keynote address about overcoming obstacles by following our passions, working hard and believing in ourselves. Tiana has overcome her own share of obstacles – she is blind – and has become an accomplished public speaker throughout Alberta.

Tiana Knight, 13 ans, a livré une conférence inspirante sur la façon de surmonter des obstacles en suivant ses passions, en travaillant fort et en ayant confiance en ses moyens. Tiana a dû surmonter sa part d'obstacles – elle est non-voyante – et est devenue une conférencière accomplie dans toute l'Alberta.



CCCF Board at the annual general meeting. *From left to right:* April Kalyniuk, chair of Member Council; Nathalie D'Amours, outgoing director; Don Giesbrecht, president; Natalie Weller, outgoing treasurer; Christine MacLeod, director; Janet Towers, secretary; Barbara Coyle, outgoing executive director.

Conseil d'administration de la FCSGE lors de l'assemblée générale annuelle. *De gauche à droite :* April Kalyniuk, présidente du conseil des membres; Nathalie D'Amours, membre sortante; Don Giesbrecht, président; Natalie Weller, trésorière sortante; Christine MacLeod, membre; Janet Towers, secrétaire; Barbara Coyle, directrice générale sortante.

Calgary, Alberta
June 15-18, 2006
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Canadian Child Care Federation

Alberta Child Care Professional Association

Alberta Family Child Care Association

Alberta Child Care Network Association



The CCCF booth was a busy meeting place at the conference's trade show.

Le kiosque de la FCSGE était un lieu de rencontre occupé durant la foire commerciale du congrès.

Calgary (Alberta)
15 au 18 juin 2006
Hôtes conjoints du congrès national

Fédération canadienne des services de garde à l'enfance

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Alan Pence, professor, School of Child and Youth Care, University of Victoria delivered a keynote address that challenged the conference delegates to make space for "other voices" in their practice.

Alan Pence, professeur, School of Child and Youth Care de l'University of Victoria, livre l'une des conférences principales. Il a mis les délégués au défi de faire de la place aux « autres voix » dans leur pratique.



Colourful entertainment at the Meet and Greet on the opening night of the conference.

Un divertissement haut en couleur lors de la réception d'accueil du congrès.



A group of CCCF Board, Member Council and staff gather for pictures at the gala. *From left to right:* Anne Miller, Early Childhood Development Association of PEI; Anne Maxwell, CCCF senior director, Projects, Programs and Services; Mona Lisa Borrega, Association des garderies privées du Québec; Olie Lee, Saskatchewan Early Childhood Association; Barbara Coyle, outgoing CCCF executive director; Catherine Cross, Nova Scotia Child Care Association; Natalie Weller, outgoing treasurer of CCCF Board; April Kalyniuk, chair of CCCF Member Council; Kelly Massaro-Joblin, Association of Early Childhood Educators of Ontario; and Janet Towers, secretary of CCCF Board.

Un groupe de membres du conseil d'administration, du conseil des membres et du personnel se réunissent l'instant d'une photo au gala. *De gauche à droite :* Anne Miller, Early Childhood Development Association of PEI; Anne Maxwell, directrice principale des projets, programmes et services de la FCSGE; Mona Lisa Borrega, Association des garderies privées du Québec; Olie Lee, Saskatchewan Early Childhood Association; Barbara Coyle, directrice générale sortante de la FCSGE; Catherine Cross, Nova Scotia Child Care Association; Natalie Weller, trésorière sortante du conseil d'administration de la FCSGE; April Kalyniuk, présidente du conseil des membres de la FCSGE; Kelly Massaro-Joblin, Association of Early Childhood Educators of Ontario; et Janet Towers, secrétaire du conseil d'administration de la FCSGE.