



The Early Development Instrument



The EDI ...

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

a place of mind



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

ABOUT THE EDI

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

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

Use of EDI results:

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

CREATING POSITIVE SOCIAL CHANGE THROUGH RESEARCH

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

EDI SCALES

Sample Questions

Physical Health & Well-Being	Can the child hold a pencil? Is the child on time for school each day?
Social Competence	Does the child share with others? Is the child self-confident?
Emotional Maturity	Is the child able to concentrate? Is the child aggressive or angry?
Language & Cognitive Development	Is the child interested in reading and writing? Can the child count and recognize numbers?
Communication Skills & General Knowledge	Can the child tell a short story? Can the child communicate with adults and children?



“Children thrive
when families
thrive.”

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

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

INFORMING GOVERNMENT

The EDI results are widely used by our government partners to inform their program and policy decisions. Provincial initiatives, like the Strong Start Early Learning Centres, have used EDI data to assist in the planning and implementation of the program. Building on the principle of “children thrive when families thrive”, HELP's researchers have provided government with recommendations for policy

investments. These investments will enable parents to best balance their responsibilities for caring and earning, therefore contributing to improved child development outcomes. A commitment to reducing children's vulnerability, as measured on the EDI, is apparent in a variety of government strategies and accountability documents.

LEADING RESEARCH IN CHILD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

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

HOW EDI RESULTS ARE USED IN OUR COMMUNITIES

EDI results frame the challenges that families, schools, communities and governments face in supporting their children's development. But how the data is used to inform the work being done varies across the province. Some use the data to help increase general awareness of children's development and the needs of children and families within their community as a whole or within a specific neighbourhood.

Others use the data to inform community planning decisions, including the selection and location of specific services and programs. Powell River EDI scores, for example, illustrated the needs of children in their more remote neighbourhoods and inspired the On the Road with Children's Activities - or ORCA - Bus, a mobile early learning activity bus that brings early development programming to these children.

Still others dig deeper, using the data as a platform for additional community research on the needs of children and families. EDI data formed the basis of the Richmond City Centre Early Child Development Report. At 43%, City Centre has the highest proportion of vulnerable children on the EDI. It is also Richmond's most disadvantaged neighbourhood on the SES Index and its fastest growing neighbourhood, with a child and youth population that is expected to grow by roughly 70% by 2021. The Richmond City Centre Early Child Development Report supported organizations to align resources and systems so young children in this neighbourhood would have better early child development (ECD) outcomes.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT

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