

**TORONTO FIRST DUTY STARTING GATE REPORT:  
Implementing Integrated Foundations for Early Childhood**

May 2002

The Toronto First Duty Research & Development Team

Carl Corter  
Jane Bertrand  
Theresa Griffin  
Marla Endler  
Janette Pelletier  
Donald McKay

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>Overview and User's Guide</b> .....	<b>1</b>
<b>Background</b> .....	<b>2</b>
<b>International Context</b> .....	<b>2</b>
<b>Canadian Perspectives</b> .....	<b>4</b>
-Pregnancy and Parental Leave.....	5
-Early Child Development Initiative.....	5
-Child Care Tax Deduction.....	6
-Research and Development.....	6
-CAPC and Canadian Prenatal Nutrition Program.....	7
-Quebec.....	7
<b>Ontario Provincial Perspectives</b> .....	<b>8</b>
-History.....	8
-Junior and Senior Kindergarten .....	9
-Child Care Services .....	11
-Family Resource Programs.....	13
-Healthy Babies, Healthy Children.....	14
-Specialized Services .....	15
-Early Years.....	16
<b>Local Context</b> .....	<b>21</b>
-History.....	21
-City of Toronto.....	21
-Toronto District School Board.....	24
-Atkinson Charitable Foundation.....	24
<b>The Genesis and Goals of the Project</b> .....	<b>26</b>
<b>Overall Project Development and Management</b> .....	<b>27</b>
-Organization.....	28
-Project Integration, internal communication, and knowledge building.....	29
-Issues for Reflection at the project management level.....	30
<b>Site Reports</b> .....	<b>31</b>
<b>York Early Years—Wilcox: The Early Leader Case Report</b> .....	<b>32</b>
-Overview.....	32
-Vision.....	33
-Partners.....	33

-Community Profile.....	35
-History.....	36
-Out of the Gate .....	37
-Summary of Progress to Date.....	40
1. <u>Programs, Policy, and Services</u> .....	40
2. <u>Child and Parents</u> .....	41
3. <u>Community</u> .....	41
-YEY-W Evaluation and Knowledge Building.....	41
-Focal Issues for Reflection at the Site Level.....	42
 <b>Secord/Dawes - Action For Children Today And Tomorrow (ACTT)</b> .....	 <b>43</b>
 <b>Corvette Early Years Childhood Education, Development and Care Project (Corvette)</b> .....	 <b>47</b>
 <b>Queen Victoria Early Years Project (Queen Vic)</b> .....	 <b>49</b>
 <b>Bruce WoodGreen Early Years Centre (Bruce WoodGreen), Atkinson site</b> .....	 <b>54</b>
 <b>The Goals and Roles of Evaluation</b> .....	 <b>57</b>
-Overview.....	57
-Objectives .....	58
-Research Issues.....	58
-Research Questions.....	59
-Data Collection.....	60
-Evaluation progress and activities to date .....	61
-Next steps in evaluation.....	61
-Dissemination.....	62
-Evaluation Team.....	62
 <b>Conclusions</b> .....	 <b>63</b>
 <b>References</b> .....	 <b>65</b>
 <b>Acknowledgments</b> .....	 <b>69</b>
 <b>Appendices</b> .....	 <b>70</b>
-Appendix 1. About Ontario’s Early Years Plan.....	70
-Appendix 2. Government Roles in ECEDC.....	71
-Appendix 3. First Duty Site Demographics.....	73
-Appendix 4. Stages of Change.....	74
-Appendix 5. YEY-W Process Checklist.....	75
-Appendix 6. YEY-W Indicators of Change Checklist.....	79

## Overview and Users' Guide

The goal of integrating services to provide better support for the development of young children is at the heart of the Toronto First Duty Project. The project vision begins with a blending of child care, early education and parent programs anchored at school sites, with other services joining in. Community partners are at work in five pilot sites to implement the overall Project vision in ways that reflect community inputs, needs and strengths. The Project has developed through the leadership of the City of Toronto, The Atkinson Charitable Foundation, and the Toronto District School Board. Evaluation is an important part of the Project. The evaluation will contribute to accountability and to understanding---of both the Project's impacts and the process of developing and implementing a complex, innovative program across multiple sites. This understanding will help in improving and extending the work of the pilot sites and will contribute to public awareness of the importance of early child development, as well as to the potential of new foundations to support it.

In a complex undertaking like the Toronto First Duty Project it is a challenge for partners to get on the same page. The purpose of the Starting Gate Report is to contribute to getting off the mark with a shared understanding of the aims of the Project, its development, progress to date, and the evaluation process. As a first step in sharing knowledge about the Project, the Starting Gate Report surveys the background, ideas and evidence on integrative supports for early childhood, as well as the concrete achievements and plans for local action. The report is designed primarily to communicate among the First Duty Project funding partners, site partners, and other key stakeholders. It is hoped that communication within the project will quickly extend to the public, to other stakeholders, and to other levels of government. The report is based on analysis of documents, meeting notes, and other background literature, as well as key informant interviews conducted with provincial, city, and school board officials, and with several pilot site leaders.

The Starting Gate Report is a long, complex document since the realities surrounding this effort are broad and complex. Nevertheless, most readers will not want to revel in all of the complexity. For example, site partners may want to start by comparing notes across site "thumbnail" reports or by examining the more in-depth case study of the Early Leader for ideas. Readers wanting general background can look at the analysis of why there is global interest in early childhood, why the Canadian federal and provincial approaches to the area are often described as "fragmented", and why the city and province can claim a long history of leadership in the area, a history which has been challenged by economic and political developments over the last decade. Readers interested in the development of the Project itself can follow the local history and development of the organization and management of the Project. Readers wanting to know about the evaluation plans will find details on the design, data, and questions to be answered in the evaluation.

Some information in this report will become dated quickly. As it is being written, Project sites are moving ahead with exciting new plans, even as new challenges to funding and political support emerge. For this reason, the Starting Gate Report will be “mirrored” by a Project website that will provide updated elements of the report as the Project unfolds. For example, site “thumbnail” reports will be available on the website but will be replaced by updated case studies at a later date. Some key documents cited in the report are also available directly to project participants on the Project website, and other relevant documents will be posted over the course of the Project.

The First Duty website is a private work environment for all First Duty participants. New users will first need to create a user account by going to <http://www.acscd.ca/acscd/firstduty/webreg.nsf> and clicking on Request a New Account. Users with established accounts can go directly to the First Duty site at <http://www.acscd.ca/firstduty>. This website is not simply a virtual bookshelf. It can be a dynamic space for comments and ideas from all project participants. As one example, the Research and Development Team has identified issues that we see as worth talking about, both at the general project management level (listed on p. 30 in this report) and at the site level (on p. 42 in this report). Project participants are invited to comment on these issues and to add other points for discussion that they would like to share.

## **Background to the Project**

The "... first duty of a state is to see that every child born therein shall be well-housed, clothed, fed and educated, till it attain years of discretion," according to the 19th-century British social reformer John Ruskin. This quote provided the title for the 1997 City of Toronto First Duty report recommending a municipal strategy for supporting young children. The First Duty Project grows from the City strategy and from the leadership of the Atkinson Charitable Foundation (ACF), the Toronto District School Board (TDSB) and other community partners. The partners in the First Duty Project are working in the context of both local history and recent local and international developments. There is worldwide interest in early childhood development and in new forms of service integration. Ideas on integration include breaking down service silos marked by professional and jurisdictional barriers in order to optimize service. The interest in integration also includes the aim of bringing parents and communities into new alliances with services to support children.

### **International context**

Public and political interest in early childhood development has reached unprecedented levels over the last several years in many countries around the globe. There are related waves of recent interest in readiness for school and school

reform, integrated and comprehensive services for early childhood, and parent/community involvement in children's services.

The depth of interest reflects multiple social and economic forces and societal goals, as well as advances in scholarly understanding of early foundations for optimal human development (Corter, 2001). Throughout the 1990s, social forces relating to economic restructuring and competition eroded many traditional supports for children, while simultaneously elevating goals related to training children for academic and eventual economic success.

Preparing children for success in the Information Age is a closely related set of ideas; in fact, the computer metaphor may have whetted public appetite for new research on the neural basis for the importance of early learning and experience. In the context of a global knowledge economy, investing in the early years is seen as sound economics. International agencies including the development banks and UNICEF have identified EC development as important, partly as a country development strategy.

The investment in young children also appears to make sense from the standpoint of other long-standing goals of developed countries: the prevention of societal ills associated with poverty and reducing the burden of social and mental health costs.

Comprehensive early childhood systems exist in most European countries but are nonexistent in Canada and other Anglo jurisdictions. The OECD Starting Strong report (2001) shows that a number of European OECD members have countrywide policies that appear to be achieving what is only a patchwork promise in North America. For example, Sweden balances local initiative in planning with national pressures, such as regulation, and supports. Starting Strong asserts a number of holistic principles including the inseparability of early care and education and universality rather than provision limited to targeted programs.

In the U.S., the Carnegie Corporation's strategy has advocated broad-based programs of support for EC in order to achieve multiple societal goals, with service integration and community connections as keys (1994). Some successful state level programs triggered by this initiative continue, but they struggle to survive in the face of ongoing challenges, such as changes in state governments (Levine & Smith, 2001). Related US initiatives in school-linked services (e.g., Future of Children, 1991) and comprehensive community services for early childhood (Regional Educational Laboratories' Early Childhood Collaboration Network, 1995) have spawned scattered successes with little evidence of sustainability or scaling up.

However, recent initiatives in the United Kingdom, United States, Australia, and New Zealand indicate possibilities of a more comprehensive approach to early care, education and development. Common characteristics include an appreciation of local community input and decision-making, emphasis on collaborative relationships, shared understanding of the importance of early development, and

the need to measure child, family and community outcomes. Targeting initiatives to children and families at risk tends to dominate but interest in a more universal approach is growing. There is considerable discussion about how to accommodate local innovation within broader government systems. School readiness (defined as social, emotional, physical and cognitive development) is an oft-repeated goal.

In the United States, school districts and state departments of education are active partners in increasing early childhood opportunities using the school base as a platform. A recent review of school-linked early childhood initiatives in the United States considered sites that met three criteria—comprehensiveness, integration and sustainability—that were defined along a continuum (Halfron et al., 2001). They reviewed an exhaustive list of possible initiatives through web searches, contact with all state departments of education, key informant interviews and a review of relevant literature. The investigators selected 112 sites then narrowed to 45 potential sites that met the criteria. A final six sites were selected to be case studies. The case studies include some pieces of true integration (seamless program, common staff and blended funding) but overall seem to be examples of more modest coordination among early childhood services with the school as a key partner. Two of the key lessons learned are particularly relevant for Toronto First Duty. System change at the school district reduces fragmentation and improves the chances for program integration. Most of the programs would like to conduct more rigorous evaluations but lack the funds to do so. Outcome evaluation data are seen as important to sustainability.

In 1998, California voters passed Proposition 10, the Children and Families First Initiative. Proposition 10 promotes, supports and optimizes early childhood development from the prenatal period to age five and fosters school readiness. It works through local county commissions to create and implement a comprehensive, collaborative and integrated system of information and services. Tax revenues from tobacco products provide about \$700 million per year. The funding is flexible and allows for considerable local discretion to match spending to local priorities. In many instances Prop 10 dollars are the glue that brings together various collaborative partnerships and funding sources. The State Commission promotes school readiness as an important organizing framework and works with the California Department of Education to create a new statewide system for children from 0 to 8 years and their parents within the education system.

## **Canadian Perspectives**

The federal government of Canada is involved with a number of early child development and family support programs that affect provincial and territorial policies and programs. It also delivers programs in communities and supports research through a number of departments including Human Resources Development Canada, Health Canada, Revenue Canada and the Department of Northern and Indian Affairs. There is an active government caucus committee that

meets weekly to discuss the "children's agenda" and how to move it forward. The recent Skills and Innovation paper (purported to be a key federal government initiative) clearly emphasized the 0 to 6 years period of development as the foundation for lifelong learning strategies. The programs and initiatives noted here are those that may influence the Toronto First Duty project.

**Pregnancy and Parental Leave.** Effective January 1, 2001, pregnancy and parental leave benefits increased from 6 months to one year. The benefits are administered through the federal Employment Insurance program. Pregnancy and parental leave benefits remain tied to employment status and are available only when parents are in the paid labour force prior to the birth or adoption of a child. The benefits provide about 50% of a parent's income (up to a maximum of about \$400/week). The eligibility requirements for Employment Insurance eliminate more than 60% of parents with newborn or adopted children. Nevertheless, the introduction of pregnancy/parental leave benefit for up to a one-year period is significant. It establishes a benchmark of a one-year leave. Perhaps most surprising, is the relatively positive (or at least not negative) response from the private sector.

In Sweden, the introduction of extended parental leave benefits (to 15 months) reduced demand for infant childcare and increased the demand for neighbourhood resource centres (Oberhuemer & Ulich, 1997). In Canada, the take up of the full year's benefits will be lower because the benefit is relatively less and eligibility is restricted. However, the extended parental leave benefit may decrease some of the demand for fulltime nonparental care during the first year and increase the numbers of parents who are at home in local neighbourhoods, and who would like to access parenting activities.

**Early Child Development Initiative.** On September 11, 2000, the federal/provincial/territorial governments in Canada announced the Early Child Development Agreement. Under the Agreement, the Government of Canada will provide \$2.2 billion over five years to help provincial and territorial governments in four areas:

- Healthy pregnancy, birth and infancy
- Parenting and family supports
- Early child development, learning and care
- Community supports.

The Agreement includes the stipulation that governments will report regularly on how young children are doing and on their investments in services and programs. It does not stipulate how the money is to be allocated among the four areas or criteria for accountability.

In 2001 – 2002, \$500 million was transferred to the provinces and territories. Canada's ECD agreement shares some common characteristics with the California initiative. Both are adding new dollars to spend on strengthening existing programs and services and are encouraging increased community collaboration. The amounts of money are similar (given that the Canadian amount will rise each year until year

five) and the population size and distribution patterns are comparable. Both initiatives are calling for monitoring and measurement, although neither jurisdiction has established how this should be accomplished. In Canada, unlike the California initiative, there is little evidence of collaborative or integrative efforts with the school system. (In Saskatchewan, there is a specified early learning initiative that is designed to develop new models that bring together care and education, presumably school-based pre or junior kindergarten, components.) Six of the Canadian jurisdictions have allocated about 10% of the total ECDI federal contribution to expanding and enriching childcare programs. Ontario has not allocated any of the ECDI money to licensed child care/ early childhood education programs.

**Child Care Tax Deduction.** Parents who are working may claim a deduction (maximum \$7000 per year per child under 7 years) for childcare expenses. Parents must be employed to be eligible for the deduction and in two-parent families, the deduction must be made from the parent with the lowest income. Eligible childcare expenses include any nonparental care arrangement (including home-based caregivers), licensed childcare programs, nursery schools, and summer camps. The deduction is of greater benefit to families with higher income levels. Parents who are working and pay fees for their families' participation in First Duty activities may be able to deduct these expenses from their income tax.

**Research and Development.** The federal government supports early child development research studies and development projects.

- The Social Development Partnerships Program, Human Resources Development Canada, supports early childhood and family support research and development projects. The Atkinson Early Years Challenge Research and Development project (that is contributing to the First Duty project) received a grant from this program. The Canadian Association of Family Resource Programs received support to study integrated approaches to family support delivered through family resource programs.
- The National Longitudinal Survey of Children and Youth, a partnership between Human Resources Development Canada and Statistics Canada, is a long-term study of Canadian children that tracks their development from birth to early adulthood. The survey collects data about how a child's family, friends, early childhood programs, schools and communities influence their physical, behavioural, and learning development. It began in 1994 and surveys 30,000 Canadian children every two years.

The survey provides researchers and policy-makers with valuable information about how children are doing and what factors make a difference to developmental outcomes. The data also open up a number of interesting possibilities for researchers who want to study how individual communities influence child development.

- Understanding the Early Years (UEY) is a national research initiative supported by the federal government. It is based in the belief that communities will use community-specific research to make the case for the allocation of resources to provide opportunities for young children. Data are collected in the community about what resources are available, children's readiness to learn at school entry (using the Early Development Instrument or EDI) and child, family and community context using the National Longitudinal Survey of Children and Youth. The data are reported at the community level and attempt to give a moving picture about how children are doing at school entry and what resources are available in that community to support early child development. Thirteen communities in Canada are involved in this initiative. Five of the sites are participating in an extensive program review that will actually provide detailed case studies of how the data are interpreted and used and what changes take place. The basic premise of the UEY sites is quite different than the First Duty sites but the collection of similar community-level data and the case study approach to monitoring the process will make for interesting comparisons.

### **Community Action Programs for Children and Canadian Prenatal Nutrition**

**Program.** The federal government supports almost 500 Community Action Programs for Children (CAPC) across Canada (approximately 70 are in Ontario). CAPC builds on community strength by funding community coalitions to establish and deliver services to meet the developmental needs of children under age 6 living in conditions of risk. Each program is unique and is defined by the community. Some provide parenting workshops, counseling, or help families to access resources. Others offer home visits, family resource centres and community kitchens. Program evaluations to date have been qualitative and have monitored inputs.

**Quebec.** The province of Quebec does not participate in the federal/provincial/territorial early child development agreement but has taken significant steps to develop community-based, early childhood centres and to improve other supports to family. Quebec's early child development policy is part of the broader family policy. The current family policy has four main objectives:

- To ensure fairness by offering universal support to families
- To give more assistance to low-income families
- To facilitate the balancing of parenting and work responsibilities
- To foster children's development and equal opportunity

A major element of the policy is the integration of existing nursery schools, family childcare, childcare centres and parent/child drop-in programs into a system of Early Childhood Centres (ECC). The centres are a "hub-and-spoke" model (specific balance of home-based and centre-based, determined by community context.) The centres offer early child development programs for children and their family caregivers (who may be family members). Play-based programs and qualified staff

are required by the province. At least 50% of the board of directors must be parents who are using that centre. The centres collaborate with the community health and social service centres (CLSCs) in their area to connect families to specialized services as needed, to identify community needs and to liaise with voluntary and community sectors (including public and private). The CLSCs remain a key partner in virtually all programs (universal and targeted) for families and children. It is likely that as the system of Early Childhood Centres grows and matures, there will be increased opportunities for integrating functions. Parents pay \$5/full day and low-income parents pay less. Children whose parents are at home may attend half time.

A second major element of the Quebec family policy is that local school boards offer full-day kindergarten for all five-year-old children and after-school programs for children in kindergarten and the elementary grades. Kindergarten curriculum is complementary to the play-based approach in the Early Childhood Centres.

**Discussion.** The federal government does not have a designated role or responsibilities in the delivery of developmental opportunities for young children and their families. However, it does provide significant resources directly to families as well as research support and a scattering of direct delivery programs that contribute to the environments of young children. It also has taken steps to encourage provincial and territorial governments to organize and deliver more comprehensive and holistic early child development programs.

## **Ontario Provincial Perspectives**

**History.** The case for integrative and innovative services for children has a strong past in Ontario. The idea was clearly enunciated in To Herald A Child a number of years ago (LaPierre, 1980), in the neighbourhood hub model proposal by the Ontario Coalition for Better Child Care in 1981, and more recently in Children First (1990). The latter was a report on children's services, commissioned by the Ministry of Community and Social Services, which concluded that schools should become the hub of services for children and families.

By the late 1980s, Ontario was making concrete progress as government agencies developed collaborative plans in support of children, particularly around unifying child care and school. For example, in 1987 the Ministry of Education was building child care space into new schools as well as some replacement schools (although legislative changes to formally permit this did not take place until 1993) and the Ministry of Community and Social Services provided start-up funding and subsidized spaces for the resulting centres. In 1989, the Province announced that all school boards would provide junior kindergarten (JK) with enrolment at the discretion of the parents.

By 1990, 50% of childcare spaces in the province were located in schools. All large school boards and those with childcare in new schools had childcare policies. Many had staff to help develop and maintain school-based childcare and promote school-child care co-ordination. Municipalities co-operated with support such as child care subsidies. Larger municipalities had childcare consultants. In the early 1990s, the Teacher Education Council of Ontario produced a plan for "integrated" kindergarten teacher and ECE training. In 1993 the Education Act was amended to allow school boards to provide childcare.

Around the same time, demonstration sites offering integrated services for children were created as part of Ontario's Better Beginnings: Better Futures project, funded jointly by several provincial ministries and federal agencies. Research monitoring of these projects continues to provide information about the implementation of exemplary programs for young children in the Ontario context (Peters et al., 2000; Peters and Petrunka, 2002). In 1994 the Royal Commission on Learning Report recommended the establishment of full-time school-based programs for children between the ages of 3 and 5 years, coordinated with community family support and child care. A call for proposals for early years pilot sites was cancelled by the newly elected Conservative government in 1995.

Since 1995, the climate in the province of Ontario has become less hospitable to ECEDC and to integration of neighbourhood services. For example, school boards were relieved of the obligation to provide JK. New schools were no longer funded to include childcare space. The Education Act was amended to prohibit school board spending on childcare. School board amalgamation and funding changes have greatly decreased school board flexibility in encouraging programs other than direct classroom instruction. Management of the childcare system devolved to municipalities. Childcare funding has decreased substantially. Those integrated programs that have persisted have done so with difficulty.

Nevertheless the ideas persisted. Case studies subsequently revealed isolated examples of successful school or neighbourhood hubs operating in Peel County (Corter, Harris and Pelletier, 1998; Cantwell, Bodalai, and Shariff, 2001) and in South East Grey County (South East Grey Community Outreach, 1998) but with the long-term survival of such efforts in doubt (Corter, 2001). A statement of the importance of the early years and the need for systemic, integrative supports also came in an early childhood services research project report by Johnson and Mathien (1998). It described the kindergarten/child care situation in four provinces that had recently experienced change in ECEDC and it proposed and tested the idea of an integrated kindergarten/child care model with parents, teachers, child care staff and government officials. Margaret McCain and Fraser Mustard produced a report in 1999 that recommended to the Ontario government that integrated services for families and children, including childcare, be available in all communities.

**Junior and Senior Kindergarten** is offered by all 72 district school boards in Ontario. Attendance is voluntary. Approximately 95% of all five-year-old children attend

kindergarten on a regular basis. Junior kindergarten is a discretionary program but the majority of district school boards offer it in a majority of their schools. Approximately 85% of all four-year-old children now attend junior kindergarten programs. Most senior kindergarten and almost all junior kindergarten classes are half-day or alternate day full-day programs. Provincial funding for kindergarten programs is approximately \$870 million. Kindergarten curriculum follows the province-wide Kindergarten Program that includes specific learning goals. Kindergarten is operated within the school system and functions within the requirements of the Education Act.

The Education Act requires all school boards to provide kindergarten (senior) and gives them the power to provide junior kindergarten and to construct childcare facilities. The previously legislated authority to operate them under the Day Nurseries Act was repealed in 1996. Although the EA provides limited scope for integrating education services with other services, key informants in the Ministry of Education didn't see the EA as one of the major barriers to integration and innovation. For example one official, based on previous experience as a Principal and Superintendent, said "Boards can make agreements on just about anything," provided the details are worked out and documented (although they can no longer use local dollars to fund these projects).

Nevertheless, barriers and limited latitudes are suggested in EA sections on duties and powers assigned to boards and in sections governing agreements of boards with municipal councils and other institutions. Limits and latitudes may also be seen in the regulation of professional work and teaching. Principals and teachers generally must be members of the Ontario College of Teachers, but the Minister may deem equivalent qualifications; the Lieutenant Governor in Council may set duties and qualifications of TAs; psychiatrists and psychologists are the only other professional groups that can be appointed to boards. Teaching time for teachers is regulated and set at an aggregate minimum; teachers working on integrated service delivery might be deemed to be doing "equivalent" work as defined in the Act. Some community-oriented activities are expressly permitted such as the provision of evening classes, continuing education, public lectures, and joint community recreation centres operated with municipal partners and potential MCSS support. Some of the "powers" of boards are stated broadly enough that they could be seen as covering many of the activities and organizational arrangements being contemplated in the First Duty pilots.

Kindergarten programs in the public school system are guided by the expectations articulated in the Ministry of Education policy document, The Kindergarten Program (1998). Kindergarten teachers (who have Ontario Teacher Certificate credentials) are expected to ensure that children meet prescribed learning expectations by the end of the Senior Kindergarten year. The detailed expectations are organized into five subject areas: language, mathematics, science and technology, personal and social development and the arts. Emphasis on the importance of early literacy is growing.

Mandated School Councils provide a political and management structure for potential parent and community input in the local school and its community connections as described in Ontario Regulation 612/00, School Councils, of the Education Act and the companion document, School Councils, a guide for members (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2001; Government of Ontario website). There are two purposes for School Councils in the Education Act: 1. Increasing student achievement through active participation of parents; 2. Enhancing accountability to parents. Membership must include a majority of parents, the principal, one teacher, one staff member, and one (or more) community member(s)... School Council parents communicate with other parents to get input on matters for advice to principal, board, ministry etc.

The provincial Guide goes beyond the core regulations and encourages two optional areas that may reinforce the school's parent-community connections: constructing a School Profile and working on community outreach. The school profile is an interesting entree point for community-connected initiatives. According to the guide, parents' "...participation in constructing the profile will help them gain an understanding of the needs of the school and insight in to the unique characteristics of their school community, and ... can be specially helpful in recruiting community representatives and other school council members... A school profile will also help a council identify the resources that the community might have available or suggest strategies that might be included in the school's action plan."

The Guide also promotes community outreach "as a whole-school activity and as a regular part of the school's business. The purpose... is to facilitate the continuous involvement of parents and community representatives in the school...(including) a number of diverse groups: those who share common geographic, racial, ethnocultural, historic, religious, linguistic, or life backgrounds or experiences; others how share a particular challenge; and still others who share business, organizational, or institutional experiences. All... have something to contribute to the school and to be successful, your council should take advantage of the experience, knowledge and skills of all of them... The following are some of the ways your council can communicate with the diverse groups that make up your community: flyers, invitation to school, meetings in recreational community and centres, use local translators, ads in local papers and ethnic press, community ethnic organizations, voice mail in other languages, create an outreach committee..."

**Child Care Services.** Child care programs are regulated under the Ontario Day Nurseries Act (DNA). Early childhood educators (who have an ECE diploma) in child care centres construct curriculum that is responsive to the developmental needs of that particular group of children while maintaining the various caregiving routines inherent in a full-day program. The DNA states that a flexible program of varied, developmentally appropriate activities will be offered to children. The program should include group and individual activities that are designed to meet

physical, language, cognitive, social and emotional development and provide opportunities for active and quiet play.

Regulated childcare provides approximately 126,500 spaces for children ages zero to six years. Regulated childcare includes childcare centres, nursery schools, and family childcare agencies. The provincial government is responsible for licensing regulated childcare programs under the authority of the Day Nurseries Act. It also contributes approximately \$400 million towards child care fee subsidies, wage enhancement grants, and special needs resourcing for this age group. Designated municipal managers (mostly municipalities and DSSABs) and Indian Bands are responsible to administer the funding and to contribute 20 percent of the costs. Childcare fees for Ontario Works recipients may be applied to regulated childcare spaces. Parent childcare fees cover about 60 percent of the total cost of regulated childcare. Government and parents spend more than \$1 billion each year for licensed childcare programs (approximately \$7800 per child/full-time space).

Regulated childcare programs are operated by non-profit organizations (approximately 80 percent), businesses (approximately 12 percent) and municipalities (8 percent). The regulatory framework created by the Day Nurseries Act stipulates basic requirements to ensure children's health and well being, as well as staffing and programming requirements intended to support positive early learning and development. Licensing is carried out through regional Ministry of Community and Social Service offices.

Unregulated childcare is usually provided in the child's home or in the caregiver's home. A nonparental caregiver is able to provide care for no more than five children in an unregulated setting. Childcare support in the Ontario Works program may be applied to unregulated childcare arrangements.

Integrating licensed child care's activities and environments into early child development, education and parenting programs will be complex and will take time to overcome numerous logistical, political and bureaucratic barriers. The Day Nurseries Act also stipulates the maximum number of children that can attend an unregulated home or group program. In some instances the regulations themselves may be limiting. But specific difficulties seem to come in the interpretation of the local Ministry of Community and Social Services area office (e.g., unwilling to give permission to have mixed age groupings, alternative meal arrangements, or confusion about status of parents and others volunteers in licensed group programs).

Regulated childcare programs are often isolated from other community initiatives and miss opportunities to exchange information and expertise with other programs available to children, families and their communities and to informal initiatives that emerge within neighbourhood networks. The isolation of childcare centers may be reinforced by the limitations imposed by the Day Nurseries Act itself, or perhaps more often, from its rigid application. For example, it is difficult for child

care centres to include children who are not enrolled in the child care programs and their parents/caregivers to use playground facilities at the same time as the children in the child care centre are using them.

In spite of the obstacles, it is possible to take first steps in addressing the question of how to fold childcare activities and environments into early child development, education and parenting support. There are some initial steps that could encourage and motivate existing childcare programs and home-based caregivers to join in the process as it evolves in communities across the province. Incremental steps can be accomplished by the consistent use of discretionary areas of the Day Nurseries Act; support to innovative models of delivery that could operate under the authority of the Day Nurseries Act while formally exempted from regulation; minor regulatory changes; and, more flexibility in the funding envelope to Consolidated Municipal Service Managers who are now responsible for the delivery of licensed child care and family resource programs.

**Family Resource Programs.** There are approximately 400 family resource programs in Ontario. They offer a wide range of family support services and programs. Most offer specific activities that are directed to children and to parents/caregivers. They may offer occasional or respite childcare arrangements for up to five children.

The provincial government provides funding to approximately 180 programs. They support caregivers of young children, enhance unregulated family home childcare and provide information and resources to families. The province spends approximately \$22 million on these programs, which are administered by the designated childcare municipal managers.

Family resource programs may receive funding support from federal government programs (e.g., Community Action Programs for Children or Canada Prenatal Nutrition Program), the voluntary sector or other provincial government programs.

Family resource programs operate outside of a single regulatory framework (although various funding streams establish operating criteria). They have considerable flexibility to respond to local community needs and changes. They have worked together to establish provincial coalitions and collaborations. Most family resource programs do establish daily routines and health, safety and nutrition practices that are consistent with the Day Nurseries Act regulatory framework.

Family support service is an umbrella term for a diverse range of family resource programs, home-visiting initiatives, family literacy programs and activities and parenting centers. These programs do not have a single regulatory or policy framework. Their programs often provide a number of resources for parents and other family members. Most do have a broad goal to support parenting capacity and have identified specific goals and activities designed to increase parents' positive

participation in their children's learning and development. The parenting strategies vary (informal networks, intentional episodes in parent/caregiver-child activities, parent education classes or workshops). Most use adult education principles based on respect for the parent, sensitivity to cultural context and awareness of different learning styles. Parenting curriculum is embedded in these programs.

**Healthy Babies, Healthy Children.** Healthy Babies Healthy Children is a province-wide program prevention and early identification program for young children, prenatal to age six years, and their families that is shaped by provincial policy and legislation. The program receives full funding (approximately \$70 million annually) from the provincial government and is delivered through the province's 37 Public Health Units.

Services include:

- Universal screening at birth for all newborns and the offer of a public health nurse home visit to all new mothers
- Public health nurse home assessments and referrals
- Family home visitors
- Prenatal screening
- Early identification of developmental problems
- Referral to specialized services

About 139,000 newborn children participate in the universal screening each year. There are about 15,000 public health nurse assessments each year and 8000 families access home visits by a trained family home visitor.

Healthy Babies, Healthy Children works together with other local service providers to build a community prevention and early intervention network for young children and their families.

The current provincial government initiated the Healthy Babies Healthy Children (HBHC) program in 1997. Its mandate and budget expanded to try to provide a more integrated hub for early childhood programs in local communities. In addition, there is some integration at higher levels since the program is run jointly by the Ministries of Health and Social Services. Several Key informants pointed to HBHC as a provincial success story in integrated children's services. Success lessons from the development of the program were having a strong leader making this a cause, having a concrete program to come together on, and the key role of community "tables." Evaluations of the process and the impact of the program have reportedly been carried out but not made public. However, the provincial government's more recent directions seem to have shifted away from the focus on HBHC. For instance, public health units were the host institution for the Early Years Challenge Fund Steering Committees, not the established HBHC cross-sector networks. The Early

Years initiative for healthy pregnancy and child development promotion was directed to public health units, not to HBHC.

**Specialized Services.** The Ontario government supports programs for families whose young children have special needs, are experiencing developmental difficulties or are considered to be at risk of developing problems. These initiatives provide extra support and assistance to young children and their families. This includes programs such as Preschool Speech and Language Program, Infant and Family Development Program, Children's Mental Health Centres and Children's Aid Societies. The Child and Family Services Act is the provincial legislation that provides the regulatory framework for funding and operations of the full range of services for vulnerable children, including those that provide early intervention services to children 0 to 6 years.

Although not targeted at young children, the Integrated Services for Northern Children (ISNC) is a successful model of integration of services targeted to children with multiple service needs in rural/remote northern Ontario (Lewko, Salhani & Legault, 1999). It includes traveling paraprofessionals and an interdisciplinary Resource Group to deliver direct services, overseen by rural-based case managers. It also includes interministerial coordination facilitated by Area Coordinators who tend the accountability mechanisms between the program, the sponsoring transfer payment agencies and the senior inter-ministerial management committees. In this case, integration came about through a two-edged process with complementary work proceeding at both the field level and the bureaucratic level of provincial ministries. The successful policy and organizational groundwork was reportedly helped by "an honest broker" with less stake in preserving traditional turf in the area of children's services. In the ISNC, the Ministry of Northern Development and Mines played this role.

The provincial government and provincial organizations have studied, proposed and piloted numerous plans and initiatives to integrate children's specialized services with each other, with those offered as part of the school system and with other early childhood programs (such as child care and family resource programs). In fact the Preschool Speech and Language Program, established in 1997 is delivered through an integrated regional network that offers families and agencies a single door access. Local Preschool Speech and Language networks seem to make efforts to coordinate this initiative with those offered by the MOE continues. The rationalization and integration of a range of intervention and treatment programs for children and families is guided by a provincial document, Making Services Work for People (1997). The document is a framework designed to guide the reshaping of the system of community services for children and people with developmental disabilities. It laid out an extensive process to guide local children's service networks in a collaborative process to coordinate services. Regional area MCSS offices worked with local networks of service providers, service users, volunteers and community members to consider various options and to develop local plans. Many of the local plans included strategies for reinvestment – including

increases to early intervention, development and prevention supports and improvement of access to services. Some communities opted for single point access to services. Other communities opted for a multi-agency approach and collaborative decision making.

The MCSS has also been attentive to the possibilities for service integration in the aftermath of the creation the new consolidated municipal service managers (CMSMs) in 1997 with subsequent service downloading and realignments at the local level. The City of Toronto, for example, became a CMSM with new responsibilities for a number of children's services. The Social and Community Health Services Implementation Project of Ontario MCSS (2000) surveyed 39 new CMSMs to assess integration of the management and delivery of human services at the local level. The goal was to "create a knowledge base upon which all levels of government and other organizations can draw as they move forward in developing, implementing and supporting systems of integrated services." Reporting on the project included a modest conceptual framework with a definition of integration and descriptions of characteristics of an integrated system, and components of integration (governance, administration, and service delivery). In addition to surveys, in depth interviewing was used to describe 13 integration initiatives in 10 case study sites.

The findings revealed that initiatives fell into a number of broad categories, several of which are relevant to integrated children's services :

- Integration of public health and social services
- Integration of different social services, including integration of employment supports and child care
- Integration under the Learning, Earning, and Parenting (LEAP) program of Ontario Works, including co-ordination of social, health and education services for teenage mothers

Several of the case studies involved children's services. These had a focus on special needs or high-risk families, and the educational sector was not central. Cases included:

- Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound Public Health Unit and MCSS: Integrated Service for Children (Let's Grow). This program involves early identification and referrals with broad committee and communications efforts.
- Dufferin Information Access Link. DIAL is a broad public data base on health and social services including those for children.
- York Region. This case involves early intervention services and integration of Ontario Works and Child Care, along with HRDC support.

**Early Years.** In 1998, The Early Years Study, prepared by Dr. Fraser Mustard and the Hon. Margaret Norrie McCain, set out an ambitious plan for the integration of all early child development programs into a network of community-based early child

development and parenting programs, which would be available to all young children and their families in five years. The report documents the needs for a system of early child development supports, the research rationale including an extensive overview of recent biological and social science research, how children are doing, what communities are doing and what previous reports have recommended (including many of those identified earlier in this document). The recommendations of the Early Years Study are consistent with those of other reports over the past 20 years but are presented in a compelling framework and context that gained considerable public attention – in Ontario, across Canada and internationally. The report is somewhat like a chameleon. Its intent and recommendations can be interpreted quite differently and are used to support very different visions and proposals for early childhood and family programs.

The provincial government has taken steps to implement the recommendations, mostly in isolation of its other core programs previously identified. In particular, some key informants pointedly noted that the provincial government goes out of its way to distance early years initiatives from child care in an "ABC" approach (Anything But Childcare). In any case, the government supported five demonstration projects in five communities to set up local governance structures, collect community baseline data using the Early Development Instrument and community mapping tools, and establish pilot early childhood programs that leveraged matching private sector support. However, at the end of the 18-month period, the province opted for a standardized and centrally controlled governance structure for the next round of Early Years Projects. The evaluation report for the demonstration sites noted, "The timing of announcements was often unpredictable, and the rationale for decisions (along with the role Demonstration Project experiences played in the decision) was often unclear to local partners" (Centre for Research and Education in Human Services, 2001, p. 8).

In 2000 and 2001 the Province brought in a series of initiatives—e.g., Ontario's Promise, the Early Years Challenge Fund and the Early Years Centres initiatives. An Ontario Government portrayal of early years initiatives is provided in Appendix 1. These initiatives generally seek partners in the community and in the business sector. Ontario's share (\$114 million in 2001/2002) of the federal government's EDCI funding is allocated to these initiatives.

- EYCF was administered through local public health authorities and supported by a provincially appointed order-in-council Early Years Steering Committee. Each of the volunteer local Steering Committees developed an Early Years Action Plan, reviewed local proposals to the Challenge Fund, sought private sector support and developed a public awareness campaign about the importance of the early years. The Early Years Steering Committees and community coordinator Order-in-Council appointments expired March 31, 2002 and the groups disbanded.

- The province has identified local champions who are organizing steering committees to plan the implementation of Early Years Centres in selected communities. One centre will be located in each provincial riding. The Early Years Literacy coordinators and community data analysts/ coordinators will be attached to the Early Years Centres. The province has prepared extensive guidelines that set out the process for establishing a community table to designate which programs will become Early Years Centres. Although current provincial initiatives such as the Early Years Centres state support for integrated services, it seems likely that the core provincial programs such as kindergarten and licensed childcare will not be included. Many have commented that the Early Years Centres are really information kiosks for parents but will not extend or expand actual program opportunities for young children. On the other hand, with the right organization, the community tables could become a base for parents to convey needs for more comprehensive supports to the providers, politicians and the public.

Toronto is just entering this process with the anticipated announcement of the Early Years champion in early May. It is expected that 22 centres will be located in Toronto – one for each provincial riding. Existing family resource programs may be incorporated into or linked to Early Years Centres or they may be eliminated. Some informants believe that developments over the next few months could threaten key partners in the First Duty project sites. Family resource programs may be threatened – a concern that is echoed across the province. Others are more optimistic and look to the new resource as an opportunity to support the development of First Duty activities. The City is engaged in the planning for the Early Years Centres.

- The Early Years Plan is aimed at both the criteria set out by the federal funding and the goals and principles of Making Services Work for People. One government document lists 14 universal and 13 targeted Early Years Plan Initiatives across the social service and health ministries, ranging from early literacy to breast-feeding promotion and from autism to injury and family abuse prevention. Many of these initiatives for relatively small sums of money. The listing includes the dollars allocated for both the Early Years Challenge Fund and the Early Years Centres. The dollar amounts for these initiatives are reported in the Final Report of the Commission on Early Learning and Child Care for the City of Toronto (2002), available on the City website.

**Discussion.** Across sectors, political and organizational realities challenge change and new ways of doing things. An example is the lack of integration within and across organizations pursuing integration and innovation. For example, among Ontario ministries of government there are several relatively disconnected integration efforts. For a number of years there have been interministerial initiatives in integrating services for children with special needs. There is also an interministerial committee on services integration among health, education, and

community and social services. There is the relatively new division of Integrated Services for Children within the MCSS and reporting to Health as well. And of course there is the provincial initiative of the Early Years Centres, based on child development and parent support through some core services, as part of an Early Years Plan. Yet many of these initiatives do not appear to be deeply connected. For example, there appears to be no structural connection or working relationship between the interministerial committee and the Integrated Services for Children Branch. If these disconnected efforts were connected, momentum to improve and innovate might be created. For example, there is accumulating evaluation evidence about successful provincial services integration efforts including Healthy Babies, Healthy Children and the Integrated Services for Northern Children initiative (Lewko, Salhani, & Legault, 1999), and this knowledge could be shared to inform other efforts. Note that this was the intention of the study of integration initiatives in CMSMs carried out by MCSS (2000), described in an earlier section.

It is possible that the some of the initiatives are simply so new that integration across initiatives has not had time to grow. In particular, the Early Years Centres involved planning across four ministries and went from cabinet committee in March of 2001 to opening the doors on some centres a year later. This is truly a remarkable pace for an initiative spanning four ministries.

In the meantime there are long lists of initiatives in the Early Years Plan, but little evidence of coherence. One sign of coherence is an Evaluation, Coordination and Project Support initiative, in the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, "to monitor, evaluate, and co-ordinate the early child development projects funded through the Ministry..." On the theme of glimmers of coherence, one point of pride within the government, reported in a key informant interview, is that the MOE and the Early Years Branch of MCSS have been able to coordinate their separate early literacy efforts by agreeing on an age boundary (3 years) to keep the efforts from overlapping. As one key informant noted, there are a number of barriers to better integration at the provincial level; the greater complexity of the provincial government makes integration harder at this level than at the grass-roots, and the pace of government business prevents the forward planning required to integrate efforts.

Part of the context for the First Duty project is the limits and latitudes on change and innovation in provincial statutes. In key informant interviews and project meetings we have not talked to any one who believes that government regulations prevent what is imagined for the First Duty project. Neither the Day Nurseries Act nor the Education Act is seen as a major impediment, by a number of key informants, from ministry officials to funding partners.

Nevertheless, across the education sector generally there are other barriers to change. The education system, boards, and schools were seen by some as being resistant to change and closed off from other service sectors. Some informants with education backgrounds argued that educators need more training to work with

other professions in linked projects. Even within the government, some key informants suggested that the Ministry of Education had less flexibility than other ministries, notably the Ministry of Community and Social Services, because of policy, funding, and reform pressures. There is also general agreement on all fronts that the boards and schools are currently operating under a great deal of pressure from curriculum reform and cutbacks. On the other hand, some of the changes in schools may open up new avenues for change. A concrete example is the mandating of school councils in Ontario. A variety of parent-community connections could be seen as part of the work of the school council in supporting student achievement. Connecting schools to community support for students and preschoolers could be a winning integration. Apart from getting children ready for school, work with parents during the preschool can also build capacity for home-school connections by helping parents get ready for school and schools get ready for parents and children (Pelletier, 2002). Creating capacity for engagement with communities and all parents, along with providing more comprehensive early childhood education programs are thought by some to be "missing" cornerstones of educational improvement in Ontario (Leithwood, Fullan, & Laing, 2002).

Although school councils appear to have failed to live up to their promise (Leithwood, Jantzi, & Steinbach 1999; Corter, Harris & Pelletier, 1998), connecting them to the provincial government's idea of communities building the "table" to support the Early Years Centres and to more comprehensive approaches like First Duty, might give them revitalized relevance. Apart from getting children ready for school, work with parents during the preschool can also help get parents ready for school and schools ready for parents and children (Pelletier, 2002). Creating capacity for engagement among all parents is a basis for effective school improvement and reform.

The confusing web of policies and unpredictability of new directions from the provincial government plus the historical fragmentation of children's programs in spite of a steady stream of integration initiatives sets up a challenging context for the local First Duty partners and project sites. Although the Early Years Centres initiative has some features in common with the First Duty initiative, they are fundamentally different at the core since the core services of care and education in First Duty are not core services in the EYCs.

The prospects for integrating childcare and kindergarten curriculum are supported by a rough alignment between the curriculum prescribed in the Day Nurseries Act and the kindergarten curriculum prescribed in the MOE policy document, the Kindergarten Program. The First Duty project will also integrate curricula from parenting programs (such as the Parenting and Family Literacy Centres or family resource programs). These documents will form a base for integrating early childhood education programming in the First Duty projects. The documents and project plans for integrating curriculum across sites are described in the document, Learning Environments for Young Children and Their Families (Bertrand, 2002, project web site).

## Local Context

**History.** Well over a hundred years ago in Toronto, Hester How, the first female principal in Ontario, pioneered the integration of early childhood care and schooling (Stapleford, 1989). Her aim was simple: to improve education by reducing truancy. Children of working mothers were missing school to care for younger brothers and sisters. Her solution was also simple: to allow children to bring younger siblings to play at the back of the classroom. Fifty years later, in the roaring twenties, experiments in nursery education at the Institute of Child Study elevated early childhood education to a socially accepted, desirable experience, sought out by parents in Toronto's "leading" families; early childhood programs were no longer limited to those in need. The experiments integrated services ranging across education, mental health and nutrition, along with required parent education. Research and professional training based on the new approaches amplified the effects of the work and provided a knowledge base for improving practice and policy in early childhood programs over a number of decades. In the 1940s this R&D effort contributed directly to the establishment of the Ontario Day Nurseries Act and the WWII war effort as mothers moved into jobs outside the home. Fifteen years ago innovative pilot projects in Toronto supported integration of childcare with community services at several school sites with good success (Metro Council, 1987). However, without continuing funding and school involvement in the integration, the pilots were not sustained, although some capacity for continuing collaboration among services may have survived at the sites. There are many features of earlier Toronto innovations that have been lost over time. Nevertheless, judging by the intensity of the First Duty developments, zest for creating innovative supports for young children and their families still exists in the City, including its services, schools, foundations and universities. The lead organizations in the innovations in First Duty are described in following sections.

**City of Toronto.** The City of Toronto manages and administrates regulated child care programs and family resource programs. Over 900 different service providers are funded and managed by the City of Toronto—it is the largest system outside of Quebec. It serves over 50,000 children and their families. See Appendix 2 for a table of more information.

Toronto's Operating Criteria for childcare is a set of requirements that childcare centres that the city operates or contracts with must meet. The criteria contain a self-assessment tool that was designed to help both city Children's Services Consultants and childcare directors and staff decide whether centres meet the operating criteria. The criteria contain 313 items in eight categories: age groups, human resources, interaction and parent information, playground, administration, health and safety and nutrition, with further supplements on multi-age grouping and integrated services. The criteria are congruent with the Ontario Day Nurseries' Act and

provide the opportunity to apply the requirements of the act in specific and measurable ways. Since the amalgamation of the previous six municipalities in Metro Toronto, the City has developed an extensive framework for the delivery of the array of children and family services. This includes public health programs, libraries, parks, recreation as well as child care, family resource centres and agencies serving children with special needs.

Groundwork in the City of Toronto over the last five years has provided a rich potential growth medium for improving and integrating services to young children and families. In 1997 the Metro Task Force on Services to Young Children and Families released a report they entitled First Duty to reflect their belief that a community's first duty is to the health and well being of its children. The report contained 35 recommendations and called for the appointment of a Children's Advocate to monitor the implementation of an overall strategy and to build public awareness. Principles behind the strategy included investment in children as a "top priority to ensure the future social and economic health of the community" and "... a coordinated approach to the delivery of children's services for maximum operating effectiveness and cost-efficiency."

This report was followed by "report cards," including the Toronto Report Card on Children, 1999 with an associated Action Plan produced by the Children and Youth Action Committee and a report card Update, in 2000. The 1999 Action Plan recommended immediate concrete actions to bolster various elements of service to young children and their families. At the same time it recommended action on two other fronts: Advocacy and service planning, to include "service co-ordination for all City divisions serving children, including the establishment of an integrated internal planning system, the creation of an integrated early childhood development system and the continuation of efforts to link our service planning to that of other organizations serving children."

In 1999, Taking Stock: The Status of Child Care and Children's Services in Toronto was produced jointly by the City and the Community Social Planning Council of Toronto. While it concluded that existing services and care were of good quality and that there were some effective coordination efforts, it also found a number of critical disparities in services that threaten children's healthy development. Uneven availability of services across areas of the City means that many children miss supports, often in low-income neighborhoods. Another gap is between the shrinking resource available to childcare and the relatively more generous availability of other types of service such as Family Resource Programs.

The Child Care Service Plan 2001, produced by the City of Toronto's Children Services picked up on some of the same themes. The work of previous child care plans is extended to include other services for children and families that the City must now administer, provide and partially fund—for example, family resource centres and services for children with special needs. The report identifies gaps in children's services and proposes action, including goals for provincial cost sharing.

Lack of provincial support for the City's systematic service integration agenda with affordable, available childcare as a centrepiece remains a major barrier to the local visions of supporting young children. The City is caught in the provincial-municipal funding arrangements. The province is responsible to fund 80% of the costs of subsidized child care, wage grants and family resource program grants. However provincial funding has decreased since 1999 while the City has maintained service levels. Therefore, the City is left with a shortfall and now pays for more than 20% of the costs. For example in 1999 the City received \$187.8 million from the Province for subsidized child care. It anticipates receiving \$176 million this year.

In November of 2001, an Early Learning and Child Care Commission, established at arm's length from government, started its task of developing "a communication and advocacy strategy to influence national and provincial policy and funding support for childcare and early learning and development" (Toronto City Council, July, 2001). The Commission, among other activities, explored the intergovernmental barriers that prevent progress in the area of early childhood education and care. To add to its own understanding of these issues and as a contribution to the work of the Commission, the City approached the Canadian Policy Research Network (CPRN) to develop a paper (Jenson and Mahon, 2001) that addressed intergovernmental problems and explored the possibility of new political arrangements to achieve City goals in early childhood. The Commission's report, released in May 2002, concludes that quality early care and learning programs for Toronto children are badly funded and poorly coordinated among municipal, provincial and federal levels of government. The report calls for the provincial government to take more responsibility for child care and for the federal government to use more leverage with the provinces to move in this direction.

The provincially sponsored Toronto Steering Committee for the Early Years Challenge Fund has reinforced many of the points in the locally sponsored reports. Their Moving Forward: Toronto Early Years Action Plan (2002) is based on the analysis of existing documents and requests for input from numerous community groups. Among key issues, the need for integrated planning leads the list; other needs include more child care and ways of addressing service accessibility, demands and disparities. Barriers to successful integration include competition for shrinking service dollars, integration as a quest for funding rather than a long-term process, small agencies being squeezed out, and the need for strong leadership at senior levels. The report contains a number of recommendations for action. For example, strong leadership at the provincial level means finding a common vision across ministries, integrating existing reform/restructuring initiatives, and creating "the political will to proceed in the area of integration and planning for the early years."

It is notable the many of these reports (e.g., "report cards") emphasize the importance of systematic information gathering to guide planning and to test results. Given the economic and political accountability issues, this emphasis is not surprising. However, a second, and perhaps less obvious, pressure is to use

information in the service of "knowledge building" if the promise of better service for children is to be achieved. Partnerships that are planning and implementing new service arrangements need to build in ways to share ideas and test results in order to fit effective programs to communities and to continuously improve them. A formal external evaluation does not replace the need for community and municipal partnerships to function as "learning organizations."

In Ontario designated municipal managers, or CMSMs, such as the City of Toronto, have developed local service delivery plans that include targets and service levels according to provincial guidelines on local service planning. These documents are usually prepared with input from local communities and service provider groups. They offer a good overview of local core early years program needs (centred on child care services but within a broader early child development context). The childcare service plans are submitted to regional Ministry of Community and Social Services offices.

**Toronto District School Board.** former Toronto School Board opened Canada's first kindergarten program in a public school in 1883, established a coordinated child care program in 1980 and initiated parenting centres in the schools in 1981. The TDSB offers junior and senior kindergarten programs in over 600 schools and parenting/family literacy centres in 41 schools. Child care centres are located in 325 schools.

The TDSB prepared kindergarten curriculum documents to assist teachers in accommodating the Ministry of Education's Kindergarten Program. The Early Years Literacy Project is working with 93 schools in the Toronto District School Board (including Bruce Public School) to improve literacy outcomes. Each of the project schools has a literacy coordinator (a teacher leader who has a half-time appointment to work with the principal and other teachers on the improvement of reading and writing in the school. Kindergarten programs are included in the initiative.

The TDSB Parent Community and Student Involvement Handbook, 2001 revision. (TDSB website) echoes many of the points in the provincial Guide for school councils, such as calling for school councils to reach out and be representative of the community and asking "How can we survey our community?" It also adds other concerns such as "How can we value established parent groups?" In fact, it outlines a number of other groups in the TDSB organization that are designed to link the Board to parents and the community such as Board Advisory Committees (e.g., Child Care in Schools Advisory Committee), Community Liaison Groups, a Parent-Community Network, and public consultations.

**Atkinson Charitable Foundation** The Atkinson Charitable Foundation is a private family foundation based on the principles of social justice and equity. The "Foundation aims to support projects that inspire citizens and policy-makers alike to imagine a future that is safer, healthier, more just and comfortable for all of your neighbours" (ACF Annual Report, p. 3).

ACF has a long track record of support to early childhood activities and has funded a number of significant projects including some at First Duty project sites. It has funded projects that build community capacity for early child development, that try out innovative program delivery models and track how well children are doing. ACF's multi-year commitment to its Million Dollar Early Years Challenge is an indication of its belief that "the key to real progress for Canada's children will be ideas for change that catch the public's imagination."

ACF is committed to the First Duty project and also committed to ensuring that it is not a time-limited or one-shot initiative. ACF will be a strong supporter of a public communication strategy (through broadcast and print media) about the First Duty community experiment.

**Discussion of local context.** At the local level, coherence is provided by major initiatives supporting children. The City of Toronto Children's Strategy outlined strategic directions in services for all children. The Strategy and the Toronto Children's Charter, adopted by the City of Toronto, the Toronto District School Board and the Toronto Catholic District School Board, provide a coherent philosophical base for integrative and innovative early childhood projects. The creation of a children's advocate position, the report cards, and the action plans, all provide additional integrated focus on children, parents, and related supports. New responsibilities for services have been transferred to the City, providing both a challenge to integrate and an opportunity to do this in new ways as the new responsibilities are blended with the old. Although there is some coherence in the political agenda for young children at the municipal level, there appears to little prospect of connecting the agendas of the City and the Province. And of course the lack of integration across levels of government extends to the federal level as well. Here and there, glimmers of connection appear. In one key informant interview a provincial official connected to the Early Years Centres was positively surprised to hear of the First Duty initiative and talked of making a connection with the project so that the provincial and municipal efforts could be coordinated. On the other hand, City officials feel frustrated that efforts made to link agendas have had little success. One of the major conclusions of the report of Early Years and Child Care Commission is that "The City of Toronto has no available avenue to participate in discussions with either the provincial or federal governments" (p. 36).

In this context, ACF appears to have an important role in acting as a catalyst and advocate for the First Duty projects in many venues. It can easily have conversations with any level of government. It does not have the large bureaucracy or programs and regulatory responsibilities of the TDSB and the City.

## **The Genesis and Goals of the Toronto First Duty Project**

The present project had its formal beginning in April 1999, on a motion from the Toronto Children's Advocate. Toronto City Council allocated 3 million in funds to contribute to a partnership for a multi-year Early Childhood Education, Development and Care (ECEDC) pilot project. The project contained a number of interdependent and interactive components such as project work-up and co-ordination, field development and expansion, continuous research and learning, and knowledge communication. The City of Toronto, the Atkinson Charitable Foundation, the Toronto District School Board and the Toronto Catholic District School Board subsequently provided funds and management for a pilot project feasibility study completed in June 2000. In spring 2000 ACF announced its Million Dollar Early Years Fund and put out a call for proposals from communities across Ontario. In July 2000, City Council endorsed the recommendations of the ECEDC project feasibility study and approved an adjustment of \$100,000.00 annually for three years to the Children's Services Division to support pilot project management and coordination. During the summer of 2000, City staff in partnership with the Atkinson Charitable Foundation implemented a process to select from a list of proposals previously submitted to the Atkinson Foundation, a project that would be called an "early leader." A funding partnership between the Atkinson Foundation and the City of Toronto was established. York Early Years Wilcox Project was selected as the "early leader." In the summer of 2001, a Request for Proposals was issued by the City of Toronto to fund additional sites and three additional sites were chosen in September 2001. A fifth site, funded separately by Atkinson, was added to the First Duty roster in January 2002. ACF has now committed approximately \$1.5 million to the First Duty project, including support for research, development and communications. This includes a contribution from the Canadian Auto Workers and Human Resources Development Canada. ACF continues to seek out additional contributions that will add to the resources available to the First Duty sites.

The overall aim of the Toronto First Duty Project (formerly ECEDC Project) is to develop working models of early childhood education, development and care leading to an integrated system of services for young children and their families.

### **To this end the Project will:**

- Develop a program model that integrates services takes all steps to be inclusive and addresses any barriers that could interfere with children and family's access to services;
- Demonstrate high quality, integrated and collaborative education, development and care practice;
- Demonstrate that a high quality, seamless program model can be developed in a variety of settings involving a variety of partners;
- Enhance partnerships and build participation.

**The core service delivery features of the integrated and comprehensive continuum of supports and services include:**

- An integrated Early Years Learning Environment blending the three streams of kindergarten, child care/early childhood education and parenting. Strategies may include shared space, resources and approaches.
- An Early Childhood Staff Team—integrating staff from the three early years streams with each member delivering core aspects of the integrated Early Years Learning Environment. Strategies may include the development of a generic job description.
- An Integrated Governance Model—a consolidated structure that has control over a pooled budget and a mandate and accountability to provide management, planning and administration and ensure the delivery of comprehensive services and supports. Strategies include, joint program planning, administration, financial management, program evaluation
- Seamless Access to services and facilitated access to other services. Strategies include; common intake to the Toronto First Duty Project, integrated client information/data collection.
- Parent Involvement—to increase the participation of parents/caregivers strategies may include participation in the governance, program and planning

(First Duty background excerpted from the Project Fact Sheet, available on the City of Toronto web site at [http://children.metrotor.on.ca/reports/Fact\\_sheet\\_feb02.htm](http://children.metrotor.on.ca/reports/Fact_sheet_feb02.htm)).

### **Overall Project Development and Management**

Reviewing the development of the First Duty project over the last two years reveals a sound start as judged against the criteria and challenges laid out in the Feasibility Study in June 2000. The Study conducted an environmental scan, which still holds today for the Toronto scene and the provincial and national backdrop (e.g., level of uncertainty about the future of children's services). The study identified risk factors and barriers to undertaking and implementing an Early Childhood Education, Development and Care initiative. "Taken together, the areas of concern raised in the environmental scan and the constraints and risk analysis suggest that the time and conditions are not ideal for the pilot project." Thus, the study concluded that "a number of gaps should be addressed if a decision is taken to proceed in the face of complex constraints and significant risk factors:

- The need to build strategic alliances for an integrated continuum of planning and objective setting. The early childhood education, development and care community in Toronto is multi-layered and multi-textured. This complexity needs to be addressed strategically through a carefully crafted planning framework and if possible, a new, expanded partnership.
- The need to establish clear project objectives and expectations, share project risks and clarify the project vision. All partners to the project should share in the

establishment of clear objectives and expectations for the project, and have a common understanding of the overall vision. They should also be able and willing to share the investment in resources required to undertake the project and any attendant risks.

- The need to link the pilot project more directly to the goals of government. Clear links between project goals and school board, municipal, provincial and federal goals and objectives are needed – the long-term success of the project depends on these links, especially if it is to receive long-term government commitment.

Conditions for successful implementation included strong leadership, willingness to collaborate, clear accountability, community focus, school involvement, adequate resources and information, and effective communications. In terms of sustainability, the study recommended that a sustainability strategy be included in the project plan. Such a strategy should contain community development, cost/benefit and evaluation components, linkages to public services and to municipal, provincial and federal child/family policy initiatives, a strategy for testing and securing multi-year funding commitment, and communications and information dissemination components."

Finally, the report listed 11 detailed recommendations on design and implementation. The recommendations were: initial strategic lead be taken by the City of Toronto's Community and Neighborhood Services; project needs clear goals and objectives for accountability; strategic focus on providing coherent objectives at all levels; explore project funding as soon as possible; develop a coordinating management framework; develop criteria for choosing a pilot model; pilot model should fit with policy directions in Toronto Children's strategy and with project partners; build a pilot model from existing services identifying a continuum of integration; produce a clear, fair, equitable, and transparent selection process for pilot model sites; evaluation of the pilot project; a communication strategy including messages about child development and importance of the early years.

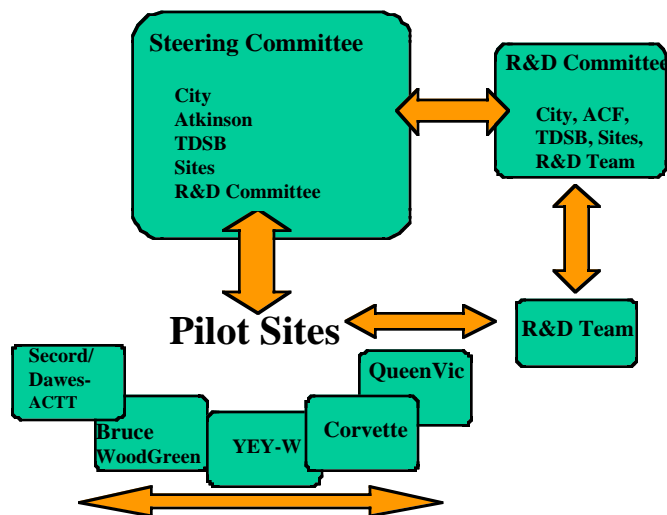
On each of these fronts—gaps to be addressed, conditions for success, and specific recommendations—a clear majority of the organizational issues have been addressed in the lead-up to implementation. Considerable work remains on some of the issues— communications, outreach to stakeholders and higher levels of government, and sustainability. Some of these issues are taken up below.

## **Organization**

A project-wide Steering Committee has met monthly for the last year-and-a-half to oversee the development, site selection and implementation of the project. It currently includes representation from funders, sites, and an evaluation work group. Terms of reference for the Steering Committee have been agreed upon (see website). The evaluation work group has been meeting in parallel to guide the

evaluation process and to oversee the university-based evaluation team, described in more detail near the end of this report. The work group has recently proposed to take on the coordination of the work on integrated learning environments being led by the Atkinson Charitable Foundation, and to change its name to the Research and Development Committee. Similarly, the evaluation team is now named the Research and Development Team. An organizational chart of these bodies appears below.

## First Duty Project Organization



### Project Integration, internal communication, and knowledge building

What about organizational integration within the First Duty project itself? The question goes beyond the core issue of how agencies integrate services in the site programs. How do the site agencies and organizations learn about each other, reflect on what they're doing, and actually roll out programs together? How does work at the site get integrated with other parts of the participating agency or organization? In addition to these questions, we want to look at how the funding partners, the sites, and the evaluation team integrate their efforts. It was clear from the project-wide workshops on February 4 and 5 that there is a need for communication among sites and project partners. Information on expectations, templates, what's working in other sites, and so on, would be welcomed by sites. Even more important, communication as a basis for reflection and knowledge building will no doubt be critical to the success of the pilots and to the dissemination of the process and payoffs. The Project-wide workshops in February and the information meeting with the TDSB in January were productive communications exercises; to build from the communication events requires ways of capturing the insights generated in meeting, putting them in the functioning organizational memory and building on them in further communications.

### **Issues for Reflection at the Project Management level:**

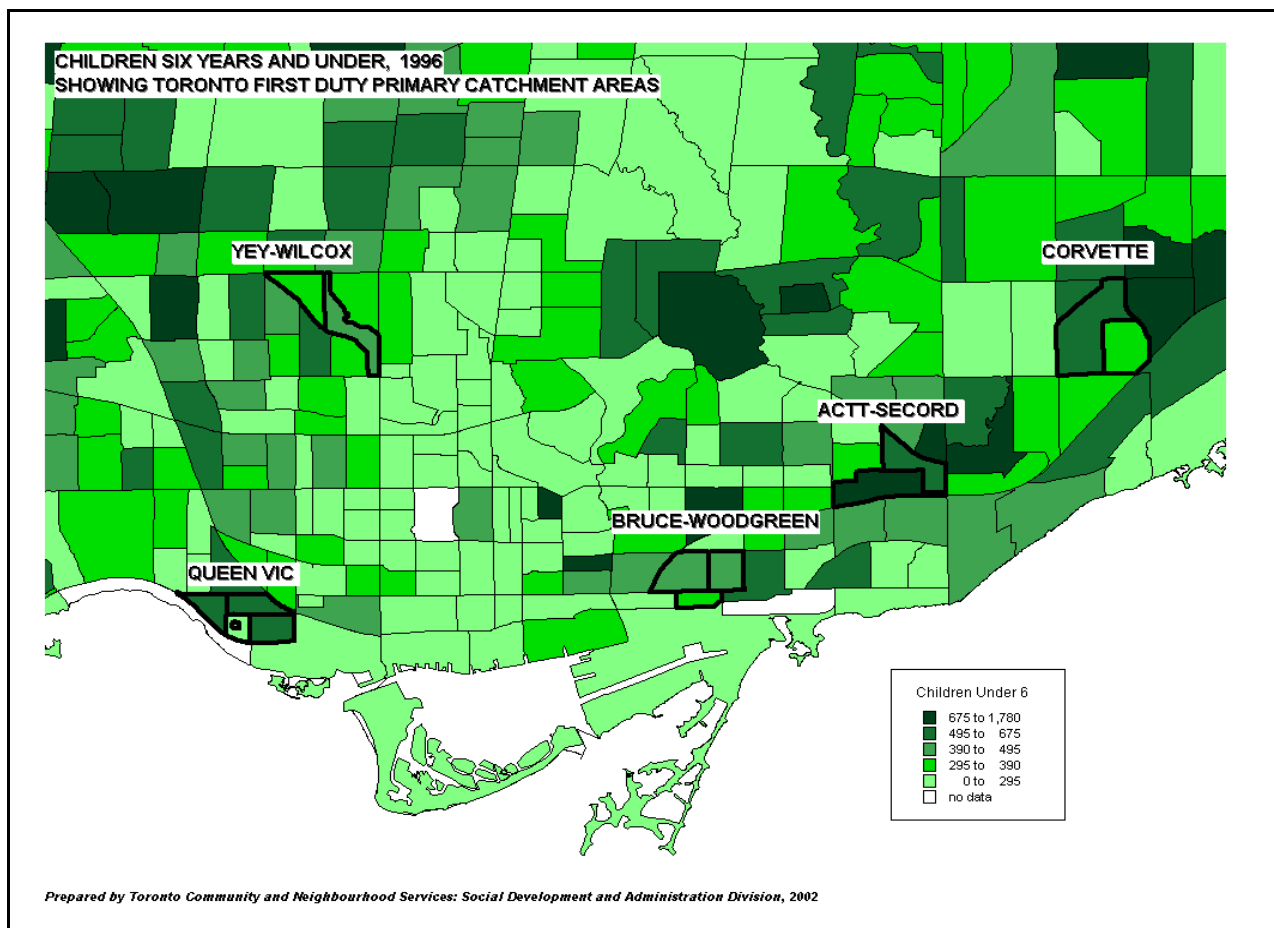
- Good team spirit now, as opposed to perception of rivalry among stakeholders at the planning table. "Have to park your egos at the door." Tremendous progress in addressing organizational gaps, conditions for success, and implementing recommendations from the Feasibility Study.
- Are important process issues, such as the tension between "real integration"/"start small and build" or funders/sites being addressed openly enough in the Steering Committee?
- Issues of trust: Concerns among some who are not directly at the table, that the FD should be careful to be a team player within the City's plans for children, and among others that the FD model not be used solely as a way of advancing the City's child care agenda, rather than in terms of more inclusive aims.
- Lack of connection with provincial government limits chance of policy impact and sustainability.
- Need to connect with federations and other labor groups, identified by Steering Committee, also a key barrier identified by the Feasibility Study and by key informant interviews.
- Need to deepen parent-community connections in the design, implementation, and ongoing operation of services.
- Working to maintain links to various departments and initiatives in the TDSB and City (e.g., the early literacy initiative of the Board; the City wide consultation with Parents "Working with parents" in Fall 2001 and community consultation at the site level).
- An external communication plan, which captures the possibilities of innovation and reveals the limits of the fragmented federal-provincial strategies to date.
- Periodic exploration of "What does integration mean? Why do it? When not to do it? Where is the innovation and the impact of change?"

## Site Reports

The Toronto First Duty Project is comprised of 5 sites across Toronto:

- York Early Years—Wilcox (YEY-W), Early Leader site
- Secord/Dawes -ACTTion for The Early Years (ACTT)
- Corvette Early Years Project (Corvette)
- Queen Victoria Early Years Project (Queen Vic)
- Bruce WoodGreen Early Years Centre (Bruce WoodGreen), Atkinson site

The map below shows the location of the five sites relative to concentrations of children under six years of age. Additional maps showing sites relative to other demographic variations are available on the project website.



The sites have a common core of services and principles that are laid out in the First Duty vision. At the same time, the sites begin with a range of approaches to that vision, varied histories, and some differences across the communities they will adapt their programs to. For example, schools are involved at every site, but several sites use a school-as-hub model, whereas one or two have a more networked approach. The early leader site builds from a number of years of experience among the site partners in coordinating and integrating their programs. One site was generated from an existing community-wide network established to serve children. Another site developed out of community action to save a neighborhood school. Another grew out of a school with an ecology and community focus based on twenty years of grass-roots parent involvement and links to childcare. A final site has a strong service base built on more than a century of innovative service design in a community with many low-income families.

Some of the site communities include both low and higher income families, and all sites include multicultural school populations, so service design will need to be universally applicable. In addition to the map above shows sites in relation to the distribution of the population of children under 6 years of age, additional maps with other demographic factors in relation to the five sites are available on the project web site. In addition, Appendix 3 presents a table of demographic data, by site and city-wide, suggesting that the sites generally have higher immigrant and ESL populations, higher levels of family poverty, residents who are less educated, and more lone parent families. Interestingly, in three sites, the schools have higher Grade 3 EQAO scores than the city average. Primary catchment areas in the table are based on approximation to the school catchment area, and Secondary catchment areas are larger and are meant to be suggestive of the draw of site programs beyond school boundaries.

## **York Early Years—Wilcox site: The Early Leader Case Report**

### **Overview**

York Early Years—Wilcox (YHEY-W) is the Early Leader site for the First Duty pilot projects. Accelerating progress is being made in the complex process of integrating and extending the services provided by the participating agencies, while involving the relevant organizations and the community. The current energetic activity follows the hiring of the Community Coordinator several months ago. Prior to that, project development went slowly but surely through a number of areas in preparing the ground work for new delivery of services. A long history of collaboration among agencies in this community had also built their capacity to take on the First Duty challenge. The history and the site's vision of collaboration are sketched below. Progress to date is also reviewed in some detail since the description and issues raised may be helpful to other sites that are not as far along in the process. The review is also intended to stimulate reflection among all stakeholders in the First Duty pilot project. Some suggested issues for reflection are included in concluding section on knowledge building and the evaluation process.

## **Vision**

The vision for establishing YEY-W outlined 5 core program/service areas:

- ECE, part and full-time
- Parent/Caregiver Programs alone and with children (including home based)
- Pre and Postnatal Supports
- Other Community Responsive Resources
- Facilitated Access to service

Programs in these areas are to be developed according to the principles of the ECEDC project and additional YEY-W service principles of delivering services that are holistic (parental choice and staff training), comprehensive (integrated, linked to other services, experienced as seamless), high quality (based on providers learning together, using diverse expertise, evaluation and community focus groups, culture of continuous improvement), and accessible (single access, availability of drop-in for information, extended service and expanded access, different languages, links to other programs with multiple languages, use of peer parent outreach volunteers).

## **Partners**

The core participating agencies/organizations representing childcare, education, health, and social service are:

Macaulay Child Development Centre is the lead agency. Macaulay is a multi-service childcare and family support agency providing a range of services to children and families in Toronto. Established in 1932, Macaulay is a non-profit, charitable organization governed by a volunteer board of directors. The agency's mission is to promote the optimal development of children, in partnership with their family and community. Programs include: child care centres and a licensed home child care program, consultation services to facilitate the inclusion of children with special needs in child care settings, speech and language services, parent support and education and community development, early intervention and identification, and family resource programs

J. R. Wilcox Community School serves 400 students from JK to Grade 6. A childcare centre operates in the school along with before and after school and breakfast programs. The school focus for the year is on literacy, math, and conflict resolution and anti-racist programs. Math and literacy programs include parent involvement and community links with volunteers in the literacy program. Community links feature the YEY-W project. Approximately 37% of the students are ESL. Major language groups in the school include Spanish, Chinese, Vietnamese and Greek, and there are some English-speaking children from Caribbean immigrant families. Information on the school comes from the TDSB intraweb and public website (<http://www.tdsb.on.ca/schools/schooldesignedwebsites.html#elementary>)

Humewood House is a young-parent resource center. It is a non-profit, charitable organization governed by a community Board of Directors, staffed by professionals

and volunteers. Its services are offered both at Humewood House and throughout Metro Toronto, in collaboration with other social services, health and educational facilities. The mission of Humewood House is to provide non-sectarian care, support and counseling to young women and their families, to enable them to cope with their life circumstances and to improve their ability to manage their lives. Services offered include a 12-bed residence for young women, a day treatment school program for 20 pregnant or parenting young women, parenting and pre-natal groups and programs offered in the community, a 10-space licensed infant day care center, individual and family counseling services, and an employment readiness program for young mothers.

Learning Enrichment Foundation (LEF) established in 1979 in the former City of York, is a non-profit, charitable agency committed to community economic growth and social development. Services include thirteen licensed childcare centres, nursery programs, childcare for community ESL programs, and LINC nursery program. LEF offers professional development to the child care community and consultation service to outside agencies in various aspects of licensed child care and trains individuals to become certified Early Childhood Assistants. LEF has also participated in establishing school age child care model programs and delivers before- and after-school care.

Program Without Walls (PWW) is a coalition of seven agencies working together to provide comprehensive parent education and support programs that address the diverse needs of at-risk families with young children (birth to six years) living in the former City of York. The goal of PWW is to reduce factors that contribute to child abuse and strengthen those that lead to healthy child development. Program Without Walls was established in 1994 and is funded by Health Canada through the Community Action Program for Children (CAPC). The agencies in the PWW coalition include Macaulay, Toronto Public Health, and Yorktown Child and Family Centre.

Supporting Young Families (SYF) is an interagency initiative that provides an integrated continuum of school and community-based supports and services for pregnant and parenting teens 21 years or younger in the former City of York. A drop-in program at YYY-W includes prenatal education, parent and child drop-in, nutrition information, food experience, and teen moms support group. SYF also includes an in-school program—parenting and support groups are held during school hours at three local high schools with pregnant/parenting teens and a peer outreach team. Teen parents have been recruited and trained as outreach assistants to reach isolated pregnant/parenting teens.

The Toronto District School Board, one of the largest school boards in North America, delivers education to students in 451 elementary schools. These students represent diverse backgrounds with 24% having been born outside Canada and 41% speaking a first language other than English. The board mission includes fostering both high academic achievement and citizenship in its students, along with

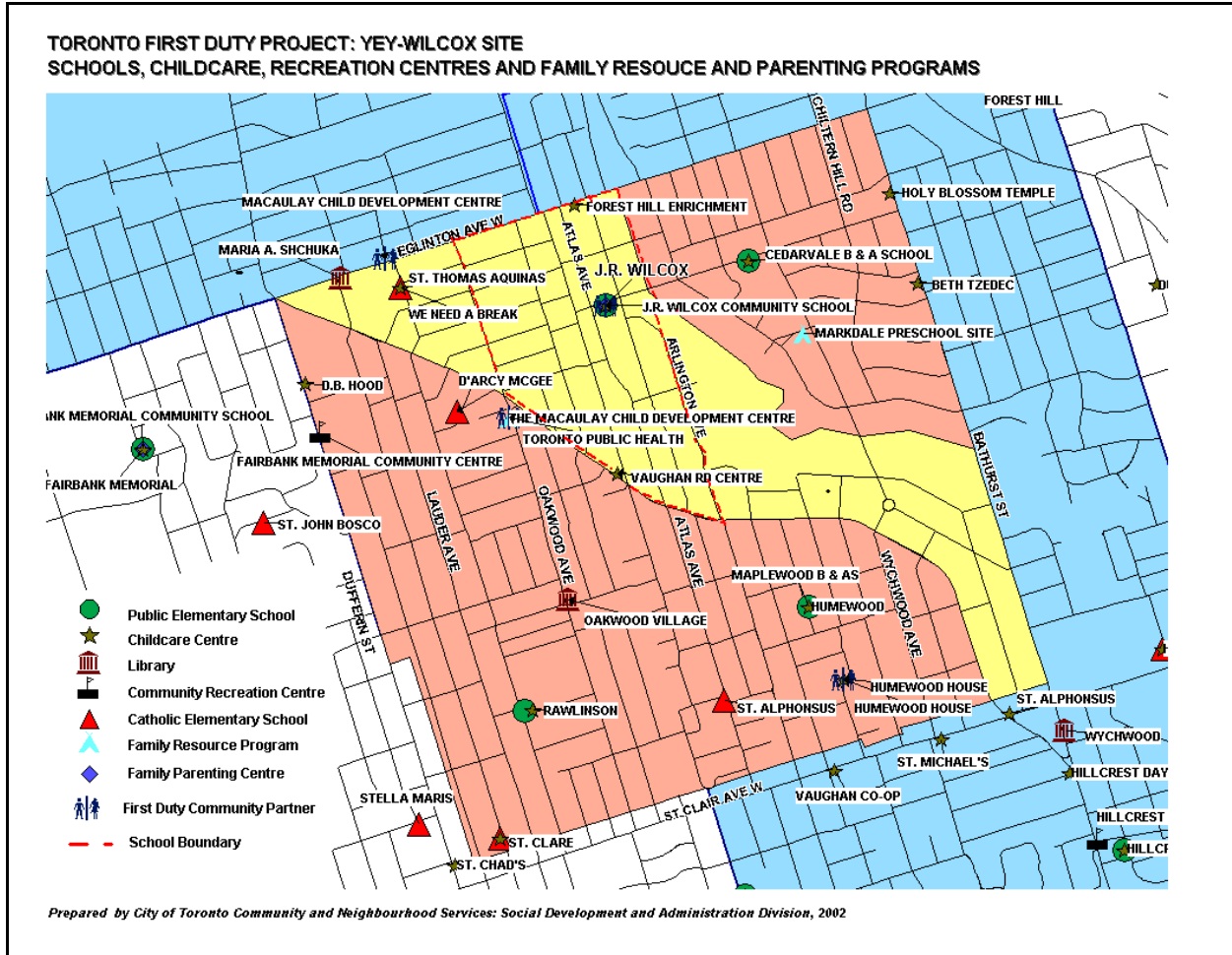
principles of equity and parent-community connections. Board units with particular relevance for the First Duty pilot sites include the participating schools, Parenting and Family Literacy Centres in Continuing Education, Early Years consultation in the Instruction Department, and Children's Services Advisors (including care) in Student and Community Services.

Toronto Public Health (West Region) is a division of the City of Toronto, with responsibilities under the Provincial Health Protection and Promotion Act. Its vision is to make Toronto the healthiest city possible, where all people enjoy the highest achievable level of health. Toronto Public Health works with the people of Toronto to make its programs and services effective, efficient and responsive to the health needs of all people in Toronto. Toronto Public Health works to enhance the health of all communities and individuals, who live, work and play in Toronto through: health promotion, advocacy, health protection, prevention, and health assessment.

Yorktown Child and Family Centre is a children's mental health centre serving the needs of children and youth from the community—in the former City of York. Its mission is to provide opportunities for children and youth with emotional and behavioral difficulties to realize their full potential. The Centre provides counseling and support services to children and youth 0-18 who are experiencing or are at risk of developing social, emotional and/or mental health difficulties. Services include community parent education and school-based intervention and consultation. School based programs include workshops, drop-in programs and whole classroom interventions involving antiviolenace "friendship clubs" and social skills development. Other services are assessment, case management & referral, early intervention and treatment activities including counseling, individual, family and group therapy, and sexual abuse trauma assessment and treatment.

### **Community Profile**

Figures on community demographics for YEY-W site are provided in Appendix 3. A map of the community showing location of key services appears on page 36.



**History**

All six of the original partner agencies are part of the York Local Planning Group for Children and Youth—22 community and family resource agencies meeting regularly to discuss service delivery issues. The YEY-W partners have worked together in the past in multi-disciplinary collaborations that produced new approaches to meet service gaps in the community. Two of these projects formed a strong foundation for the YEY-W proposal and subsequent work: Program Without Walls (PWW) and Supporting Young Families (SYF). PWW is a CAPC program - agency, employing the coordinator, with a half dozen other agencies working to coordinate prevention for high risk. CAPC funding requires partnership, but doesn't specify where partnership falls on a range from coordination to integration. The federal funders have been helpful. They have supported evaluation and they provided the push that led to SYF by asking PWW "what are you doing for teen moms?" SYF moved the York partners into the realm of "real integration" with staff from 3 or 4 agencies on site at once, delivering the program. Its coordination is currently supported by United Way funding and operates on the basis of contributions from a number of other partners.

One benefit of the PWW experience was the development of clear protocols for funding and governance. Initially, SYF started on the basis of less formal understandings reached quickly and on the basis of trust—but players and organizations change, so more formal understandings have been developed. Reports on local evaluations of the projects describing their general success and some elements of process have been carried out (e.g., Barrett, 1999).

Reflecting on this history suggests that balance is needed between trust and formal organization. "How you deal with problems as they come up is a key." For example, PWW was faced with recasting a pared-back budget but worked through it. It's interesting that a similar budget-trimming exercise took place more recently in preparing the budget for the Early Years Challenge Fund in the fall. There were different points of view in the YEY-W Management Committee but members appeared to be comfortable in stating them and working through the accommodation process. From the perspective of the Evaluation Team participant observers, there appears to be trust and openness in the management meeting, which may reflect the long history of working together, as well as other factors such as the shared mission and excellent, shared leadership.

The history of collaboration among the partners provided the base for YEY-W to apply to become the Early Leader First Duty pilot site. Application began with letters of interest to the funders in June and August 2000, and a final proposal in May 2001 was accepted for funding by the City and ACF. The name of the group became YEY-Wilcox when the name of the school was added to reflect its important role.

### **Out of the Gate**

Meetings are a good window into the "process" of building a new organization and the emerging "product" of services being delivered. Meetings of the Management Committee and groups reporting to it are described as a way of telling the YEY-W story to date.

The YEY-W management committee meetings are held monthly. The committee is chaired by the Executive Director of Macaulay, the lead agency. In the months since September 2001 the meetings have been busy and productive with each agenda covering a lot of ground. Major recurring themes have been funding, communication of various types, and planning around the services to be offered by YEY. Other recurring themes include evaluation and hiring. Community consultation has been a particular focus in the last several meetings.

Funding was a major preoccupation in the fall as some members of the committee worked on a Challenge Fund proposal and brought drafts to the committee for discussion. The process included open debate around strategies and where money should go in the plan. Compromises were reached in a respectful way. Agenda items related to communication have focused on a number of targets: TDSB relations and negotiations around support, municipal politicians, local service

providers, funders, and parents (e.g., the school council). A YEY-W brochure was produced in the fall. Discussions have also touched on media connections and events such as the United Way symposium on integrated services held last fall. YEY-W has built in some resources for community consultation, as well as communication, recognizing the two-way nature of exchanges. There was also discussion in one meeting about how knowledge building (information gathering and reflection) was an important basis for exchanges between YEY-W and stakeholders. This means that evaluation should be a resource to the communication/consultation process. In fact, the current community consultation process in YEY-W can be seen as an evaluation process which the site leads and will continue. The initial consultation was pushed along by the need for input from parents and others in the community on what services should go into the initial offerings by YEY-W. Ongoing consultation is seen as critical to continual improvement, insuring quality, and directly involving parents in the project.

Naturally many of the meeting agenda items are related to the complexity of planning and beginning to deliver integrated services. A nuts-and-bolts example is, "How does the school invoice for supply teacher time when teachers are required to be in YEY-W meetings?" Other critical examples have been the negotiations with the TDSB on the support provided to the site through donated service charges. Some of the real meat of this agenda is being dealt with in working groups of the management structure.

The Integrated Curriculum Committee has met monthly since November. They have constructed a statement of principles ("YEY-W Wilcox Journey to Date: Personal/institutional pedagogical approach," including principles related to: behavior management approach, health and safety practices, professional roles, inclusion of children with special needs, and roles of parents). Special needs is a point of concern since one of the three kindergarten classes is a special needs class; how to integrate special needs within a universal integrated curriculum will be a big challenge. And of course the committee faces the practical challenges of time to meet, release time for staff, staff fatigue, etc. Concrete progress has been made in the committee's work on a "flow-through" model. This model provides an immediate practical solution to the problem of efficiently sharing space and staff between care and kindergarten programs, and providing complementary learning experiences, until the staffing and curriculum can be integrated, as opposed to coordinated. The model was actually proposed by the Site Committee, a standing committee of the Management Committee, whose job is to look at integration beyond the learning environment. It explores what everyone is doing, what resources there are, how they might be used more effectively and "integratively."

A Policies and Procedures Working Group has also begun meeting and has taken up a number of tasks such as designing intake forms and joint protocols for abuse reporting and TB testing. Some of this is straightforward but constructing common policies will be more challenging in particular areas such as staffing policies. What do other collaborative projects do?

One important "integration" agenda item handled directly by the Management Committee has been adding services to the array that was first proposed. For example, an SYF drop-in program for young mothers, based in the community, was losing its space and a site partner proposed inviting it into the YEY-W fold. The first part of the discussion was along the lines "It's really worthwhile and it seems to fit, so let's invite it in." A second line of discussion was, "What about the fit with the YEY-W model and the issue of integration?" In fact, in further discussion it was concluded that programming that mixes teen mothers with more mature mothers would lose something in the translation. The SYF program will thus continue as a targeted program but co-location will open up young mothers to the wider services of YEY-W.

The question of whether the sponsors of free-standing programs are willing to alter them to fit an integrated model was also discussed in relation the TDSB Parenting and Family Literacy Centre programs. In this case the answer is "yes" and the Centres now have introduced programming at the YEY-W site and they are represented on the Management Committee. YEY-W as a "magnet" for kindred programs appears to be one way of building critical programming mass. Given that the nature of integration for YEY-W services as a whole is currently being worked out, the nature of integration with added services remains to be determined. Will co-location of kindred services and their linkage to management structures working on principles of integration lead to new, improved and/or more efficient forms of service? For example, given that more than a half-dozen parent/caregiver programs were mentioned in the YEY-W proposal, and given that two more have been added to the roster, how will these come together?

Of course a major preoccupation of the Management Committee has been to oversee the expansion of services underway at YEY-W. The number of childcare spaces has been increased through the efforts of LEF. SYF and TDSB Parenting and Family Literacy programs are now taking place in YEY-W. The Public Health Department has just agreed to add a Moms' and Tots' group. Responding to parent feedback in the community consultation, the committee has generated plans for a new Saturday morning recreational program.

Naturally the Management Committee has spent time on organizational issues and has adopted Terms of Reference; these and other agreements are described below.

In the Terms of Reference for the Management Committee Macaulay is the governing body accountable to the funders and to the community, ensuring that commitments of YEY-W project are met. The committee sets overall direction, vision, objectives and operating policies with advice of a Community Reference Group and Site Committee. Voting membership: one school council representative, two service user representatives, and individual representatives from each of the core agencies or departments. Nonvoting membership includes the Project Manager, funder representatives, external evaluators, and project advisers. An

agency or organization may be invited to join if they are contracted to offer ongoing programming or service; occasional contributors will be asked to join the Site Committee. The fact that three member units are part of the TDSB (the school, parenting centres, and children's services) attracted some interest from another project site in an email, wondering about subordinate units having independent representation. However, the YEY-W management committee did not see this as a problem since the subordinate units are part of a very large organization, operate relatively autonomously, and play very different roles at the site.

In the City-YEY-W Contract, Macaulay Child Development Centre is the sponsoring agency for the YEY-W project. The sponsoring agency plays a leadership role in supporting the project's governance structures and service delivery model. It also employs and directly supervises the project coordinator, receives and distributes funds on direction from the Management Committee, takes responsibility for all reports to funders, and prepares financial statements for the funders based on information from the participating agencies. Partnership legal agreements will govern the distribution of funding from the sponsoring agency to the other agencies. Each partner agency also signs a "membership agreement" agreeing to honour the aims and work of YEY-W Wilcox. The contract includes requirements for core services as outlined in the YEY-W proposal and for reporting service targets for each type of service and in terms of the metrics of # of adults, # of hours open, and # of child contacts.

Agreements with TDSB have been reached for the site, which are in the process of being formalized and are reported to extend to other sites.

### **Summary of Progress to Date.**

The activities above document the progress at YEY-W. The narrative account is summarized below in point form according to the three interconnected strands of the process and impacts across: 1. Program and policy, 2. Child and family, and 3. Community. Most of it documents the progress on program and policy change through the organizational development of YEY-W. In addition, most of it reflects implementation as opposed to impacts (e.g., making a difference for children and parents) since the programs are just underway and information on outcomes has not yet been gathered.

### Programs, Policy, and Services (Integrated services. Organizational Capacity and development)

- Organization building with meetings of the Management Committee, and the development of the Site Committee, and working committees (Integrated Curriculum and Policies and Procedures).
- Agreements/policies/protocols
- Expanded services with added programs and expanded child care
- Integrated Learning Environment; process established and some service implementation
- Good shared leadership

## Child and Parents

- An ongoing parent/community consultation process is underway; a first report provides a basis for action on services. Information was gathered from focus groups and questionnaires.
- A school council parent representative is on the Management Committee.
- A Family support worker, recently, hired will work on outreach, accessibility as well as facilitating connections by parents.

## Community

- The parent/community consultation process is underway; key informant interviews have connected to other agencies. There are plans for connections to other community organizations and faith groups in the next phase.
- Plans are in place for the Community Reference Group (proposed as part of the organizational structure); to build from the community consultation process.
- Funding set aside for community communication and consultation

Another view of YEY-W progress is provided in three appendices attached to this report (see Appendix 4, 5 & 6). Appendix 4 is a figure representing five stages of organizational change in integrated service efforts (Melaville & Blank, 1993). These five stages are meant as general guides, and progress is typically spread across several stages, as is the case with YEY W. In fact some of the steps were determined by the project vision laid out at the RFP stage by the funders; other steps had their beginnings in the proposal development phase. Two checklists for assessing progress in change are also included as appendices and have been filled out for YEY-W. The first checklist (Appendix 5) is designed to look at progress through the change stages. The second checklist (Appendix 6) is designed to describe indicators of system change as an integrated system emerges. These checklists have been completed by the evaluation team with some input from the YEY-W leadership. If they prove useful, they will be revised to reflect the particular history of First Duty.

## **YEY-W Evaluation and Knowledge Building**

The external evaluation of the work of the sites is designed to describe the process and outcomes of effective integration and innovation, as well as to contribute to the accountability of the project. The evaluation is also intended to "build knowledge" within the site and beyond. Thus the description should trigger reflection and produce understanding that improve the project process and programs and help to extend the approach to new sites in flexible ways rather than by a fixed formula. However, more important to the success of the sites will be internal evaluation capacity—the emerging organization's abilities to systematically monitor and reflect on their own activities in a way that helps improve the process and that helps energize new ideas. The importance of the grass roots "learning organization" is front-and-center in most accounts of organizational and systems change, including traditionally conservative systems such as the education sector. Even in large-scale change and reform efforts, the capacity for local learning and adaptive innovation is seen as the necessary complement to successfully implementing and adapting to top-down pressures for change (Fullan, 2001).

Can First Duty pilot sites be "learning organizations"? In YEY-W the Integrated Curriculum Committee seems to be functioning in this way. Another concrete example is the Community Consultation Report (available on the Website?) being brought back to the Management Committee for discussion and reflection as a basis for action. There is also money in the budget for community consultation and communication, which can contribute to idea exchange and knowledge building with the community. The Child Development staff, to be hired, may also facilitate knowledge exchange across site partners. Finally, the site manager/coordinator is playing a key role in knowledge building at the site. For example, she is considering keeping a journal—to assist in telling the story of the pilot, the process of implementation, the issues and barriers encountered along the way, the milestones achieved the activities in support of community building. The telling of the story will (it is hoped) facilitate communication among all the involved stakeholders—from the funders, to service providers and staff, to parents and the broader community in which the pilots are situated. By sitting on community organization meetings, such as Healthy Babies, Healthy Children and the Wilcox School Council, she is able to network and build mutual understanding.

**Focal Issues** emerge from both local reflections by the site and observations and interviews by the evaluation Team. These are meant to encourage reflection, debate, and celebration as appropriate.

- Successes: Strong accountability and agreements have been put in place; solid leadership and good communication/climate within site. Good beginning on community focus and information gathering but more depth will be needed and is planned (how to reach the difficult-to-reach parents for example).
- If sites act as magnets for existing services (e.g., SYF and Public Health Moms and Tots) is service improved? Does the critical mass lead to service improvement and innovation?
- Realities of front line collaboration (curriculum integration team)—release time for teachers and ECers to attend meetings, to take ownership and reflect.
- Balance/tension between targeted and universal is played out in the issue of how special needs fit into the integrated curriculum planning.
- Tension between process (building the organization right) and product (rolling out the services); between incremental and sweeping systems change.
- Problems for small agencies, partnerships & chasing dollars are exhausting, potential for being squeezed out by larger agencies.
- Need for major communication within partner organizations/ board; some actions not processed in best way (e.g., bringing in SYF and TDSB needing more preparation; communication beyond the site).
- Problems of space and where to put programs
- Nobody's having fun any more in children's services generally; celebrating success missing? (But then Nobody's Perfect!)

## **Secord/Dawes - Action For Children Today And Tomorrow (ACTT)**

### **Overview**

ACTT (Action for Children Today and Tomorrow) Neighbourhood Access is a community-based coalition with projects encompassing four (4) neighbourhoods. The Secord/Dawes pilot site is one of these. The ACTT group answered the City of Toronto's call for proposals in August 2001. The project intends to bring together and integrate early years services to children and families in the Secord/Dawes community. Secord School is involved in the project. A part time coordinator has been hired on an interim basis. At present the project plan is being further refined. This site is different from the others, as it is one piece of a larger integrated project for the East end of Toronto. It also differs in that the school is less of a physical hub and the projected services are more distributed throughout this neighbourhood. These differences provide an interesting context for the integration of services.

### **Vision**

The Action for the Early Years—Toronto First Duty vision specifies the integration of service delivery to provide seamless service for young children and families within the Secord/Dawes area. This will include common outreach and marketing of the pilot program and a focused approach to integration and coordination of services within the catchment area. To actualize this vision, the Secord/Dawes site will offer pre-literacy and school readiness/school bridging programs. These programs will be developed to help children 3 to 6 years of age become familiar with the kindergarten setting and enhance and consolidate school readiness skills. This readiness program will be offered during both the school year and summer at Secord School. In addition, parents of new kindergarten students will receive an orientation program to reinforce the role they play in preparing their children for school. The Secord/Dawes site will also offer family / childrearing support programs which will include the introduction of linguistic and special needs support staff into program sites in key languages and provision of parenting / caregiver workshops with childcare services available on site. These programs will be closely integrated with existing programs and expansion will be based on assessed need. A third program will support perinatal bridging and provide linkages for women with babies six months to one year. This will include parenting support and education about child development, nutrition and play. Program components will also focus on linking parents with other community resources and increasing the bonding and attachment between mother and infant. The ACTT approach to supporting families is based on building capacities and strengths within the local communities. The ACTT vision is based on the development of four neighbourhood-based access points for early childhood education and care. The Secord / Dawes site is one of these neighbourhood points. Prior to responding to the City RFP, ACTT completed a community consultation and has identified some specific community needs.

## Partners

East York/East Toronto Family Resources (EYET) provides a range of services to children and families including the provision of 4 family resource programs. EYET is the financial trustee for ACTT.

Secord School is located in the Main and Danforth area. The school serves more than 900 children from JK to grade 6. Over 30% speak a language other than English at home. Specialized classes include the Crèche. Although there is no preschool child care at the school, there is a school-age "Y" child care in the community centre attached to Secord School. The school focus for the year is on literacy and numeracy and on aligning assessment and evaluation with TDSB and Ministry of Education practices. There is a breakfast program, a lunch program and a noon activities program for grades one through six.

There is considerable parent and community involvement at the school. Parent involvement programs include: an active Home and School Association and School Council, parenting programs, Home and School Program Nights, Literacy Evenings, Interactive Nights, Snuggle Up and Read and Book Fair. Community links include: class visits to Parks and Recreation sites and businesses, collaboration with Aisling and East Metro Youth services, visits from seniors through the Intergenerational Program, high school students as classroom assistants, co-op students from East York Collegiate, and community volunteers.

The Creche (East York)

The Neighbourhood Centre

Toronto District School Board

YMCA School Age Childcare.

East York Healthy Beginnings.

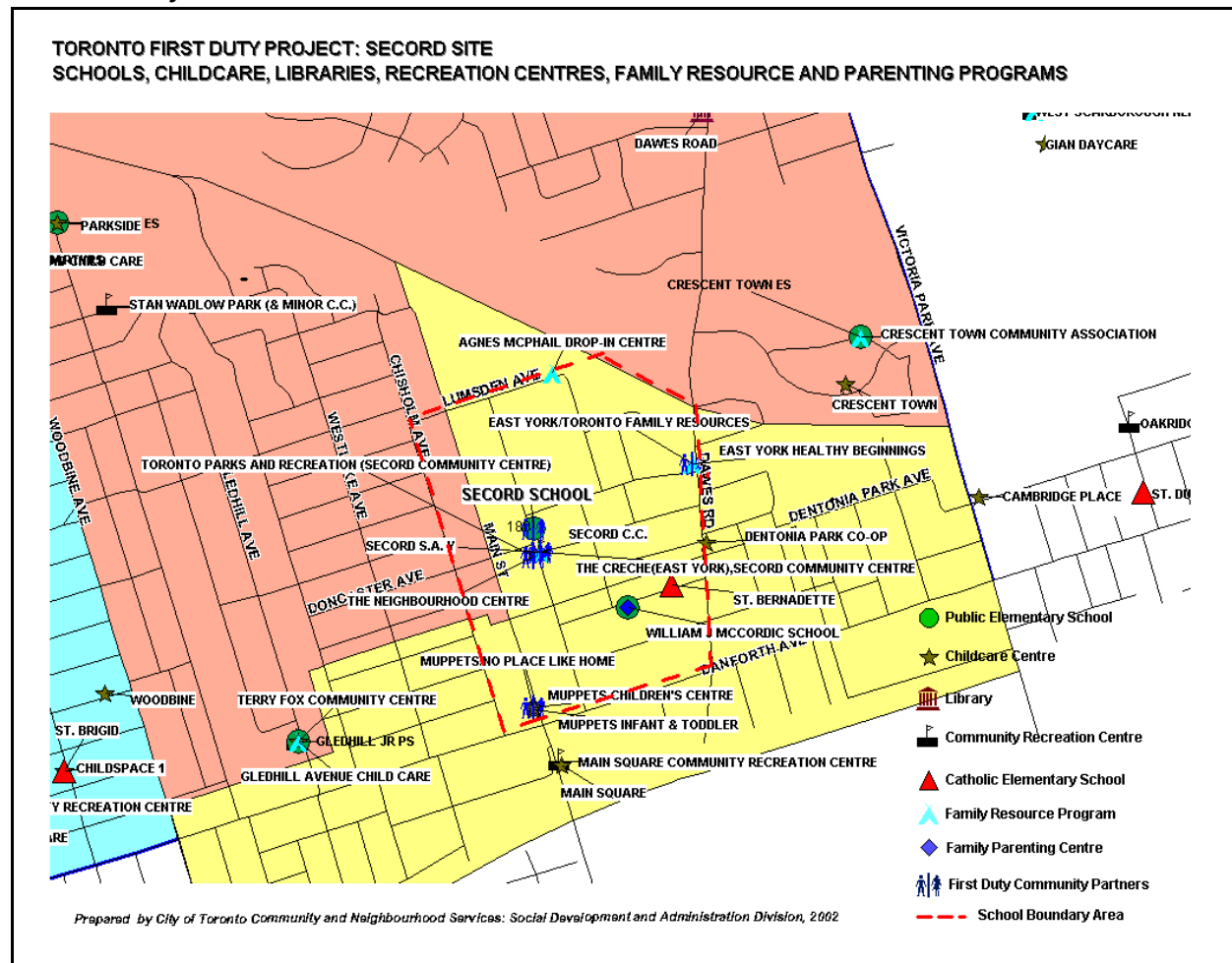
Toronto Public Health.

Toronto Parks & Recreation.

Toronto Public Libraries.

Muppets Childcare Centre.

## Community Profile



### History and Progress to Date

This group started as a community effort to bring people together around a specific issue in 1996. In 1998 ACTT was solidified as a coalition following a conference with representatives from all levels of government, public health, local hospitals, service agencies, parents and the Toronto District School Board, among others. The community area encompasses East York and East Toronto; boundaries are from the Don Valley to Victoria Park and from the lake up to the former northern boundary of East York (approximately Eglinton Avenue). ACTT is the umbrella coalition for this project, although EYET will be acting as the 'banker' for the First Duty pilot.

1996: Initiatives included Early York Access Task Force, East York Family Resource Centres, Partners for Health, Toronto East General Hospital (Child Development Clinic which was on hold).

1997: Canadian Standards Association commissioned the Ontario Council to do a study on sustainable communities – East York was chosen as the urban community. A three-month project under the direction of John Godfrey, MP

for Don Valley West and Leslie Wright, Executive Director of the East York Community Development Council was undertaken.

- 1997: Building on the work of the Canadian Standards Association project, "Do indicators mobilize communities?," the East York Community Development Council applied for a community capacity building grant from the United Way of Greater Toronto. The Rotary Club of Toronto Leaside provided funds to leverage the capacity building money from United Way.
- 1998: In the spring, community members, business people, faith leaders and community organizations were brought together to develop a vision for children 0-6 in the East York and East Toronto communities. Coming out of the three day search conference was the "East York and East Toronto 0-6 Movement" a group of people committed to working together to support children and families in our local communities.
- 1999: Canada Prenatal Nutrition Program (CPNP) – received funding for two of their four sites, including Secord/Dawes.
- 2000: Early Years Plan from the Province – started to put together the overall vision of ACTT, including the four hubs as geographical or virtual entranceways.
- 2001: Answered RFP from the City of Toronto – selected as one of the pilot sites. Applied to Early Years Challenge Fund, Community Call. Received funding through Ministry of Health in partnership with South Riverdale and East End Community Health Centres to develop a community consultation process on the service gaps and needs in the East Toronto community. The funding was designed to strengthen ACTT's capacity to build community and provide a range of services and supports for children and families.
- 2002: With the financial support of SRCHC, ACTT web site to be developed and used as a mobilization and capacity building tool. Although this started as a tool for the agencies, it will be accessible to the public. The front page will be a GIS map, which will allow people to identify services within their area and search for further information.

ACTT was notified on April 15, 2002 that their bid for Challenge Fund dollars was unsuccessful. This will affect its overall plans for East Toronto. At this point, it is not clear if the Secord/Dawes First Duty site will be affected in any way.

ACTT works completely by consensus and is currently wrestling with the issue of how to build enthusiasm and buy-in from all practitioners, not just the leaders and initiators

## **Corvette Early Years Childhood Education, Development and Care Project (Corvette)**

### **Overview**

The Corvette Early Years project is one of the First Duty pilot sites. The group came together to the City of Toronto's call for proposals in August 2001. The project intends to integrate early years services to children and families in the Corvette community. Corvette Public School will be the hub for early childhood experiences for young children from conception through to kindergarten and primary school years. The group received approval to be a First Duty pilot site in the fall of 2001. Since that time the partners have been working together on several fronts to construct a management structure, to bring together all of the practitioners who will be working together and to ensure parental involvement and participation is meaningful.

### **History**

The core partners have worked together in the past to offer coordinated and integrated services. Not Your Average Daycare (NYAD) began in 1979 in the Scarborough Village Alternative School. It created an environment for preschool children and for young school age children during out-of-school hours that was interconnected with the activities of the school. NYAD was then asked by Corvette School to begin a childcare program in that school. In 1997, the school and the childcare centre created a seamless day program for kindergarten children. However, a change in the school leadership brought that initiative to a close. NYAD has worked together with the Corvette Family Resource Centre (a program of the East Scarborough Boys and Girls Club) to operate a day nursery school program, NYAD Corvette Parent Preschool Program.

### **Partners**

Corvette Public School serves 672 children from JK to Grade 6. It is located in the Kennedy Road and Eglinton Ave area in a culturally diverse neighbourhood. Approximately 57% of the children are ESL and 20% have moved to Canada within the last five years. Tamil is the mother tongue or primary home language for 20 percent of the children. Altogether the school represents 30 language groups. The school focus for the year is on improving levels of academic achievement, providing a safe and respectful school environment and on promoting responsibility. NYAD (Not Your Average Daycare), a family resource program and a kindergarten readiness program operate in the school. The school is working with other community partners to develop the First Duty project.

Not Your Average Daycare (NYAD) is the lead agency.

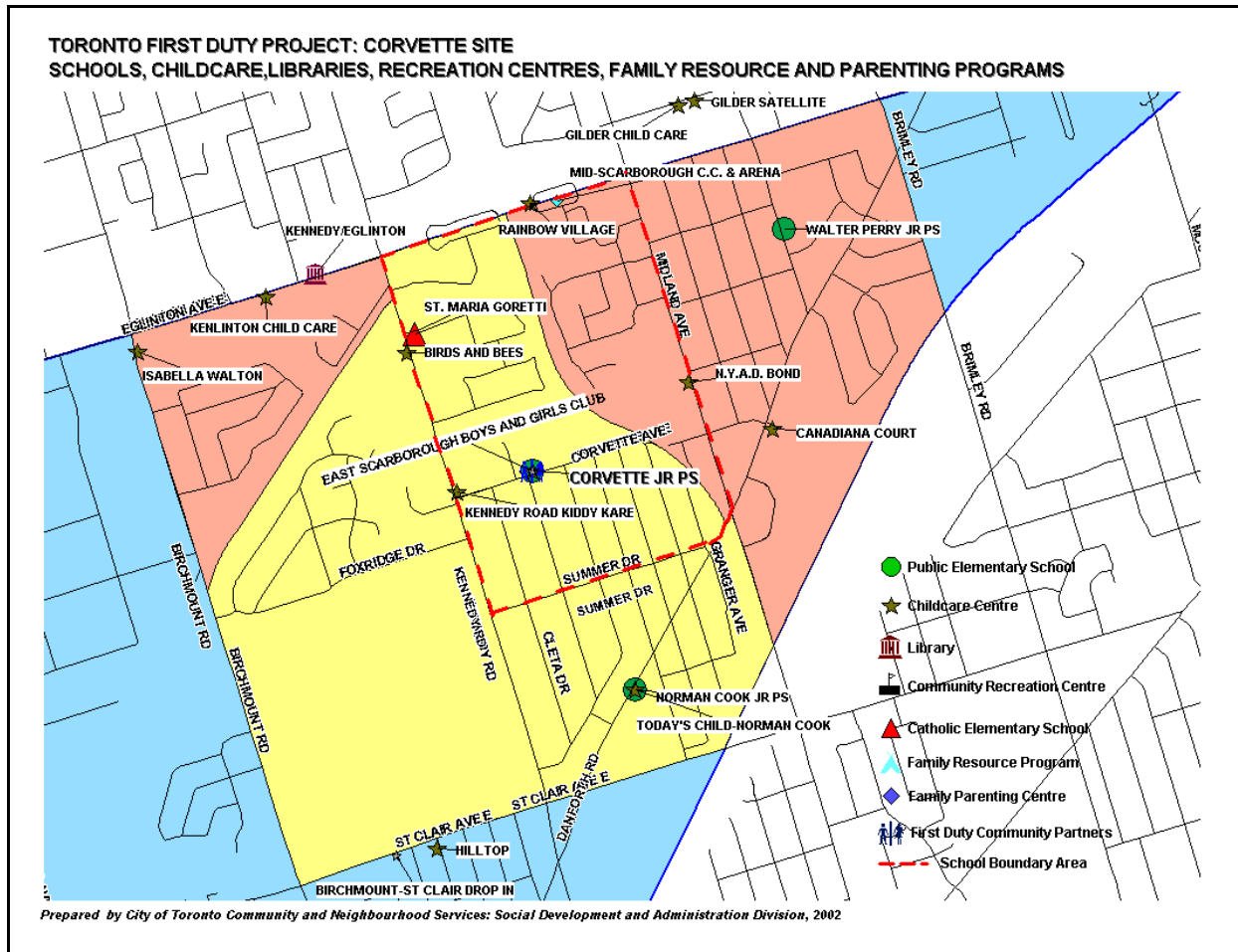
Corvette Family Resource Centre

Corvette School Council

Kindergarten Readiness Program (Seneca College)

Toronto Public Health pre and postnatal programs

## Community Profile



## Vision

Corvette Early Years Project's initial vision statement called for the integration and seamless delivery of existing programs located at Corvette Jr. Public School in response to identified community needs. It called for a "community that recognizes and values early years services as essential to the optimal growth and development of young children." The First Duty project participants have identified a significant health and well-being component to the project that includes plans for a community garden—a "greening" of the concrete, barren outdoor into a space. Community residents, who may find the school building an intimidating place to enter, are more likely to be lured into a green space that provides opportunities for familiar activities (e.g., cricket). The greening of the outdoor environment will extend or grow into the indoor First Duty learning environment.

### **Progress To Date**

The Corvette Early Years project has established three committees to manage and guide the project: a management committee, an on-site committee and a community reference group. They have hired a project coordinator and are finalizing their budget and contract with the City of Toronto.

The management committee is the integrated structure for decision making, evaluation and financial monitoring requirements. The management committee includes representation from program participants, Corvette School Council, partner agencies and organizations including the project coordinator and staff team member. Each agency/organization will be represented by a decision maker/manager. The project coordinator and other team member will be non-voting members. Participants will have the authority to make decisions on behalf of their organizations and that front-line practitioners and community participants have a direct communication line to decision making.

The on-site committee will make day-to-day decisions, give input to the management committee via the project coordinator and team representative. It will also monitor and allocate a flexible community budget and manage these funds. Membership includes front line practitioners, resource staff, community participants and representatives of partner agencies as required. The core group to date includes the kindergarten teachers, NYAD on-site childcare centre and the family resource program operated by the Boys and Girls Club.

Work to date seems to have focused on bringing together the partner agencies and some of the front-line practitioners. Informal communication with the parent school council is active; the chair of the council is a staff member of the NYAD childcare centre on-site at Corvette School.

The Community Reference Group is under development. It is planned to include membership from community residents, project participants, and local politicians. The work of the group will be supported by the project coordinator. The community reference group will act as a resource to the project on how to achieve its vision and mission, what gaps in service remain and how best to fill these gaps.

### **Evaluation and Knowledge Building**

The core group of representatives from NYAD, Corvette School and the Family Resource Program are committed to the vision and eager to participate in planning and evaluation. The group is facing two immediate challenges: how to build enthusiasm and how to operationalize a joint governance structure to support the First Duty project. They are nervous about long-term commitment from Toronto District School Board and have identified the need for flexibility around interpretation of regulatory requirements. They are planning two events in the next month to bring together all front-line staff who will be involved in First Duty. The next step will be to increase input and involvement of parents and community representatives.

## **Queen Victoria Early Years Project (Queen Vic)**

### **Overview**

The Queen Victoria Early Years Project (QVEYP) is described by its partner agencies as a multi-year plan to transform existing sectorized and fragmented services into a seamless, integrated system of health, social and educational supports that wrap-around the needs of children and families in the inner city area anchored by Queen Victoria Public School. They intend to achieve this by: consulting with local parents and the community at large in determining strategies most likely to improve outcomes for children and families, by undertaking activities that build the strength and capacity of the community, and by strengthening and supplementing current services with additional services. These include services to enhance pre-and post-natal care, child development, services that support parents and healthy family living, and services that extend local licensed childcare services to meet the needs of families. Having identified access and engagement as crucial to their success, they are initiating a number of strategies to involve and reach neighbourhood parents in the project. Finally, they propose to strengthen the integration of junior and senior kindergarten children into the school.

"Developing the partnership" has been the primary focus of their efforts since coming together as QVEYP. It has involved ensuring that the right organizations are at the table (four additional organizations have joined the original coalition of partner agencies), achieving a congruence of values and mission, organizational commitments and trust to work together (as reflected in a partnership agreement developed jointly and signed at their April, 2002 Steering Committee meeting), and adopting a governance model that balances process and action. The Partnership Agreement includes a Program Planning and Development Framework to guide the project through the next three years.

### **Vision Statement and Objectives**

The aspirations of the Queen Victoria Early Years Project are reflected in their vision statement:

- Each child is supported to reach optimum early development;
- Children come to school with supports so that they are 'ready to learn';
- Parents are provided or connected with the services and supports that they require;
- Families and children experience service as a seamless whole;
- School is experienced as a hub of pre-school services;
- Services are equitable, universal, and inclusive;
- The project will build community capacity and the 'community' will be seen and experienced as supportive to the optimal development of children.

The Steering Committee is focused on achieving the following specific objectives:

- To enhance access and participation in programs and services;
- To create awareness of services by parents;

- To expand service capacity and numbers of children and parents served;
- To implement an integrated curriculum that is experienced as seamless and that smoothes transitions between services and sectors for families and children;
- To enhance child development so that children come to school ready to learn;
- To provide services that are flexible, responsive and based on need.

### **History**

Parkdale was already pursuing integrated services when the ECEDC projects came along. The Creche Child and Family Centre and the Toronto District School Board were collaborating on a number of programs in response to children's and families needs in the Parkdale community. When the newly renovated Queen Victoria School was opened in 2000, the school again was able to provide space for TDSB's Parenting and Family Resource Program. Simultaneously, in response to the need for more childcare, The Creche assumed the operation of a childcare centre, which was scheduled for closure. Through a combination of private and provincial funding they were able to purchase and renovate a property adjacent to Queen Victoria school to which they relocated the ailing childcare centre in the fall of 2001 and provided program space for existing and planned family support programs. When the call for ECEDC proposals came along, The Creche and TDSB's Family Resource Program got together to discuss the development of a proposal to strengthen their current service integration efforts. They approached the Parkdale Community Health Center who brought along the Parkdale Parents Primary Prevention Project to prepare a proposal in response to the City's call for ECEDC pilots. The QVEY proposal was developed by these four organizations in August and approved by the City in the fall of 2001.

### **Partners**

QVEY's original coalition of organizations is now joined by four additional organizations, including the following partner agencies:

**Queen Victoria Public School**, founded in 1887, is an inner city school located in the south Parkdale neighbourhood. The school has a new building designed to address the overcrowding that severely impacted service delivery over the previous five years. It is an elementary school that serves over 1,097 students, and that has a large cohort of children in junior kindergarten, senior kindergarten and grade one. There are over eleven kindergarten groups alone, plus grade one and parenting center children, making for a 0 to 6 year old cohort of approximately 1800 children over the duration of the project. Many of the children are newcomers – 27 percent were born outside of Canada and 71 percent report that English is not the primary language spoken at home. It is not surprising that their EQAO scores indicate a significant number have poor reading, writing and math skills.

Queen Victoria is one of the schools in the Toronto District School Board's Early Years Literacy Project. As a result of participation in this Project, the school is assigned a .5 full time equivalent Literacy Coordinator and (4) .5 full time equivalent

Reading Recovery teachers in addition to their regular staff allocation of 55 teachers for over a thousand students. The Early Literacy Project focuses on the improvement of student literacy through a comprehensive, school-wide approach that involves assessment, instruction, professional development and home / school partnerships. The school focus for this academic year includes: the Early Years Literacy Project; the Reading Recovery program; a focus on oral language; a focus on the Arts; collaboration with parent volunteers, community agencies and businesses; and equity of access and opportunity to new information technologies.

Parenting and Family Literacy Centre

Parkdale Beach Child Care

Parkdale Community Health Centre (PCHC)

The Parkdale Parents' Primary Prevention Project (PPPPP)

St. Christopher House

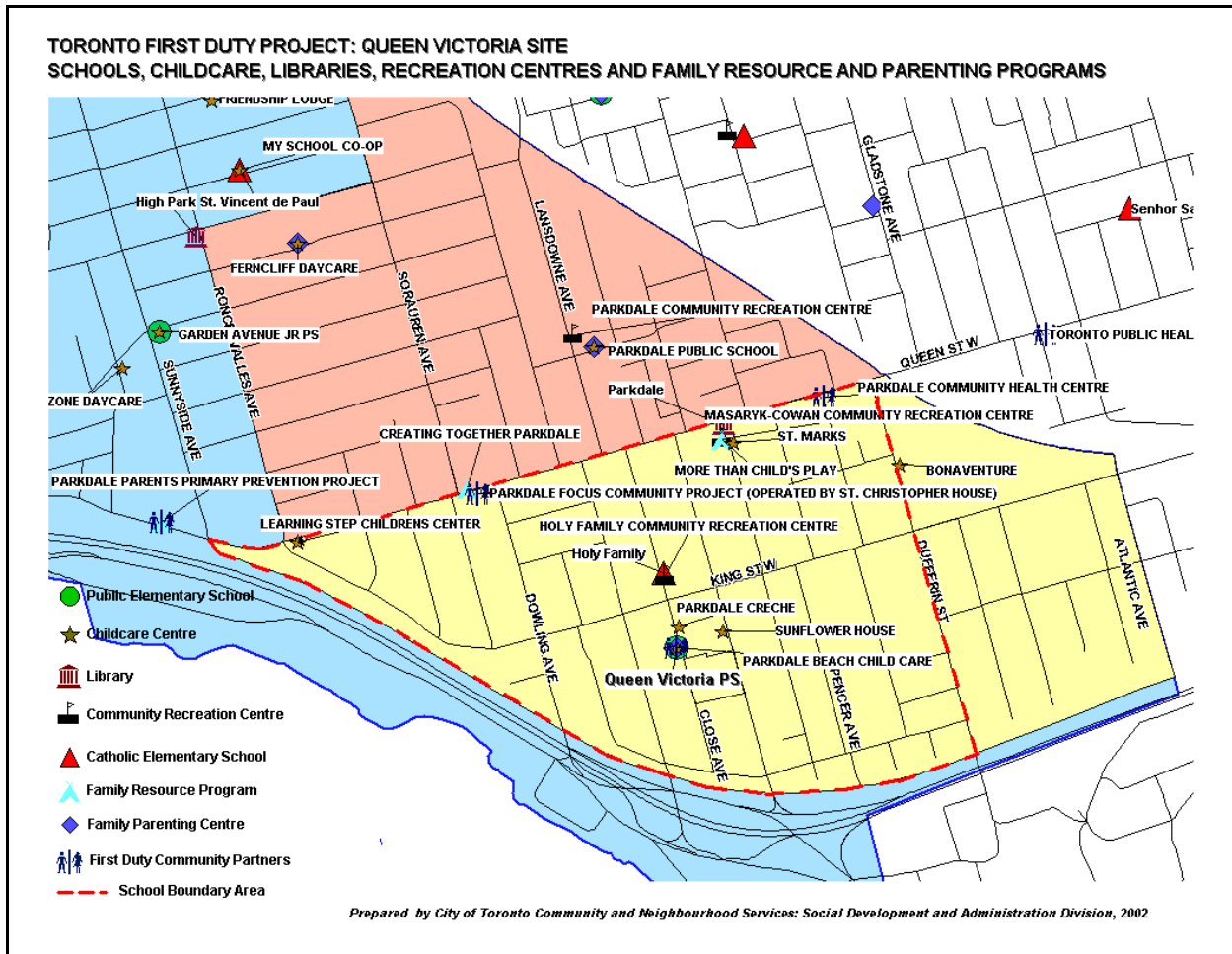
Toronto Public Health

The Creche Child and Family Centre, the lead agency for the Queen Victoria Early Years Project, has been serving the children and families of this community since 1909. It is a pre-school, multi-service agency founded with a specific focus on the families of young children. It is the major provider of pre-school, early intervention, children's mental health services in the inner city. One program from this stream—Parents and Children Together—is focused on high-risk families of young children residing specifically in the Parkdale area. Another major early intervention program – Start Right – is a collaborative program with the Toronto District School Board to provide early intervention (JK, SK, Grade One) for identified children with significant behavioral and adjustment issues. In addition to these services, The Creche provides another service stream addressing issues of family violence and child abuse, as well as trauma assessment and treatment for young children. Finally, The Creche provides a family support / child development / childcare stream through a series of childcare and 'early years centres.' The most recent of these – The Parkdale Creche Early Years Centre (PCEYC) – is on Close Avenue directly across from Queen Victoria School. As the lead agency, it provides fund management for the QVEY Project, as well as liaison and contractual assurance and accountability to the project funder.

### **Community Profile**

The site community is the south Parkdale neighbourhood, an area in Ward 14. This neighbourhood in the old inner City of Toronto has had high numbers of new immigrants since the beginning of the last century. It also has high numbers of low-income, single parent-led families who live in high-density rental housing, most of which are low quality, private sector operated units. No public housing is available

in Parkdale despite the obvious need. This makes for a very diverse and highly transient population.



### Progress To Date

QVEYP has focused first on developing their partnership in accordance with the principles for effective partnership identified in their original proposal. They have added four new partners and jointly developed a Partnership Agreement that signifies the commitment and participation of the eight partner organizations. The partner organizations have also signed off on a jointly prepared Program Planning Development Framework that sets out the objectives and requirements of the QVEYP as well as the governance structure and process. This document builds on the original proposal submitted to the City of Toronto and includes project changes and refinements accepted since that time. It was approved and signed by QVEY's Steering Committee at their April, 2002 meeting. It will be reviewed on a regular basis and changes made as necessary.

The Steering Committee has also finalized a work plan for year one. It divides the year into quarterly periods and identifies milestones to be accomplished for each quarter. The next phase / quarter will focus on the community consultation process

and the hiring of new project staff, beginning with the project coordinator. The project coordinator's job description and interview process was jointly developed by the Steering Committee. A subcommittee was formed to short list the applicants and conduct interviews for the position. They anticipate that the coordinator will be hired and in place by mid-May, 2002. One of the coordinator's first tasks will be to meet with the different partner agencies to understand clearly issues and opportunities. Another priority is to build and sustain momentum through the summer months. A six-week summer school readiness program provided by the Parkdale Parents' Primary Prevention Project will facilitate linkages with families. Specific plans for community consultation and feedback are now being developed by a subcommittee of the Steering Committee and the newly hired coordinator, and in consultation with Queen Victoria's Parent/School Council, which is actively involved in the project.

## **Bruce WoodGreen Early Years Centre (Bruce WoodGreen), Atkinson site**

### **Overview**

The Bruce WoodGreen project brings together Bruce Public School and the WoodGreen Community Centre in an innovative neighbourhood partnership. The combination of two established and trusted community institutions will be the base for a center for early child development, care and education, including parenting, and a particular focus on literacy. Bruce Public School provides kindergarten, parenting and family literacy, early literacy, nutrition and other programs; WoodGreen Community Centre provides childcare and child development services, recreation and parent support programs. WoodGreen's participation provides additional links to adult literacy, English as a Second Language training, youth service and employment, housing, anti-violence programs, and programs for new Canadians and seniors.

In September 2001, the Bruce WoodGreen partners submitted a proposal to the Atkinson Early Years Challenge Fund and were awarded funding to establish the project. Although it was not one of the original First Duty sites, Bruce WoodGreen has been included in the evaluation process, with funding through ACF and HRDC in order to integrate the First Duty and Atkinson evaluation efforts and because the aims of the Bruce WoodGreen project are consistent with the First Duty vision. Furthermore, both the TDSB and the City of Toronto are partners in this project through Bruce Public School and through the City's support of the development of a new child care centre at the site. Therefore, the partnership model is similar to the other Toronto First Duty projects.

### **Vision**

Bruce WoodGreen's vision is to help all children to "reach their full potential" by bringing all sectors together in a community-based hub that will provide an integrated, seamless service model of education and care. The Centre aims to serve

as a model early years "system" whose philosophy and practice can be shared with policy-makers, the community and the public. The vision is based on four principles: 1) universal access, 2) voluntary /parental choice, 3) high quality services, and 4) building on existing community capacity.

### **History**

This project has a distinct and relatively brief history. It began in 2001 in response to a community crisis: the threatened close of Bruce School. The crisis galvanized parents, then the area school trustee, and created outreach to agencies and others in the community. The project developed over the last several years through a partnership working group comprised of the Director of Children's Services at WoodGreen, the principal of Bruce Public School, the area Trustee, administrative staff at TDSB and an Atkinson Early Years Challenge Fund consultant. Parents and teaching staff attended planning meetings in the early stages of the proposal and a parent reference group maintained ongoing involvement. Outreach efforts to include public health and a coalition of community agencies have been underway for some time. School board architects have been consulted about the design for both indoor and outdoor space.

### **Partners**

WoodGreen Community Centre, Lead agency

Bruce Public School has a small student population of 277; of those, 175 children are in JK–Grade 3 programs. More than half the students at Bruce speak a language other than English (40% Chinese, 5% Vietnamese, 9% Other). The school is involved in a number of initiatives including the Early Literacy Longitudinal Study, the TDSB Excellence in Literacy Project that provides a .5 site based coordinator and a .5 Reading Recovery teacher, and a Parenting and Family Literacy Centre.

Ben Wicks Literacy Foundation

Canada Prenatal Nutrition Program

Destination Carlaw

Evergreen

Toronto District School Board

Toronto East General Hospital

Toronto Foundation for School Success

Toronto Preschool Speech and Language

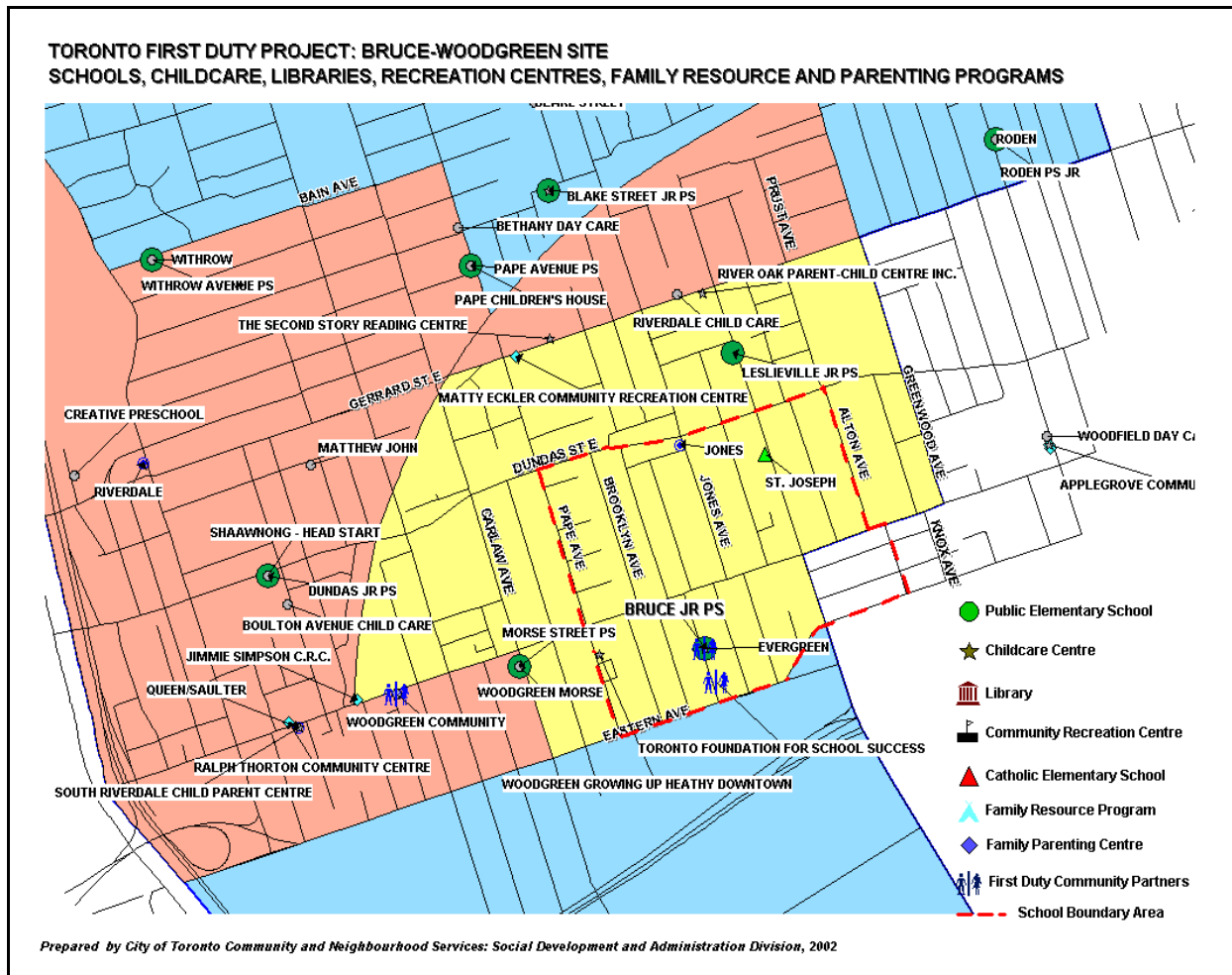
Toronto Public Health (Healthy Babies, Healthy Children)

Local business (McDonald's, Chinese Business Association)

## Riverdale Community Health Centre

### Community Profile

Located in South Riverdale, housing prices are low and attract first-time homebuyers with young families. There are also rental units that draw new immigrants and families with subsidized incomes. South Riverdale has the highest teen birth rate, the lowest birth weight and highest number of single-parent households in Toronto. In most families in the area, both parents are employed for long hours in low-wage jobs. Aging grandparents often take care of the children. Children at Bruce School performed well on the EDI's Physical Health and Well-Being subscale; this is attributed to the school's comprehensive food program. However other EDI subscale scores suggest greater need in other areas of learning and development.



### **Progress to date**

A Management group has been meeting. Parents have been brought into the program design via an active parent reference group. There is broad community representation among the site partners including business representatives. There are also ongoing efforts to involve additional services. At this point things are in a state of flux since rejection by the provincial Early Years Challenge Fund. The group is restructuring its proposal for support by the Atkinson Charitable Foundation. This site is unique in that it is the only First Duty site without direct City funding, but the City is a key partner in providing funding for new childcare centre that will be integrated with the First Duty site.

### **Evaluation and Knowledge Building**

"The Bruce WoodGreen Early Years Centre is committed to evaluation." All team members are ready to take responsibility for ongoing evaluation and will work with evaluation team members on the development and implementation of the instruments. Bruce WoodGreen hopes to include parents in the evaluation, both in the design and in the feedback sessions through focus groups, interviews, confidential assessments and surveys. Bruce WoodGreen intends to have ongoing public education about the work at the Centre. This will be done through written materials that are distributed by the partners and by coverage in local media. Feedback from the public will be an important aspect of the knowledge building process. The Bruce WoodGreen project aims to provide a model of curriculum and staff integration for early childcare and education and parent and family literacy programs that can be extended into the greater school system. In this way, knowledge building works within and outside of the project itself.

## **The Goals and Roles of Evaluation**

### **Overview**

The general aim of the evaluation is to track First Duty Project development, implementation and impacts within the three strands of community; children and parents; and program, policy and service. To meet the evaluation aim, the study design will include both qualitative and quantitative data on five contextualized case studies of the individual sites introduced above. The case descriptions will include integrated service development, implementation and change over time. Context will include community and client profiles. Profiles will be built partly from neighbourhood demographic data available through the City's information base; these profiles will allow an assessment of the segments of the community being served by the new program. Another part of the context will be to describe baseline approaches to service delivery by agencies prior to the implementation of integration. The case studies will pay particular attention to dimensions of organizational change as service integration unfolds; these dimensions will include

the challenges of merging cultures, resources and staff as well as the construction of new programming approaches. Changes across the initial three years of the project will be described for each of the strands of: programs and policy, child and family, and community. Cross-case analysis will be carried out, particularly for the programs and policy strand, since all sites will be affected by provincial, municipal and school board policies and by the First Duty project organization itself. In addition, the evaluation will collect data on expansion/ contraction of services, as well as access issues in communities. Quantitative analysis will include charting changes such as the increase/decrease in numbers of programs, families using programs, children using programs, etc. for each of the 3 strands across the three years of the project. Sites will collect much of this information; the evaluation team will be responsible for building data files and analyzing the data to determine the impact of the First Duty Project from the initial phase (baseline) to full implementation within each site.

**The formal objectives of the evaluation are to:**

- Provide a successful evaluation of the First Duty pilot project with multi-faceted, community based Early Childhood Education, Development and Care (ECEDC) sites. The project will demonstrate innovative and integrated service delivery for children ages 0 to 6 and their families and will evolve over time in response to experience, new learning and the change that the project, itself, will generate.
- Evaluate effectiveness in ECEDC reform in programs for children ages 0-6 and their families, based on clearly developed and articulated outcomes and indicators across three interconnected strands: policy/program/services, child and family and community/public awareness.
- Describe, measure and evaluate innovation in ECEDC
- Provide generalizable lessons, strategies for sustainability and scale-up and options for public policy change and systems reform
- Contribute to the accountability for the First Duty project through summative evaluation.
- Facilitate knowledge building for improvement and innovation within the First Duty project through formative evaluation.
- Contribute to external communication about the First Duty project.

**Research Issues.** Many issues frame the development of the First Duty project and its evaluation:

- Multiple ECEDC program streams, a variety of jurisdictions and providers, lack of continuity, and little or no integration—implications for children, families, communities, agencies/organizations, program staff, jurisdictions such as municipalities and school boards.
- Ontario ECEDC context (see provincial history section) and the need for new ways of doing things at a time when the more traditional approaches are getting less provincial support.
- Building support for ECEDC in communities and in the general public through program innovation and dissemination.

- Organizational change , within and across organizations—the costs and benefits of change and the role of organizational learning.
- Optimizing conditions for supporting young children; the needs for continuity, caring and stimulating environments. Improving access to service for children and families: improving hours, fee and eligibility arrangements.
- The benefits and costs of supporting, involving, and empowering parents and communities in new service arrangements. Effective parental roles in determining services.

**Research Questions.** The kinds of information and analysis carried out in this case study approach can be summarized in terms of questions to be answered through the activities and reporting of the Evaluation Team. With respect to the First Duty Pilot Project and the 5 Sites:

1. What is the general backdrop for the First Duty Project in terms of literature and evidence? From the literature, what are the conceptual arguments and the evidence base for and against service transformations of the type envisioned? What is the evidence on risks and barriers and success stories to date, particularly in the Ontario context? What does the evidence tell us about the process of change and outcomes, across strands of policy/program/services, child and family, and community/public awareness?
2. What is the local/provincial, political/policy context for the Project? What are the environmental conditions impacting the Project (e.g., supportive/non-supportive legislation, regulation, policy, program operations, availability of resources)?
3. Do changes across the three years show that individual Sites are meeting the Project vision and honoring the selection criteria (population, partnerships, increased access, sustainability, accountability and funding)? In detail, what are the indicators and outcomes of change in achieving the vision and aims (see City of Toronto Evaluation Outline, attached).
4. What does service integration and innovation mean in practice at each of the Sites? Can these practices be characterized along a continuum of integration, from coordination to transformation, with new forms of programming, joint planning, pooling of funding, management etc.? What's new, what's been done before and how long does it take to change? What are the beliefs of service providers about the effects of these practices in achieving their own aims and those of the ECEDC? How do Sites develop shared beliefs and practice plans—for example, concrete curriculum for children and programming for parents? How do they implement their plans and monitor outcomes? How do Site partners overcome barriers, act flexibly, communicate and learn together?
5. How are parents and communities involved in the planning, implementation, and ongoing development of the pilots? How are they and their children affected? How are underserved groups brought into the process and into the

services? What are the experiences of children and parents in the pilot programs? What is the level of community awareness of needs to support young children and the pilot projects? Are there links to other community services and supports that are not a formal part of the pilot? Is there evidence that the pilot increases community capacity (knowledge, collaboration) to meet changing community needs?

6. How does the external evaluation process work in relation to the goals of the Funders and Sites? What are the costs and benefits for Sites? Are the aims of collaboration and formative feedback achieved? Can the evaluation process support the development of integration and innovation and learning (self-evaluation) by organizations? Can it support community and public awareness of ECEDC successes?

**Research Activities** To answer the questions and to meet the objectives of the study, the core research team will work with City, ACF, and Agency partners throughout the project to shape the questions, measures and analyses. Input from other community stakeholders including parents will also be sought in this process. Wherever possible, existing agency records and approaches to information gathering for program monitoring and evaluation will be utilized.

This emergent and collaborative approach is necessary to adapt the evaluation to new program designs as they develop, to particular sites and to changing circumstances. The approach includes formative evaluation, which means providing useful evidence to help refine program design and delivery. The approach aims to deliver information in a non-technical way that allows practitioners, managers and community members to put ideas into practice and policy. Non-technical reporting will also enable the dissemination of lessons learned to communities and organization in the dissemination phase of the project.

Part of the collaborative/formative strategy at each pilot site will be geared toward supporting the emerging organization's capacity to function as a learning organization and to use self-evaluation in guiding their own development. A concrete example will be feeding back information and analysis from the external evaluation to each site for their review and reflection, partly to improve the information, and in the event it might help the site in its work and knowledge building. The sites will also be able to contribute information which they collect on the interests of parents and communities and thus enrich the database available to the evaluation. The pooling of interests and evaluation resources will expand the data available to both the research team and to the pilot projects and should build the capacity of the pilot projects to do constructive self-evaluation.

The evaluation will not have a primary focus on developmental outcomes for individual children and parents for several reasons. The project duration may not be long enough for clear developmental impacts. It is expected the integrated service approaches ultimately will have their effects partly through family and

community amplifiers that will take time to build. Furthermore, it is difficult to design appropriate control conditions in a neighbourhood/ community-based intervention (Connell, Kubisch, Schorr & Weiss, 1995). Nevertheless, community level analysis of impacts on children will be assessed through the availability of EDI data with data collection funded by HRDC funding to ACF with data collection through Macmaster University. Some individual items related to school readiness and general development will also be collected. These will be mapped on to the NLSCY data set to allow community comparisons between sites and the larger database.

In addition to these measures, impacts on community/public awareness and child and family participation/satisfaction will be assessed as potentially important mediators of developmental impact. Finally, viewpoints of children and their stories as participants will be an important part of the data collection.

**Data Collection.** A variety of techniques for data gathering will be used, including document collection, collection of meeting notes and other records from pilot agencies, participant observation in organizational meetings, focus groups with program staff and parents, interviews, surveys, and direct observation of programs. Direct observations allow evaluators to experience the program first hand and gain a feel for the organizational/community climate and to provide concrete descriptions of what the programs actually entail. These data sources will be analyzed in a variety of ways, both qualitative and quantitative, so the reporting and dissemination can be tailored to various audiences ranging from social scientists to the general public.

The evaluation team will be working with the Atkinson Charitable Foundation and TDSB to combine research and work around school readiness measures utilizing such tools as the Early Developmental Instrument (EDI) and the community mapping work reflected in the City of Toronto Report cards on children. These reports track changes in the condition of Toronto's children, measure progress in improving the situation of children, build public awareness and understanding of the needs of children, serve as planning tools for service providers and elected officials so that they can make decisions about the allocation of resources, and can act as a stimulus for political and community action to improve the situation of children and families. Other directly obtained measures of children's school readiness (e.g., numeracy, literacy) are also of interest.

More details on evaluation activities and data collection are available in the Evaluation Plan, including detailed descriptions of indicators within each strand.

#### **Evaluation progress and activities to date**

- An Evaluation Plan approved by the Steering Committee in February 2002 (available on the project web site)
- Organizational work: Records management, hiring of the Community Research Coordinator and Evaluation Team Research Manager

- Development of research tools and protocols for ethics approval, interviews, etc.
- Document/Records collection, analysis and reporting
- Participation of Team members in regular meetings (Steering Committee, Research and Development Committee, Research and Development Team)
- Participation in the second round of the site selection process.
- Participation in Workshops (Feb 4 and 5th and Learning Environment Workshop and related activities)
- Participant observation in site meetings
- Key Informant interviews with Site, Provincial, City, and School Board officials.

### **Next steps in evaluation**

- Get into the sites to talk to staff, families, children and community members about baseline attitudes and experiences and participation in new pilot programs.
- Participate in FD-wide communication and discussion at the Starting Gate stage with focus groups at Steering Committee and Site levels on key themes. The goal will be to facilitate systematic reflection (presenting information and ideas for comment and evaluation, leading to new ideas and connections, with the joint goal of improving knowledge and practice).
- Making detailed information available on a web site.
- Designing information and analysis to include needs of the FD communication plan.

### **Dissemination**

- Starting Gate Report, Spring 2002.
- Semiannual Progress Reports in June/December
- Ongoing Informal Reporting, including feedback to sites.
- Final Report, December 2005.
- Academic and Professional Journal reports
- Partners in Public and Policy Communication.

### **Evaluation Team**

The Team is comprised of faculty and students from the School of Early Childhood Education/Ryerson Polytechnic University and the Institute of Child Study/Ontario Institute for Studies in Education of the University of Toronto, and a faculty member from George Brown College representing the Atkinson Charitable Foundation. Individual team members are "assigned" to sites to foster in-depth understanding of each site.

Community Research Coordinator: Theresa Griffin (contact with all sites).

Research Manager: Marla Endler (Secord/Dawes-ACTT site).

Faculty Researchers: Donald McKay (Queen Vic), Jan Pelletier (Bruce-WoodGreen), Carl Corter (Yey-Wilcox), Rachel Berman (on leave).

Atkinson Researcher: Jane Bertrand (Corvette).

Research Assistants: OISE/UT and RPU students.

## Conclusions

- The general backdrop for the Toronto First Duty Project includes rising global tides of interest in the ideas of early childhood as a universal social investment, service integration to improve supports for young children and families, and the importance of parental and community involvement.
- There are many experimental programs based on these ideas in North America but they are often limited to targeted programs for groups at risk or for special needs children and they are often not evaluated.
- Innovative programs with a more universal focus, including integration of early education and care across previously disconnected sectors are working in some OECD countries and North American jurisdictions such as Quebec.
- In Toronto and Ontario there is a history of innovative supports for the care and education of young children dating back more than a century, but current programs are mostly fragmented and lag behind those in some other jurisdictions.
- In the current Ontario Early Years Plan there are long lists of new early childhood initiatives and established programs. There are also some relevant federal programs. Most of these are targeted programs and child care for young children is not part of the mix. The quick roll out of federal dollars and provincial early childhood programs has not led to a coherent, comprehensive approach. Whether common ground can be found between the provincial approach and the integrated approach of First Duty is a major question.
- The innovative, integrative goals of the First Duty Project face barriers of organizational complexity and inertia inherent in any project of this nature, compounded by recent amalgamations and continuing funding cuts. The challenges to the Project are balanced by the commitment of the funders to improve services and change policy for young children and families.
- The Project management and organization has taken many of the necessary steps for project development and implementation identified in the Feasibility Study in the Spring of 2000.
- The five Pilot Sites are planning for a common core of services and principles that are laid out in the First Duty vision. At the same time, the Sites begin with a range of approaches to that vision, varied histories of past work together, and some differences across the communities they will adapt their programs to.

- The Early Leader Site has moved from a long period of planning into an active period of implementing new services and integrative arrangements. Progress has been made across strands of program/service/policy, child and family, and community. Many challenges and unresolved issues remain but other sites may benefit from lessons learned to date, as well as from templates for agreements and other management tools.
- The evaluation team has produced the Starting Gate Report on the basis of analyzing background documents, carrying out initial key informant interviews and working as participant observers in the Project and in Site meetings. This report is designed as a first step in describing the process of planning and implementing an innovative ECEDC project and is intended to foster further steps in improving the Project through knowledge sharing among all the partners. Ideas and issues identified in this report will be discussed in organizational meetings to serve both further data collection and Project “knowledge building.”

## References

- Barrett, M. (1999) Local evaluation of Program Without Walls: Lessons learned. Imprint, 25, pp. 11-12. (available on the project website)
- Behrman, R. (1992). School Linked Services: Introduction. The Future of Children, 2, <http://www.futureofchildren.org/homepage2824/archive.htm>
- Cantwell, J., Bodolai, P., & Shariff, A. (2001). Partners in prevention. Imprint, 12, 1-4. (available on the project website)
- Carnegie Corporation of New York (1994). Starting Points: Meeting the needs of our youngest children. New York: Author.
- Centre for Research and Education in Human Services. (2001). Executive Summary: Evaluation of the Ontario Early Years Demonstration Projects. Kitchener, Ontario: Author.
- City of Toronto. (1997). The First Duty. Report of the Metro Task Force on Services to Young Children and Families.
- City of Toronto. (2001a). Toronto Report Card on Children – Update 2000. Toronto Children and Youth Action Committee.
- City of Toronto. (2001b). City of Toronto: Child Care Service Plan 2001 – 2003 (Draft). City of Toronto's Children Services
- City of Toronto. (1999a). Toronto Report Card on Children. 1999.
- City of Toronto. (1999b). Action plan for the children's report card 1999. Children and Youth Action Committee.
- City of Toronto. (1999c). Taking Stock: The Status of Child Care and Children's Services in Toronto. Joint report by the City of Toronto and the Community Social Planning Council of Toronto.
- Commission on Early Learning and Child Care for the City of Toronto. (2002). Final Report. May, [http://children.metrotor.on.ca/reports/Early\\_Learning\\_and\\_Child\\_Care\\_May2002.pdf](http://children.metrotor.on.ca/reports/Early_Learning_and_Child_Care_May2002.pdf)
- Connell, J., Kubisch, A., Schorr, L., & Weiss, C. (1995). New approaches to evaluating community initiatives: Concepts, methods, and contexts. Washington, D.C. Aspen Institute. (available online at <http://www.aspenroundtable.org>).

Corter, C. (2001). Integrating early childhood services and communities: A role for schools. Every Child, 7(3): 10-11. (available on the project website). Based on a Keynote address at the biennial meetings of the Australian Early Childhood Association, Sydney, July.

Corter, C., Bertrand, J., Griffin, T., Endler, M., McKay, D., & Pelletier, J. (2002). Evaluation Plan and Outline: Early Childhood Education, Development and Care Pilot Project. Schedule "A" to the Agreement between City of Toronto and Governing Council of the University of Toronto.

Corter, C., Harris, P., & Pelletier, J. (1998) Parent Participation in Elementary Schools: The Role of School Councils in Development and Diversity. Transfer Grant Report to the Ministry of Education and Training of Ontario, including case study of Havenwood Place, an integrated services, preschool parent centre.

EDEDC Project Workshop February 4, 2002 – meeting notes.

EQAO website: <http://www.eqao.com>

First Duty Project. (2002). First Duty Project Fact Sheet. April. [http://children.metrotor.on.ca/reports/Fact\\_sheet\\_feb02.htm](http://children.metrotor.on.ca/reports/Fact_sheet_feb02.htm) (available on the project website)

Halfon, N., Sutherland, C., View-Sneider, M., Kloppenburg, A., Wright, R., Uyeda, J., Kuo, A., & Shulman, E. (2001). Reaching Back to Create a Brighter Future: The Role of Schools in Promoting School Readiness. Los Angeles: UCLA Centre for Healthier Children, Families and Communities.

Jenson, J., & Mahon, R. (2001). Child Care in Toronto: Can Intergovernmental Relations Respond to Children's Needs? Canadian Policy Research Networks Inc. An Options Paper.

Johnson, L. & Mathien, J. (1998). Early childhood services for kindergarten age children in four Canadian provinces: Scope, nature and models for the future. Ottawa, Ontario, Canada: The Caledon Institute of Social Policy.

Keating, D.P. & Hertzman, C. (Eds.). (1999). Developmental health and the wealth of nations: Social, biological, and educational dynamics. New York: The Guilford Press.

LaPierre, L. (1981) To Herald A Child. Toronto: Ontario Public School Men Teachers' Federation.

Leithwood, K., Fullan, M., & Laing, P. (2002). Towards the schools we need. University of Toronto Bulletin, #17, April, p. 18. (available on the project website)

Leithwood, K., Jantzi, D., & Steinbach, R. (1999). Do school councils matter? Educational Policy, 13, 467-493.

Levine, M. & Smith, S. (2001). State and Community Partnerships for Young Children. The Future of Children, 11, [http://www.futureofchildren.org.pubs.info2825/pubs-info.htm?doc\\_id=79324](http://www.futureofchildren.org.pubs.info2825/pubs-info.htm?doc_id=79324)

Lewko, J., Salhani, D., & Legault, M. (1999). The process for achieving full scale integration of services.

McCain, N. & Mustard, F. (1999). Reversing the real brain drain: Early years study. Toronto, ON: Ontario Children's Secretariat.

Melaville, A. & Blank, M. (1993). Together we can: A guide for crafting a profamily system of education and human services. Washington: US Dept of Education, Office of Educational Research and Improvement and US Dept of Health and Human Services, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation.

Metro Task Force on Services to Young Children and Families. (1997). The First Duty. Report of the Task Force.

Metro Council Records. (1987). Assessment of Comprehensive Child Care Pilot Projects. Report of 21 April 1987 from Commissioner of Community Services.

Ministry of Community and Social Services. (2000). Integration of human services: highlight report on a survey of consolidated municipal service managers in Ontario. (<http://www.gov.on.ca/CSS/page/brochure/hsres.html>)

Oberhuemer, P. & Ulich, M. (1997). Working with Young Children in Europe: Provision and Staff Training. London, England: Paul Chapman Publishing Ltd.

Ontario Coalition for Better Child Care. (1991). Daycare Deadline 1990: Brief to the Government of Ontario on the Future of Daycare Services in Ontario. Don Mills, Ont: Ontario Federation of Labour.

Ontario Ministry of Community and Social Services (2001). Early Years Centres Planning Tool Kit. September.

Ontario Ministry of Community and Social Services (2001). Planning the Ontario Early Years Centres: Guidelines for Communities. September.

Ontario Ministry of Community, Family and Children's Services ( ) Integration of human services: highlight report on a survey of consolidated municipal service managers in Ontario. (<http://www.gov.on.ca/CSS/page/brochure/hsres.html>).

Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development. (2001). Starting Strong: Early Childhood Education and Care. Paris.

Pelletier, J. (2002). Child, parent, and teacher outcomes in a school-based preschool readiness program. Manuscript submitted for publication.

Peters, R. DeV., Arnold, R., Petrunka, K., Angus, D. E., Brohpy, K., Burke, S. O., Cameron, G., Evers, S., Henry, Y., Levesque, D., Pancer, S. M., Roberts-Fiati, G., Towson, S., & Warren, W. K. (2000). Developing Capacity and Competence in the Better Beginnings, Better Futures Communities: Short Term Findings Report. Kingston, Ontario: Better Beginnings, Better Futures Research Coordination Unit Technical Report. <http://bbbf.queensu.ca/pub.html#sterm>.

Peters, R. DeV. & Petrunka, K. (2002). Better Beginnings, Better Futures. Imprint, 33, 18-21.

Province of Ontario. (2001). Early Years Challenge Fund – Program Guidelines.

Regional Educational Laboratories' Early Childhood Collaboration Network (1995). A Framework for Home, School, and Community Linkages. <http://www.sedl.org/prep/hsclinkages.pdf>.

Royal Commission on Learning (1994). For the Love of Learning. Toronto: Queen's Printer for Ontario.

Rutter, M. (2001). WebForum 2001. A Millennium Dialogue on Early Child Development. Final Roundtable Remarks. Toronto: Ontario Institute for Studies in Education/University of Toronto.

Southeast Grey Community Outreach. (1998) Survive and thrive! A guidebook for making community development meet your community's needs. Markdale, Ontario: Kids N' Us.

Stapleford, E. (1989). Day Care: An historical perspective as a basis for policy issues. Paper presented at the annual meetings of the Canadian Psychological Association, Halifax, June.

Toronto District School Board website: <http://www.tdsb.on.ca>

Toronto Steering Committee for the Early Years Challenge Fund. (2002). Moving Forward: Toronto Early Years Action Plan. April.

UNICEF (2001). State of the World's Children 2001.

## Acknowledgments

Alan Meisner, at the City of Toronto Community and Neighbourhood Services, Social Development and Administration Division, created the city-wide and site maps and supplied demographic data. Julie Mathien, also at the Social Development and Administration Division, provided general support and background material. Maria Yau of the Academic Accountability Department of the Toronto District School Board provided school and board-level information.

Funding to support the evaluation is provided by the City of Toronto and the Atkinson Charitable Foundation. In-kind support to the evaluation is provided by the Institute of Child Study and the Dr. R.G.N. Laidlaw Centre of the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, University of Toronto and by the School of Early Childhood, Ryerson Polytechnic University. Support for the First Duty Project website is provided by the Centre for Society and Child Development in the Department of Human Development and Applied Psychology at OISE/UT.

We gratefully acknowledge the time and assistance that key informants gave us in interviews and the help provided by the Sites in providing documents and other information. Site descriptions, in particular, are based partly on descriptions produced by individuals at the sites, in interviews, proposals, and in direct communication with the research team.

## Appendix 1

### About Ontario's Early Years Plan

Ontario's Early Years Plan consists of two key initiatives:

- expand, enhance and strengthen the province's universal and targeted programs for children ages 0 to 6
- establish a network of Ontario Early Years Centres across the province.

The Plan, which is based on extensive research into healthy child development and the early years, is part of a larger national initiative. In September 2000, the First Ministers made a commitment to invest in the early years, and the federal government agreed to provide funding to support programs and services to:

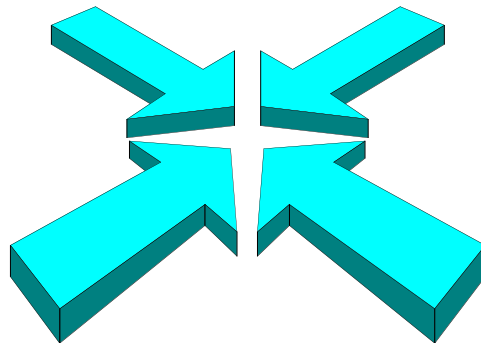
- promote healthy pregnancy, birth and infancy
- improve parenting and family supports
- strengthen early childhood development, learning and care
- strengthen community supports.

Ontario's Early Years Plan meets the criteria for federal funding and, at the same time, reflects the goals and principles of Making Services Work for People (Ontario's framework for improving access to and the integration of social services).

Ontario's Early Years Plan and the Ontario Early Years Centres are more links in a chain of provincial initiatives designed to give every child a healthy start in life.

Ontario's Promise

Early Years Plan



Early Years Challenge Fund

Early Years Centres

(Adapted from Ontario MCSS, 2001, "Planning the Ontario Early Years Centres: Guidelines for Communities", Crown copyright)

## Appendix 2

### Government Roles and Responsibilities in Toronto for Early Childhood Education, Development & Care Programs\*\*

<b>Government Level</b>	<b>Child Care</b>	<b>Education</b>	<b>Family Support Programs</b>	<b>Early Identification &amp; Intervention</b>
<b>Federal Government</b>	First Nations & Inuit Child Care Initiative (on reserve) Child Care Income Tax Deduction Research & some development. Included as area for spending in ECDI.	Supports research & development. Language of ECDI does not preclude inclusion of kindergarten in early learning & care initiatives.	Direct support through CAPC, CPNP, Military Family Resource Programs & Crime Prevention Centre Included as area for spending in ECDI	Some of federal family support programs offer compensatory & other early identification & intervention programs.
<b>Provincial Government</b>  (Does not reflect Early Years Plan or Provincial Early Years Centres)	Governance & policy for regulated child care centres and family child care. Legislation (Day Nurseries Act) includes operating and funding regulations and sets limits for unregulated care. Funding available for fee subsidies and direct grants.	Jr & Sr kindergarten offered as part of public education system. Legislation (Education Act) sets out policy, funding & operational framework. Provincial document outlines curriculum & expected student outcomes.	Funding for approximately 180 family resource programs. Funding, policies & legislation (Health Promotion & Protection Act) Healthy Baby, Healthy Children & pre and postnatal programs in 37 public health units.	Funding, policy & legislation (Child & Family Services Act) for several programs. Overlap with HBHC. Includes Preschool Speech & Language, Children's Mental Health Centres, Infant Development Programs.

Appendix 2....Continued

<b>Government Level</b>	<b>Child Care</b>	<b>Education</b>	<b>Family Support Programs</b>	<b>Early Identification &amp; Intervention</b>
<b>Municipality</b>	Direct delivery of regulated & family child care. Purchase of service contracts with nonprofit & commercial operations. Responsible for administration, management & service planning. Contributes 20% funding.		Family resource programs: Contracts with non-profit organizations. Responsible for administration, management & service planning. Contributes 20% funding. Public Health Unit operates HBHC & pre & postnatal programs	Special needs resourcing available to directly operated and contracted licensed child care progr
<b>Toronto District School Board</b>	Directly operates 1 licensed child care centre.	Directly operates junior and senior kindergarten programs in 600 schools.	Directly operates parenting & family literacy centres in 41 schools.	Directly operates specialized programs for kindergarten children with diagnosed special needs.

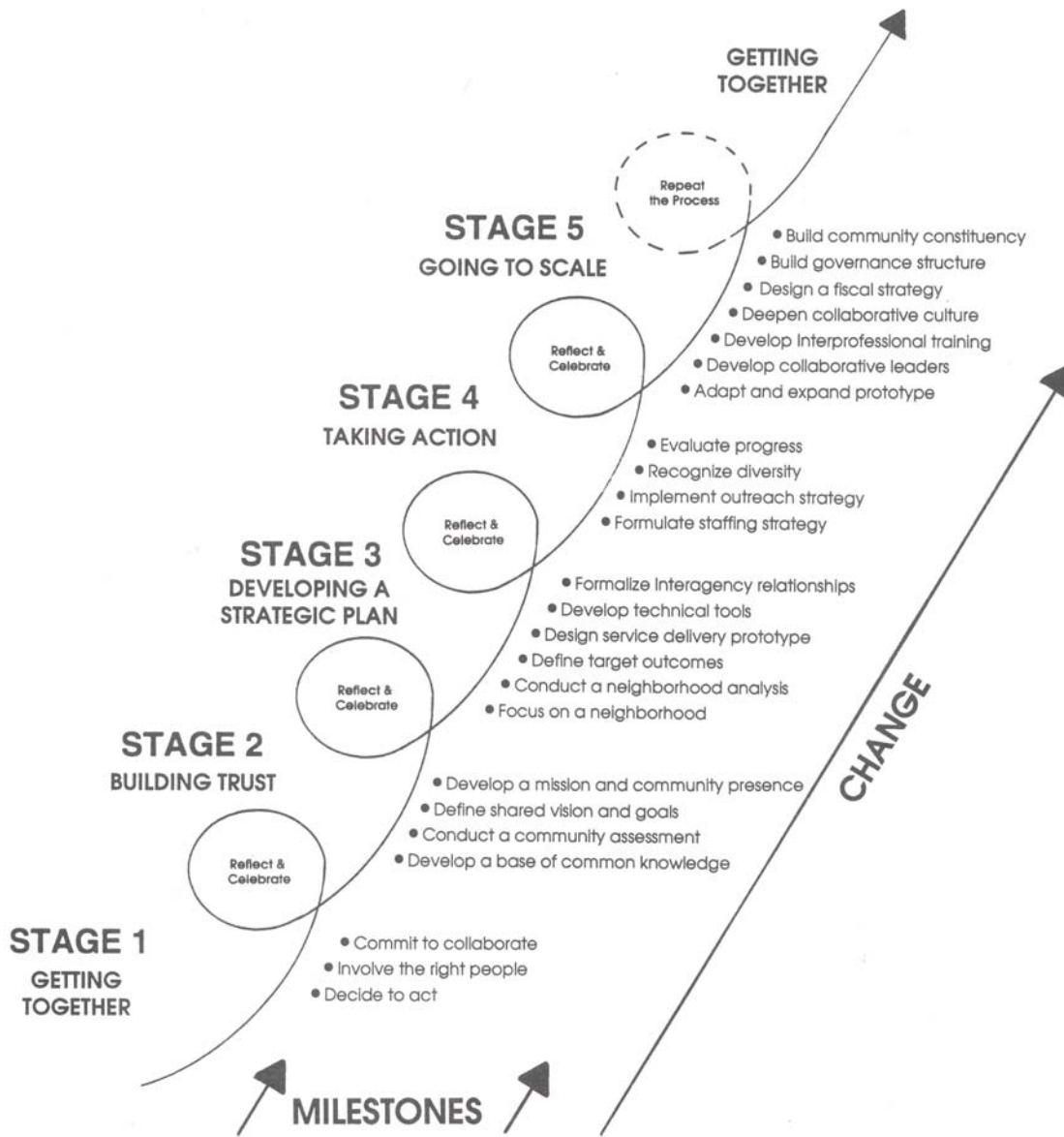
Appendix 3

Demographics of Toronto First Duty Primary Site (School Catchment)/Secondary Site Areas

	Bruce		Corvette		J R Wilcox		Secord		Queen Victoria		City
	Primary	Secondary	Primary	Secondary	Primary	Secondary	Primary	Secondary	Primary	Secondary	Total
Total Population	14,010	17,210	8,380	14,180	11,695	26,245	14,305	22,570	21,935	15,780	2,385,420
Immigrant Population (1991 - 1996)	15%	12%	18%	22%	22%	11%	18%	17%	22%	15%	13%
Mother Tongue											
English	48%	51%	50%	55%	51%	51%	61%	57%	42%	42%	54%
French	2%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	2%	1%	1%
Non-official languages	46%	44%	46%	41%	46%	45%	35%	37%	50%	53%	42%
N/A	4%	5%	4%	3%	3%	3%	3%	5%	6%	4%	3%
Education (population 15+)	12,425	13,800	17,880	11,390	9,910	21,295	11,475	18,030	17,385	13,000	1,938,345
Less than grade 9	17%	16%	15%	14%	15%	20%	10%	11%	11%	22%	12%
Grade 9 - 13	42%	34%	40%	38%	29%	29%	39%	38%	38%	33%	33%
Trades certificate or diploma	2%	2%	3%	2%	3%	2%	3%	3%	2%	2%	3%
Other non-university only	18%	16%	23%	23%	22%	18%	23%	23%	23%	17%	21%
University without degree	9%	12%	9%	9%	12%	10%	11%	12%	9%	9%	11%
University with bachelor's degree or higher	12%	21%	11%	12%	19%	21%	15%	14%	16%	16%	21%
Families (# in private households)	3,325	3,860	2,275	3,910	2,850	6,680	3,635	5,845	4,900	3,875	619,995
Husband/wife: no children at home	32%	29%	28%	29%	34%	27%	28%	32%	32%	31%	32%
Husband/wife: with children at home	46%	48%	50%	46%	43%	52%	45%	46%	38%	49%	49%
Lone-parent families	22%	67%	22%	25%	23%	20%	27%	21%	30%	19%	19%
Income (Census families)	3,295	3,860	2,265	3,900	2,840	6,690	3,635	5,850	4,915	3,860	619,990
Under \$20,000	31%	28%	28%	29%	24%	17%	29%	22%	37%	27%	20%
\$20,000 - \$39,999	27%	24%	27%	31%	33%	25%	30%	28%	35%	30%	25%
\$40,000 - \$59,999	19%	18%	20.3%	21%	21%	22%	20%	24%	16%	22%	20%
\$60,000 - \$99,999	17%	20%	22.3%	17%	16%	22%	17%	21%	9%	17%	23%
\$100,000 +	6%	10%	1.8%	4%	6%	13%	4%	5%	3%	4%	13%
Average family income \$	\$44,878	\$51,573	\$38,821	\$38,565	\$45,318	\$58,099	\$38,509	\$44,987	\$33,514	\$40,880	\$58,939
Median family income \$	\$36,336	\$40,580	\$34,884	\$34,748	\$34,046	\$53,556	\$30,790	\$40,131	\$26,320	\$34,535	\$45,251
Low Income Status (Economic families)	3,235	3,830	2,195	3,930	2,910	2,715	3,710	5,825	5,045	3,865	614,020
Low income	36%	32%	33%	36%	34%	27%	38%	28%	45%	34%	24%
Other	64%	67%	67%	64%	66%	73%	62%	72%	54%	66%	76%
Home Language [Other population groups of note are: Corvette (Macedonian = 3.5%); J R Wilcox (Hungarian = 1.2%) and Secord (Romanian = 2.1%; Farsi = 1.3%)]											
Chinese	30.9%	29.1%	8.2%	10.4%	1.4%	2.6%	7.9%	6.2%	4.8%	5.7%	8.1%
Italian	0.1%	0.2%	2.6%	1.6%	3.9%	8.3%	0.7%	1.2%	0.0%	0.3%	4.8%
Portuguese	1.4%	0.2%	0.2%	0.0%	5.7%	6.8%	0.2%	0.2%	1.4%	12.2%	3.0%
Spanish	0.1%	0.4%	1.5%	0.8%	5.5%	2.5%	0.7%	0.4%	2.1%	1.4%	2.3%
Polish	0.0%	0.1%	0.1%	1.4%	0.2%	0.6%	1.6%	0.5%	6.3%	7.4%	2.0%
Tamil	0.0%	0.0%	9.0%	3.0%	0.0%	0.1%	0.8%	5.3%	5.0%	2.2%	2.0%
Tagalog	1.0%	0.2%	1.9%	2.0%	5.8%	1.0%	1.2%	1.0%	3.7%	1.2%	1.7%
Greek	0.3%	1.2%	2.6%	1.9%	1.2%	2.2%	0.8%	1.6%	0.1%	0.3%	1.6%
Vietnamese	1.8%	4.4%	0.0%	0.4%	1.8%	1.2%	0.1%	0.2%	7.9%	4.1%	1.0%
Grade 3 EQAO Results 2000/01 (method 2, using only those who completed assessments)											TDSB
Reading levels 3, 4	50%	n/a	57%	n/a	38%	n/a	60%	n/a	47%	n/a	54%
Writing levels 3, 4	66%	n/a	57%	n/a	50%	n/a	49%	n/a	48%	n/a	57%
Math levels 3, 4	66%	n/a	88%	n/a	54%	n/a	68%	n/a	79%	n/a	70%

# Appendix 4

## Stages of Change



## Appendix 5

### YEY-W Process for Crafting a Profamily System of Education and Human Services

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Action Required</u>
<b>Stage One: Getting Together</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Has a small group decided to act? ✓</li> </ul>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Do the players meet the following criteria for membership in the collaborative:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— clout; ✓</li> <li>— commitment; ✓</li> <li>— diversity ?</li> </ul> </li> </ul>			Committed service providers including good cross-sectoral ; more diverse community input? Community Referenc e Group TBA will provide greater diversity
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Are the right people involved, including:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— consumers; ✓</li> <li>— public-sector organizations; ✓</li> <li>— private providers and nonprofit organizations; ✓</li> <li>— businesses and business organizations; and X</li> <li>— elected officials ✓</li> </ul> </li> </ul>			Most, but not all  Communication established
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Have partners established a strong commitment to collaborate ✓ as evidenced by:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— deciding whether collaboration will work;</li> <li>— agreeing on a unifying theme;</li> <li>— establishing shared leadership;</li> <li>— setting ground rules; and</li> <li>— securing financial resources for the collaborative’s planning efforts?</li> </ul> </li> </ul>			YES  Early leader has much of this already in place
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Have partners reflected on their work and celebrated their accomplishments?</li> </ul>			Good start; part of every agenda? need to celebrate and communicate accomplishments?
<b>Stage Two: Building Trust and Ownership</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Has the collaborative built a base of common knowledge by:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— learning about each other; ✓</li> <li>— learning to value personal style differences and to resolve conflicts; and ✓</li> <li>— achieving “small victories”? ✓</li> </ul> </li> </ul>			Strong history of collaboration; Information sessions provided as part of management committee meetings; New partners and new front line staff continue to learn about each other and build relationships

- Has the collaborative conducted a comprehensive community assessment that:
  - identifies indicators of child and family needs; ✓
  - produces a profile of child and family well-being in the community;
  - maps existing community services (joint effort of early leader site and the city);
  - assesses the existing service delivery system from the perspective of families and frontline workers; and ✓
  - identifies other community reform efforts (through coordinators participation and community service network board, school council) ✓
- Have partners defined a shared vision and goals for changing education and human services by:
  - learning from others' experiences;
  - asking hard questions; and
  - writing a vision statement?
- Has the collaborative developed a mission statement that clarifies its role in the community? ✓
- Has the collaborative communicated its vision and mission to the community and received public endorsement from the community's major institutions? ✓
- Have partners reflected on their work and celebrated their accomplishments?

Some initial assessment and of needs and services was done in the proposal phase. The current community consultation process and report is an excellent further step; Hiring of the family support worker the end of March initiates further parent outreach and begins a second phase in community consultation; Management Committee will respond to the community consultation process on an on-going basis.

Achieving clarity through the process of dialogue, problem-solving and planning in various sub-committees as well as the management committee

This is an on-going process

Starting Gate Report to facilitate reflection and provide an opportunity for celebration of accomplishments?

### Stage Three: Developing a Strategic Plan

- Has the collaborative narrowed its focus to a specific neighbourhood for launching a service delivery prototype? ✓
- Has the collaborative conducted a neighbourhood analysis that: ✓
  - identifies key neighbourhood leaders who should be involved in prototype planning; and
  - assesses the service delivery system in the area?
- Has the collaborative defined the target outcomes that its prototype service delivery design will address? ✓
- Has the collaborative engaged a person to direct the prototype and involved this person in the planning process? ✓
- Has the collaborative developed a strategy for involving the neighbourhood leaders, school principals, teachers, and agency directors and frontline workers? ✓

Much of the Plan was developed in the proposal phase Initial plans are being updated as more players and the community become more involved.

The project coordinator

- In making service delivery choices, did the collaborative:
  - select what services the prototype would offer; ✓
  - develop criteria for assessing its prototype design; ✓
  - determine a service delivery location that is comfortable for the neighbourhood children and families; ✓
  - consider a school location; ✓
  - decide how to finance the prototype's services?
- Has the collaborative developed the technical tools of collaboration, including:
  - interagency case management; X
  - common intake and assessment forms; ✓
  - common eligibility determination; ✓
  - a management information system; X
  - procedures for dealing with confidentiality and sharing oral and written information? ✓
- Is a mechanism in place for using program-level intelligence to suggest system-level changes? ✓
- Have partners signed interagency agreements to facilitate accountability?
- Has the collaborative defined its governance structure so it can make policy changes at the service delivery and system levels? ✓
- Is a structure in place to help the coordinator deal with operational issues as they emerge? ✓
- Have partners reflected on their work and celebrated their accomplishments? ✓

Governed by First Duty principles and further shaped by the community consultation process which included service providers as well as parents

Evolving

No case management in place but is this a goal of the project? (more appropriate for considering special needs);  
Currently have a draft common intact form;

Developing a protocol for addressing confidentiality and the sharing of information on a "need to know" basis  
Formal evaluation process

Also through Management committee which can take issues to the city's steering committee

Agreed to, but not signed

Management committee terms of reference approved by partner agencies;  
Individual service contracts between lead agency and service provider;  
Governing structure includes management committee and its various subcommittees (integrated learning environment, site committee, and policy committee)

Coordinator is supported by supervision and policy/structure supports of lead agency

#### Stage Four: Taking Action

- Do job descriptions for prototype staff reflect the collaborative's vision of high-quality service delivery and staff responsibility for achieving anticipated outcomes? ✓
- Has the collaborative designed and implemented a comprehensive and interdisciplinary staff training program?

Evolving, beginning a budget line and funder's commitment to professional development;

February 4, 5, information orientation workshops for management/steering committees, and learning environment workshop March 25 for front-line staff

- Are mechanisms in place to facilitate communications and to nurture the relationship between prototype staff and school personnel? ✓
- Is the collaborative implementing an inclusive outreach strategy? ✓
- Have partners incorporated sensitivity to race, culture, and gender into the collaborative and prototype? ✓
- Is the collaborative evaluating progress by:
  - using process evaluation techniques; ✓
  - measuring outcomes?
- Have partners reflected on their work and celebrated their accomplishments?

Joint planning committees (learning environment, site, and policy committees)

Community consultation report and family support worker

Equity policy is the first policy to leave policy committee; Will be brought to management committee in May

will be

Hopefully will be initiated by the starting date report

### Stage Five: Going to Scale

- Is the collaborative ready to adapt and expand the prototype to additional sites?
- Is there a strategy for developing collaborative leaders and incorporating the concepts of collaboration into partners' professional development programs?
- Is the collaborative working with local colleges and universities to change the character of professional education to reflect the vision of a profamily system?
- Do inservice training programs include strategies and tactics for collaboration?
- Are partners working to deepen the collaborative culture within their own organizations by:
  - applying the collaborative's vision;
  - providing rewards and incentives for staff that demonstrate a commitment to collaboration?
- Is the collaborative formulating a long-range financing strategy?
- Has the collaborative built a formal governance structure? ✓
- Does the collaborative have a strategy for building and maintaining a community constituency for its work? ✓
- Is the collaborative promoting change in the federal government's role in delivering services?

Not yet. This is seen as a progressive, incremental process

Not yet

Not yet

They will

One of the lead agency's strategic directions is increasing collaboration with YEY-W; Partnership agreement in First Duty proposal commits all the partners to collaboration; Incentives are imbedded in outcomes when people see the value of collaboration  
No, not yet

Not yet, but will support.

## Appendix 6

### YEY-W Indicators of Systems Change

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Under Consideration</u>	<u>Rejected</u>	<u>Action Require</u>
<b>Are interagency agreements in place?</b>					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Are they reviewed periodically?</li> <li>■ Are agency agreements negotiated with the clear understanding that they are meant to be binding?</li> <li>■ Are policies in place to address agreements broken in “bad faith”?</li> </ul>			X		
Partly in place – 2 pieces to this: 1) the terms of reference for the YEYW Management Committee, the April draft was endorsed and voted on at the Apr. Mgmt meeting (hadn’t thought of an official signing off of this, but might consider that) 2) separate legal agreements to flow \$ are being developed ... individual specific agreements between LEF and Yorktown to facilitate purchase of services.					
<b>Do program-level information and intelligence trigger policy-level changes across multiple systems?</b>					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Is there a case management system or other method for collecting information on a case-by-base basis to determine what services children and families need that are not available and what barriers prevent them from using services that are available, including transportation, cultural and interpersonal issues, and eligibility rules?</li> <li>■ Is there a person or committee designated to analyze this information, to identify those barriers that could be resolved by policy-level actions, and to summarize findings?</li> <li>■ Is there a procedure in place to ensure that the collaborative reviews this information? Has action been taken as a result?</li> </ul>			X	Evolving	
No case management system but yes, a system of collecting information through community consultations ... process is ongoing ... as reflected in community consultation report...first stage in December/Jan 2002 ... second stage: beginning with hiring a family support worker the end of March  persons dedicated to this role are primarily Fidelia as project coordinator, and Ruby, Family Support Worker as well as the “Site” Committee, which in turn reports to the Management Committee.					
<b>Have partners developed shared information system?</b>					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Is there ready access to each other’s records?</li> <li>■ Are shared confidentiality protocols in place?</li> <li>■ When agencies implemented and expanded computer systems, did they take into account interagency access capabilities and information-sharing needs</li> <li>■ Have agencies replaced separate in-house forms to gather the same kind of information with a common form used by all members or other organizations to establish program eligibility? Assess case management needs? Develop case plans?</li> </ul>			X	Evolving	
not yet ready to access each others records Policy & Procedures committee working on a shared confidentiality profile Also have a draft, common intake form (see attached)					

**Have partner agencies incorporated the vision and values of the collaborative at their administrative and staff levels?**

- Have partners altered their hiring criteria, job descriptions, and preservice or inservice training to confirm to a vision of comprehensive, accessible, culturally appropriate, family-centered, and outcome-oriented services?
- Have partners changed the design hours, and location of waiting rooms and interviewing offices, or revised the nature of services?
- Has there been cross-training to share factual information among all of the agencies working together to provide school-linked services?
- Have partners developed training to help staff support the collaboration?
- Is there a change in the way teachers, principals, and service providers relate to each other? To their students? To others they serve?
- Are redirected staff assigned to work in school-linked centers keeping in touch with policies and agencies?
- Is there basic agreement on who they need to service, what they should be doing, and what results they should expect?
- Are outcome goals clearly established?
- Has the collaborative used its data collection capacity to document how well children and families are faring in their communities and how well agencies and child-service institutions are meeting their mandates?
- Are these data used strategically both within the collaborative and in the larger community to advance the collaborative's goals?
- Are outcomes measurable? Do they specify what degree of change is expected to occur in the lives of children and families during what period of time?
- Is shared accountability a part of outcomes that reflect education, human service, and community goals and objectives?
- Is public accountability established?

all YEY-W job descriptions and partner agencies with staff at YEYW have modified / incorporated vision and values into job descriptions, some formally, others, like TDSB unofficially – both Sharon and Fidelia believe both the principal's and teacher's role expectations address this

cross-training will be provided eventually. The funders (City & Atkinson) have already provided orientation/information sessions (March 4 & in Metro Hall); (Atkinson's Learning Environment session March 25)

shared vision was also part of the proposal

already seeing changes in principal's and teachers' attitudes and behaviours towards other service providers; planning together and beginning to integrate some program activities

yes redirected dedicated staff keep in touch with home agencies policies, etc.

agreement on who they serve, outcome goals, all included in the proposal

uses data collection capacity to document progress

already begun reflecting the community consultation report and are tracking participants using various program services

are using data strategically – that process has begun with the community consultation report which is being used to identify program priorities and new programs and services

currently YEYW is accountable to the funder

the partner agencies are accountable to their individual boards

community representation on YEY-W's own governance structure

will be periodic community report cards

- Are periodic community report cards released and public meetings and forums conducted to keep the public apprised of specific collaborative accomplishments and overall progress toward improving key indicators of community well-being?

**Has the collaborative devised a financing strategy to ensure long-term funding?**

- Are plans in place to support new patterns of service delivery beyond the prototype level?
- Have partners explored major funding sources entering the community?
- Have partners contacted provincial liaisons to explore how current funding sources could be channeled and maximized to support prevention-oriented services?

Expectation that service-school links can continue

No long term funding strategy has been discussed. Challenge Fund proposal was rejected by province suggesting it wasn't cost-effective. First-duty monies have not yet been received, and are considering other additional sources of funding (Atkinson).

**Has the collaborative gained legitimacy in the community as a key vehicle for addressing and resolving community issues regarding children and families?**

- Does the collaborative have a voice that is heard in the community?
- Are the collaborative's positions on community issues supported by commitments from public and private service providers, the business community, and the church- and neighbourhood-based organizations whose members are often most directly affected by collaborative decisionmaking?

X  
Evolving

- in a recent consultation by Health Centre, York Early Years was independently recognized at that meeting