



EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT IN BC

First Call's Framework for Action



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Early Childhood Development in BC: First Call's Framework for Action

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FIRST CALL—B.C.’s child and youth advocacy coalition of over 80 partner organizations and mobilizing communities—welcomes this opportunity to share with you

“Early Childhood Development in British Columbia: First Call’s Framework for Action”

Overwhelmingly endorsed by the First Call Coalition in February 2003, this position paper is groundbreaking in several ways:

- It identifies and integrates all components of a comprehensive early childhood development (ECD) strategy that are required to support young children and their families
- It provides a conceptual framework for understanding the programs and services that comprise and support a pro-active ECD approach for our province
- It draws upon the latest ECD research and expertise, and reflects broadly based consultation and consensus-building across the ECD sector in British Columbia
- It offers organizations and communities an advocacy tool to use as they work together on behalf of and for young children and families

FIRST CALL gratefully acknowledges the ECD Funders Network for their support in the development of this initiative. We also commend their collaborative efforts to articulate a common vision, language and policy framework amongst funders and view this First Call document as a complement and companion to their work.

You can give life to **“Early Childhood Development in British Columbia: First Call’s Framework for Action”** by:

- Formally endorsing it within your organization
- Distributing copies to individuals and groups in your community for their support and to stimulate discussion and action on ECD issues
- Urging regional planning committees and government forums to adopt this paper as they weave their strategies and chart their plans for young children and families.

FIRST CALL welcomes your feedback and further suggestions for ways to use this document. We are also eager to learn of your efforts and successes in taking this paper forward.



Gyda Chud
Chair, First Call ECD Roundtable, 2003

Acknowledgements

The development of this document reflects the commitment and energy of many individuals and organizations, widely respected for their knowledge and long-standing advocacy efforts.

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- The United Way of the Lower Mainland
- Vancouver Foundation
- Health Canada
- City of Vancouver

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FIRST CALL wishes to extend thanks and heartfelt appreciation to the following people, for without their vision and dedication we could not have been successful in developing this framework for early childhood development:

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First Call is also very grateful to the Centre for Community Child Health Research for the donation of office space.

To all who were involved in moving this initiative from a vision to a reality, we express our deepest appreciation and congratulations!

Purpose

The purpose of this paper is to:

- Build commitment and agreement for action on Early Childhood Development (ECD) to guide the ongoing advocacy work of First Call.
- Propose a province-wide action framework for Early Childhood Development, within which communities can determine, develop and deliver the ECD supports and services that are needed by their young children and families.
- Clarify what fits specifically within the ECD action framework and determine the broader enabling factors that support all children, youth and families.
- Identify the range of ECD specific supports, services and strategies needed to foster the optimal healthy development of young children and families in British Columbia (BC).
- Provide First Call a basis for ongoing reflection, monitoring and updating of BC's progress in Early Childhood Development.

The paper is divided into two sections:

SECTION I highlights the research, policy and advocacy links to Early Childhood Development and introduces First Call's 'ECD Basket' framework, placing it within the context of the broader enabling factors that support all children, youth and families.

SECTION II provides an in-depth look at the 5 components of First Call's ECD Basket. It begins with those supports, services and strategies that are known to strengthen families and enhance the healthy development of children, and then addresses the other four 'Basket' components, which collectively establish a systemic approach to ECD in British Columbia.

SECTION I

Drawing upon the Research

Research has long suggested that the first six years of life are an important period in the development of a child and a matter of public policy significance. Yet in Canada, our collective commitment to early childhood development has lagged behind that of most industrialized nations. However, in the 1990's, research on brain development sparked a shift in thinking. Scientists discovered that failure to provide optimum conditions for a child's development during early childhood causes the developing brain to be physically different from that of a child who has experienced loving care, positive social interaction and play stimulation.

Further studies showed that these differences in brain structure and capacity can have lifelong consequences for health, behaviour and learning outcomes, and that in Canada nearly 25% of children are developmentally vulnerable by the age of school entry. This research, added to studies on the increasing stresses/challenges facing today's families and the particular vulnerability of certain populations, has led to the recognition that "an investment in an early childhood development strategy is an investment in the social vitality and economic growth of a nation" (The National Children's Strategy—Government of Canada).

This latest research has put early childhood onto the public agenda in Canada and around the world, and yet there is still much to be done to raise awareness, gain consensus, determine priorities and move to action that will properly support young children and families. The good intentions of Canada's National Children's Agenda and the September 2000 federal/provincial/territorial Early Childhood Development Agreement are only words on a page unless there is a sustained, tangible, shared commitment to the healthy growth, development and well-being of young children and families.

First Call and ECD

First Call: BC Child and Youth Advocacy Coalition emerged during the 1990's as a grassroots movement in support of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. From across BC, non-profit agencies came together to develop a public education tool, called 'Keys to Success', to raise public awareness about the needs of children and youth. Through community consultation and eight community mobilization campaigns, First Call identified and affirmed that:

Children and Youth in BC need:

- A strong commitment to Early Childhood Development.
- Support in transitions from childhood to youth to adulthood.
- Increased economic equality.
- Safe and caring communities.

Further work on the Early Childhood Development ‘Key’ determined the following goals:

- To improve pregnancy outcomes.
- To support parents of young children.
- To build a system of high quality, affordable, accessible childcare services.
- To develop and enhance a system of early identification, support and intervention for families with children at risk for developmental delay and children with disabilities.

Strong consensus emerged around certain key principles:

- Society has a *collective responsibility* to support the optimal healthy growth and development of all young children and families.
- Young children have a right to be *visible* within and *connected* to the broader community.
- Effective social policy blends a strong population-wide investment with a targeted focus on those most at risk.
- Early Childhood Development strategies must strive to strengthen capacity, environments and service delivery.
- Families, communities and governments must work together to create stable, supportive and nurturing environments for children at home, in their neighbourhoods and in non-parental care situations.
- *All* young children and their families must have *access* to a basic set of ECD supports and services as needed. This means addressing the specific barriers that face certain families and the systemic barriers that limit the overall availability, affordability and integration of ECD programs.

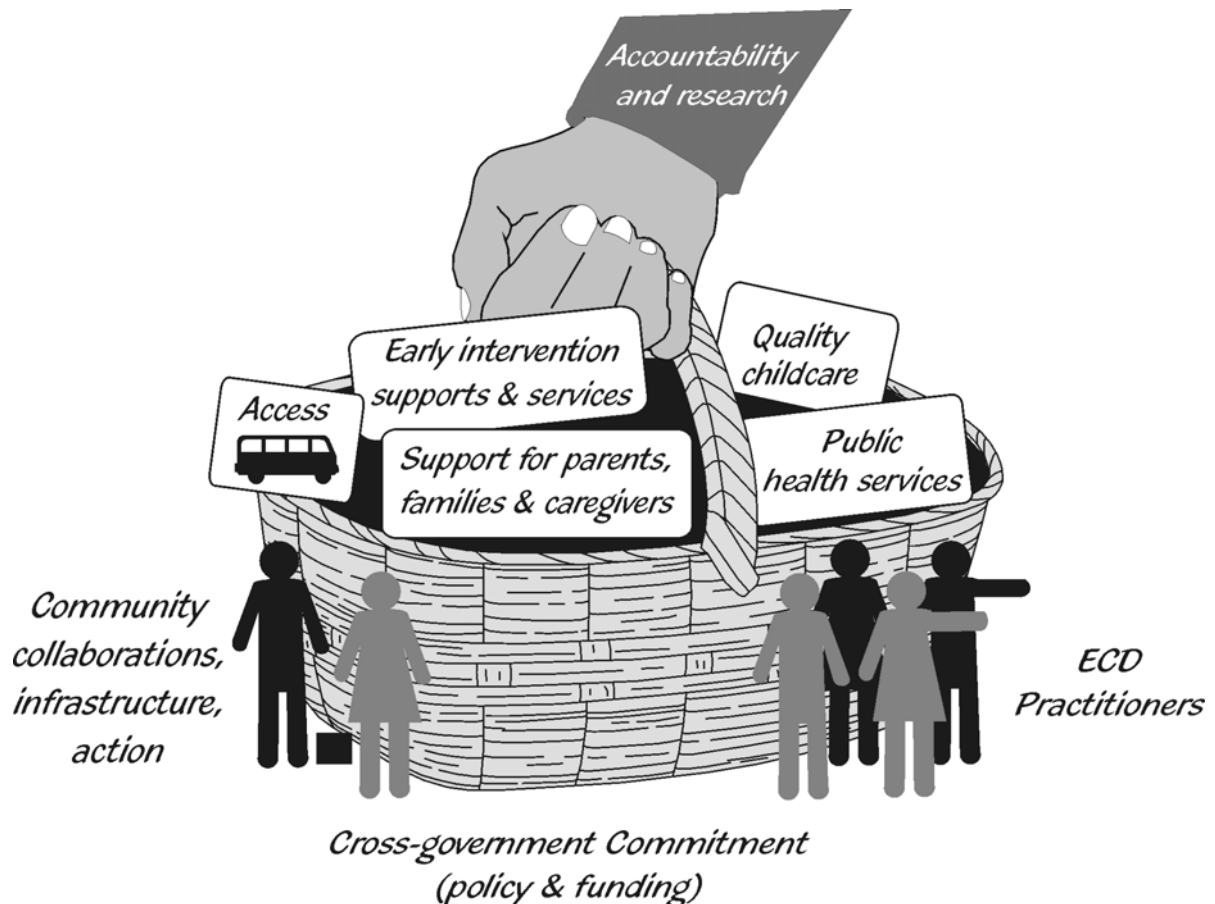
There must be *full inclusion* of young children at risk of developmental delay and children with disabilities. These children require specific strategies and supports to ensure that they can participate in their local ECD community programs alongside their peers.

- ECD services, strategies and supports must be:
 - a) designed to *actively* engage children and families and meet their immediate, longitudinal and transitional needs in a culturally appropriate way;
 - b) based on research, quality standards and community needs;
 - c) regularly evaluated to ensure progress towards improved ECD outcomes;
 - d) planned and delivered in a seamless way at the community level within a clearly articulated provincial ECD plan;
 - e) adequately resourced through an integrated funding mechanism;
 - f) publicly accountable at the community and government levels.

These goals and principles have been used as the basis of First Call’s ECD Action Framework.

Using a 'Basket of Supports' Approach

Drawing upon the latest research and using the 'basket of supports' analogy put forward by the National Children's Alliance, First Call is proposing a comprehensive basket of supports, services and strategies that together are known to facilitate healthy Early Childhood Development for children between 0 to 6 years of age. Using the 'basket' image, the supports and services needed by young children and their families are the packages *inside* the basket. The basket *itself* is the infrastructure required to create an effective ECD strategy and is woven from the collective experience, expertise, resources and involvement of individuals, communities and government. The flexibility of the basket approach is that within a common provincial framework, it allows each community to take the key components, then weave the basket and design and deliver the continuum of programs in a way that best meets local needs.

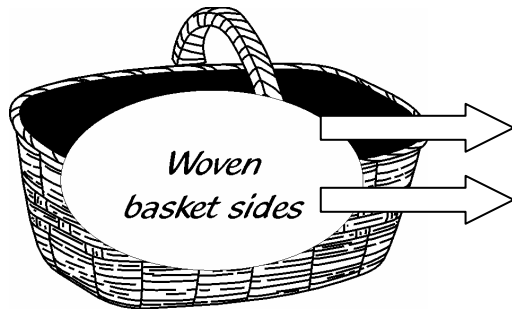


First Call has identified five key components that make up an ECD Basket:



1. A Continuum of ECD Supports and Services

- ECD public health initiatives
- Supports for parents, families and other caregivers
- Childcare and other early learning programs
- Targeted early intervention strategies and services
- Access strategies
 - community based information and referral service
 - designated resources for access and participation.

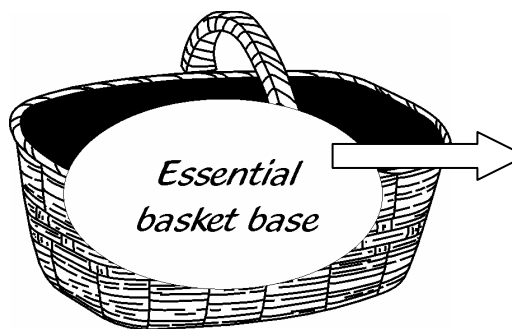


2. Practitioners involved directly in ECD

3. Community Collaboration, Infrastructure and Action



4. Research and Accountability Mechanisms



5. Government Commitment, Policy Support and Long-term Funding

See Section II of this paper (pp 10-16) for an in-depth discussion of these components.

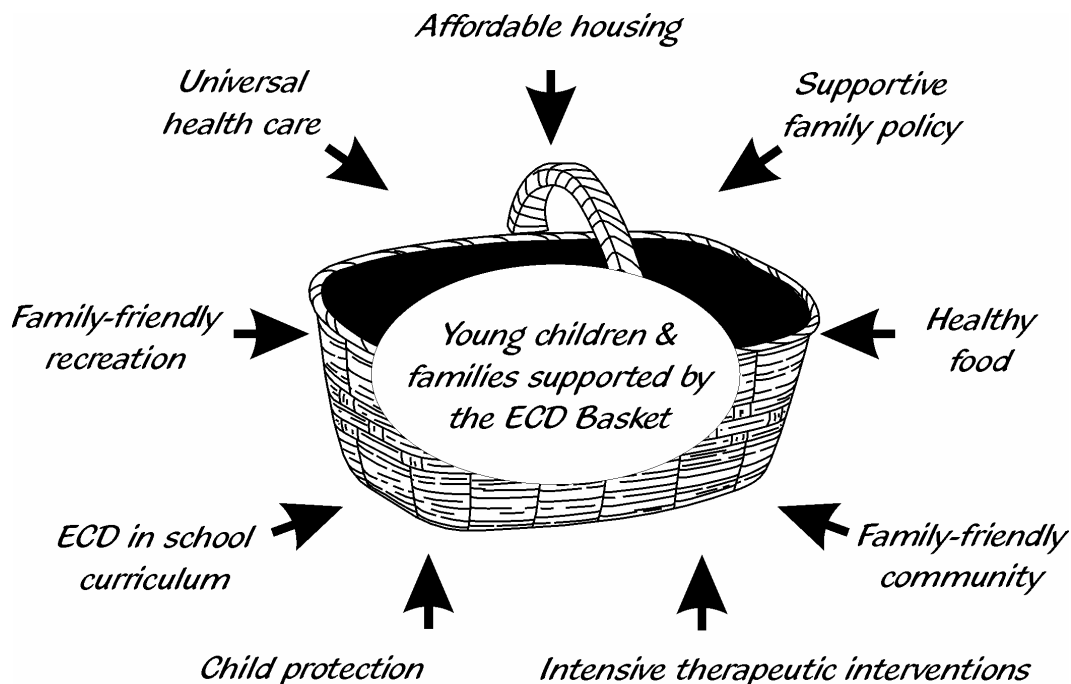
Enabling Factors that Support and Complement the ECD Basket

The ECD Basket is age specific so it must be seen as nestled within the broader context of other essential enabling factors that support all children, youth and families. First Call's ECD Basket approach assumes that:

- Children, youth and families require access to:
 - universal provincial healthcare including immunizations, mental health supports, speech, behavioural and rehabilitation therapies, and vision, hearing and dental coverage;
 - healthy, affordable food sources;
 - family-friendly, affordable housing options;
 - family-friendly, affordable community recreational opportunities.
- To prepare children and youth for parenting, a knowledge of healthy child development and an understanding of the responsibilities associated with becoming a parent, should be integrated into the regular school curriculum. Schools and ECD service providers should encourage and promote student volunteer placements in ECD services.
- Further work is needed on key policy areas having an impact on families such as measures to support adequate family income and employment, maternity/parental leave benefits and 'family-friendly' workplace initiatives.
- Local government community planning and policy initiatives must encourage, support and require the development of safe 'child, youth and family friendly' places and neighbourhoods.
- The ECD Basket is closely linked with but separate from both child protection services and the intensive therapies and interventions required by some children and youth.

First Call acknowledges that these enabling factors are integral to the lives of all children, youth and families, but reiterates that a specific and distinct focus on the needs of children 0 to 6 years and their families is required and appropriate.

An Enabling Services Framework



SECTION II

The Five Components of First Call's ECD Basket: An In-depth Look

The five components of the ECD Basket proposed by First Call are not new - indeed many of the supports and services described below currently exist in some form in communities across BC. What is innovative about First Call's ECD Basket, is that it identifies the components that collectively are essential for an effective ECD strategy and proposes that they be interwoven, strengthened, enhanced and transformed into an intentionally integrated, adequately resourced province-wide ECD approach.

1. A Continuum of ECD Supports and Services

The first component of First Call's ECD Basket relates to the *contents of the basket* i.e. the supports and services that directly encourage and promote the healthy development of young children and families from the point of considering pregnancy through to entry into full-time school. First Call has identified the key packages that need to be in the basket. For the purposes of this discussion paper, the packages are described separately and in point form to highlight the role that each plays and to provide examples of the types of initiatives and programs that have proven to be highly effective. The ultimate goal, however, is that children and families will experience these supports and services as a user-friendly, family-centred, seamless ECD continuum - one that children and families can access and move into, through and out of as their needs evolve and change.

a) ECD public health initiatives that:

- Provide parents with information and support, particularly during the pre- and post-natal period.
- Provide a systematic approach to developmental screening and early identification of vulnerability and risk.
- Include:
 - pre-natal classes and pre-natal outreach programs;
 - home visits of all newborns by community health nurses;
 - post-natal information, support and drop-in programs, including the new-born hotline and breast feeding clinics/supports;
 - baby/child health clinics;
 - vision, hearing, dental, and speech screening;
 - child/parent health fairs.

Public health nurses are most often the first community contact for parents and infants. They play a key role in helping families access and make effective use of available core and targeted ECD services.



b) Supports for parents, families and other caregivers that:

- Encourage parents to feel positive about parenting and respect parents as the primary partner.
- Enhance parents' and caregivers' abilities to effectively nurture and foster their children's optimal care, learning and development.
- Promote healthy child/parent relationships.
- Assist families with reconciling work and family responsibilities (note: many families are struggling with childcare and eldercare issues simultaneously).
- Build social networks and enhance the visibility of children
- Include:
 - child/parent play, activity and field trip opportunities;
 - information, resources and workshops about child development and parenting;
 - parent/family literacy and numeracy initiatives;
 - drop-in, emergency and respite childcare;
 - nutrition programs and cooperative cooking activities;
 - clothing exchanges and toy lending;
 - 'parents mentoring parents' opportunities;
 - lay counselling programs;
 - home visiting programs;
 - outreach through mobile drop-in programs and playground programs
 - family-oriented social events and intergenerational gatherings.

Many of these activities are currently offered by a diverse range of organizations including: family resource programs, neighbourhood houses, community schools, churches and childcare centres. However, in most communities the services are extremely fragmented and under-funded. This severely limits user access and causes confusing gaps and duplication in service.

c) High quality childcare and other early learning programs that:

- Provide children with caring, consistent, enriched, play-based settings where they can discover, explore, create, problem-solve and connect with other children and adults outside their family circle.
- Provide additional opportunities for the early identification of developmental delays, disabilities and/or other risk factors and appropriate referrals.
- Enhance parents' understanding of child development through information, support and role modelling.
- Build supportive social networks amongst children and families, including intergenerational and cross-cultural involvement to encourage a strong sense of community.
- Support and enhance the economic security of women and families.
- Include a comprehensive range of affordable full-time, part-time and/or 'flexible hours' programs that are:
 - intentionally planned to meet the longitudinal developmental needs of each child within a group setting and during key transitions such as school entry;
 - language/literacy enriched;
 - culturally sensitive;
 - inclusive.

The programs must:

- reflect the characteristics associated with high quality;
- encourage parent participation and strengthen the ‘shared caring’ partnership;
- meet the needs of all children regardless of whether their parents are working, studying, involved in the voluntary sector or at home.

Childcare programs (including group and family childcare centres, preschools and Aboriginal ‘headstart’ programs) and kindergartens are the cornerstone of an early learning and care approach. Access, affordability and funding issues must be addressed.

d) Targeted ECD early intervention supports and services that:

- Address the broad continuum of ‘risk issues’ and ‘special needs’, so that children at risk for developmental delay and children with disabilities can reach their full potential and utilize the full range of community resources.
- Are family-centred.
- Facilitate full inclusion in the ECD and broader community services.
- Heighten community awareness and a strong commitment to early detection and early support, so risk factors and disabling conditions can be identified, assessed and acted upon as early as possible.
- Include:
 - pre-pregnancy planning for populations at risk;
 - supports for high risk mothers during the pre and post-natal period;
 - post-natal follow-up of babies and toddlers with low birthweight and/or other risk factors;
 - young parent programs to support the return of teen mothers to school;
 - home visiting programs;
 - specific supports for children with developmental delays, disabilities, and behavioural issues and for children who have experienced trauma.

First Call regards initiatives such as Pregnancy Outreach Programs, Healthiest Babies Possible, Young Parent Support Programs, Building Blocks, the Infant Development Program, Early Intervention Programs and Supported Childcare as an essential part of the ECD Basket for BC.



e) Access Strategies

It is clear from the research data that the families who could benefit the most from participation in a comprehensive ECD approach are often the ones that do not have the knowledge, community contacts, financial resources, skills, confidence or basic awareness to get the support they need. One study identified over fifty barriers that impede families' access to services. However, simply focusing on removing specific barriers is insufficient. Improving access also requires that ECD supports and services be available, affordable and within close proximity to the children and families they are meant to serve. Recent research undertaken by the Human Early Learning Partnership in Vancouver suggests that only by addressing both family and systemic barriers to access, can we hope to improve ECD outcomes across the province.

i) Information and referral services for all families

For many families, it is challenging to find the supports and services they need in a timely manner. Each community requires an integrated, well-resourced information and referral service that:

- Is highly visible, highly interactive and child and family focused.
- Quickly and efficiently connects children, families and early childhood practitioners to specific ECD supports and services and to broader community resources.
- Provides personalized neighbourhood-based contact and assistance to help families make the link with a particular support or service.

ii) Designated resources for access and participation

For families who are struggling with limited family income, literacy issues, language and culture, geographic isolation or work/life conflicts, more pro-active outreach strategies are required. These may include specific resources for transportation, translation, interpretation, literacy assistance, provision of food and childminding as part of a program or outreach home visits/programs.

First Call sees an ECD information and referral service and the coordination of access strategies for each community as an integral part of a centralized 'hub' (*see Appendix 1*), connected closely to other supports and services for parents, families and ECD practitioners. In turn, this neighbourhood 'hub' or area network, must have formal connections with the ECD public health initiatives, childcare programs, the specialized supports and services, and the local schools in a community.

The existing Child Care Resource and Referral programs, family resource centres, neighbourhood houses, and schools are key to developing and expanding centralized hubs over the next few years. In time, these hubs might also house the community infrastructure required for community capacity building, community mobilization and ECD service delivery planning.



2. Practitioners involved directly in ECD

The second component of First Call's ECD Basket approach recognizes the people who work with young children and families as a key community asset and essential to the shaping of the basket itself. ECD draws upon the expertise and experience of practitioners from a wide range of fields including public health, family support, literacy, early childhood education, special education, speech and language, mental health, social work, community development, immigrant settlement and women's and aboriginal issues. Investing in practitioners builds community capacity, facilitates community planning and encourages an integrated family-centred ECD service delivery approach. Creating a sense of shared vision and synergy amongst these practitioners can be achieved through:

- specific and multi-disciplinary training, mentoring opportunities and ongoing access to up-to-date ECD resource materials and research, practitioners can learn about and share innovative practice.
- ensuring that expertise and funds are available for program evaluation, program improvement and province-wide sharing of lessons learned.
- provision of remuneration and respect that reflect the value of the work and the importance of continuity and expertise.

3. Community-based Collaboration, Infrastructure and Action

The third component of First Call's ECD Basket is the development of community-based ECD collaboration, infrastructure and action. Research tells us that young children and families are healthiest and most resilient when they are actively connected to and positively engaged in their local community and, in turn, communities which mobilize around the needs of young children and families, see an improved quality of life for all citizens. It is this symbiotic relationship which First Call seeks to weave through the ECD Basket approach.

A community approach to ECD:

- Allows families, ECD practitioners and community leaders to weave the ECD Basket that best fits the needs of their children and families.
- Ensures First Nations and Aboriginal groups have the right to develop their own ECD hub approaches.
- Starts with the strength of existing programs (family resource centres, childcare centres, childcare resource and referral programs, neighbourhood houses, community schools, ECD public health initiatives, Aboriginal headstart programs, etc.).
- Requires inter-sectoral collaboration at a community level, so that ECD components can be planned, operated and evaluated *as integrated neighbourhood hubs and/or area networks*.
- Facilitates efficient and creative use of resources, seamless delivery, high public visibility of young children and early detection of vulnerability factors requiring early intervention.
- Raises the profile of Early Childhood Development at a local level, providing opportunities for developing new relationships with schools, local service clubs, neighbourhood businesses and local public bodies.
- Requires sustained adequate funding for start-up, operation and innovation.

The size, complexity and funding needs of each neighbourhood hub and/or area network will vary according to factors such as:

- number of children and families;
- proportion of time that children are spending in different environments
- socio-economic profile of the community, including labour-force participation rates and work/study patterns;
- clustering and degree of vulnerability of children and families;
- requirement for additional access, outreach and targeted strategies;
- existing mix of services, supports and resources and links with local schools;
- readiness of the community and ECD practitioners for inter-sectoral collaboration and service integration;
- active support of the provincial, regional, municipal, corporate and philanthropic sectors.

Over time and with the formalization of the neighbourhood hubs/area networks, opportunities for innovative partnerships, service co-locations, shared administration and new and transformed programming can be realized at the community level.

4. Research and Mechanisms for Accountability

The fourth component of the ECD Basket approach recognizes the importance of province-wide research and public accountability mechanisms for monitoring whether the Early Childhood Development outcomes for young children and families improve as ECD spending increases. The challenge is to find the right balance so that research and accountability mechanisms provide information for the development and implementation of an ECD strategy, but do not overload the day-to-day workings, such that other components of the ECD Basket are not realized.

The following suggestions are seen as initial steps:

- Consistently collect and use baseline data such as the Early Development Instrument to monitor BC's ECD progress.
- Develop province-wide consensus pertaining to indicators that can measure improved ECD outcomes for children and families, including the timeliness of access to ECD supports and services.
- Develop mechanisms for program evaluation that facilitate improvements in program quality and improved ECD outcomes for children and families.
- Require provincial ECD priorities and expenditures to be linked to improved ECD outcomes.
- Require that provincial and regional ECD budget estimates and priorities be released to the public at the beginning of each fiscal year, and within six months of the year end, report publicly on actual expenditures and progress made on improved ECD outcomes.

Require all submissions to Cabinet to report their impact on the government's ECD plan for children and families, to ensure that any policy shifts or funding changes support rather than undermine the healthy development of young children and families.



5. Cross Government Commitment, Supportive Provincial Policies and Long-term Integrated Funding

The final component of the ECD Basket approach focuses on the fundamental role played by the provincial government in regard to Early Childhood Development. Cross government commitment, supportive provincial policies and sustained integrated funding provide the essential base for the ECD basket, without which practitioners and communities cannot effectively deliver the supports and services that young children and families need. Immediate action is required in the following areas:

- BC's Premier and Cabinet must designate ECD a top cross-government priority, equal in importance to other strategies currently being pursued to increase economic prosperity.
- A mechanism for well-informed and focused inter-ministerial and inter-governmental collaboration must be developed so that all policy and funding decisions made at the federal, provincial and regional levels advance, not undermine, positive ECD outcomes for children and families.
- First Call strongly recommends that all the ECD programs that serve children and families directly, be clustered within the policy and funding mandate of one ministry to encourage and facilitate service integration at the community level.
- Provincial policies, which support the facility, program and staff training standards that research has identified are necessary for high quality ECD programs, must be put in place.
- The provincial government must recognize that significant provincial funding, comparable to that available on a per child basis for education, is required to develop an accessible, affordable, integrated system of ECD services for all children and families across BC.
- Over the next five years, First Call proposes that the funding for ECD be steadily increased until it matches educational funding levels and that capital and operating funds be provided to communities for the development, integration, transformation, expansion and evaluation of their ECD Basket of supports and services.

Provincial funding must be delivered to communities as an integrated ECD funding stream to avoid the huge inefficiencies and waste of resources that occur when communities are forced to seek and manage multiple funding sources.



‘Build it and Change Will Come’

Investing in the healthy growth and development of young children and families is an investment in the social and economic health of our communities, our province and Canada. Research clearly demonstrates that the experiences of the early years of life directly affect long-term health, behaviour and learning outcomes.

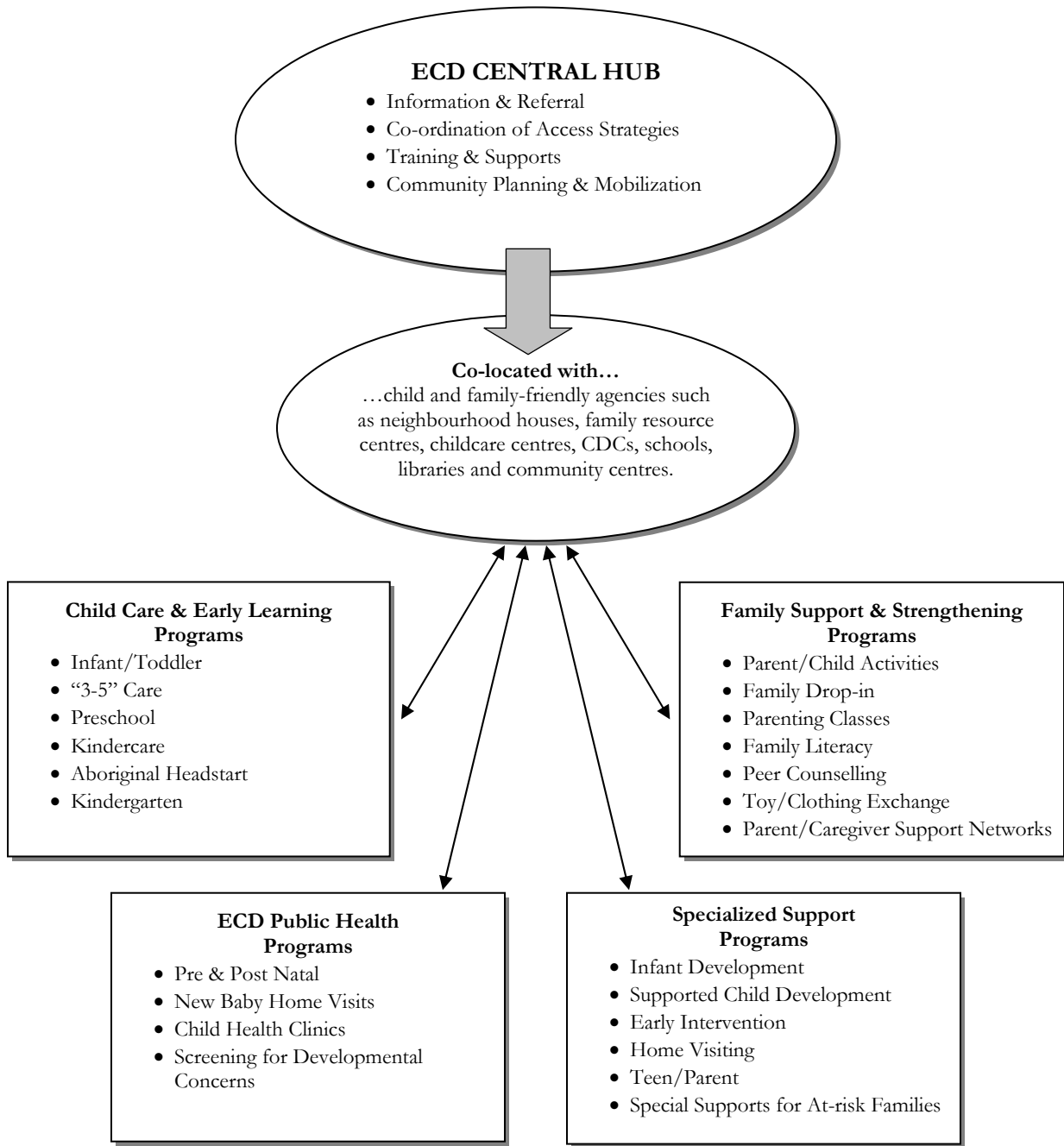
For years we have spent significant amounts of time and money trying to fix problems after they materialize, instead of pro-actively focusing our efforts on Early Childhood Development and strengthening families and supporting young children from the outset. The time for a shift in priorities has come. Prevention and early intervention programs for children from conception to six years are known to be cost effective. A recent cost-benefit analysis undertaken in Canada showed that for every \$1 invested in licensed high quality childcare for children and their families, at least \$2 of taxpayer’s money is saved in the long term. International research indicates that the savings can be as high as \$7, when children living in high risk situations are provided appropriate early support.

First Call’s ECD Basket approach with its five key components, provides an action framework for building a comprehensive ECD system for BC. As was said at an international conference on Early Childhood Development sponsored by the World Bank in April 2000, “Build It and *Change* Will Come”

Appendix 1: Central Hub

Linked to a Seamless Web of On & Off Site ECD Services

Families and young children access ECD services as needed, directly or through referral from the Central Hub and are involved in community-wide planning for ECD services.



Annotated Resource List

Campaign 2000. Diversity or disparity.

http://www.campaign2000.ca/ci/rep10_02/ECECreport10_02.pdf

This paper explores the level of availability, affordability and quality of early childhood education and care (ECEC) in Canada.

Canadian Pediatric Society, Dietitians of Canada, Health Canada. Nutrition for healthy term infants.

http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/dca-dea/publications/pdf/infant_e.pdf

This is a national statement on nutrition for infants from birth to 24 months. The document summarizes the existing scientific literature on infant nutrition and presents principles and recommendations to promote optimal, evidence-based, nutritional care for infants in Canada.

Cleveland, G. & Krashinsky, M.(Eds.). (2001). Our children's future: Child care policy in Canada.

University of Toronto Press.

This book makes a significant contribution to understanding how Canada should design and advance a national child care strategy. It includes chapters by many of Canada's leading researchers from different fields and disciplines.

Cleveland, G. & Krashinsky, M. (1998). The benefits and costs of good child care. Childcare Resource and Research Unit, Centre for Urban and Community Studies, University of Toronto.

<http://www.childcarecanada.org>

This cost-benefit analysis of child care in Canada provides an economic rationale for the public investment in young children. The paper concludes that for every \$1 invested in high quality child care for all children, there is a \$2 benefit to children, parents and society.

Dietitians of Canada BC Region. The challenge of feeding a family on a low income.

http://www.dietitians.ca/news/downloads/cost_of_eating_in_BC_final_2002.pdf

This paper addresses the ability of those on low incomes to feed their families a healthy diet and makes recommendations to the government of B.C.

Doherty, G. What does research tell us about quality in child care?.

www.childcarecanada.org/resources/CRRUpubs?factsheets/sheet4.html

This fact sheet summarizes the elements of high quality childcare.

Early Childhood Development Funders' Network. (2002). A policy framework for early childhood development in British Columbia.

www.vancouverfoundation.bc.ca

This paper outlines a framework to develop capacity in B.C. to reduce vulnerability and inequality and increase resilience of young children.

First Call: BC Child and Youth Advocacy Coalition. Early Childhood Development Presentation Tool Kit.

www.firstcallbc.org

This presentation kit has been developed to assist individuals when speaking to decision-makers and other groups about the importance of the early years. Includes CD with video and PowerPoint.

First Call: BC Child and Youth Advocacy Coalition. The Well-Being of British Columbia's Children and Youth. A Framework for Understanding and Action. Hay, D.I., Wachtel, A. 1998

This document surveys and analyzes key research on the well-being of children and youth, and then identifies policies and actions based on that research.

FRP Canada, 2002. Status report on Canadian family resource programs.

www.frp.ca

This report describes the state of family support programs in Canada including a national overview, provincial and territorial profiles and emerging trends.

Goelman, H., Doherty, G., Lero, D.S. & LaGrange, A. (2000). You bet I care: Quality in child care centers across Canada. University of Guelph, Ontario: Center for Families, Work and Well-Being. <http://uoguelph.ca/cfww>

This report describes the findings of a large, multi-jurisdictional study conducted in Canada exploring relationships between center quality and center characteristics such as staff wages and working conditions and teaching staff characteristics and attitudes.

Guralnick, M.(2000). Contemporary issues in early intervention. Community Living Services, Community Services and Program Support Division, Ministry for Children and Families, B.C. <http://www.communitylivingcoalition.bc.ca/>

This paper highlights recent advances in early intervention and applies this information to a "best practices" approach. The paper presents outcomes supporting the importance of comprehensive and systematic early intervention programs.

Guy, K.A. (ed.). (1997). Our promise to children. Canadian Institute of Child Health. www.cich.ca

This book presents compelling evidence that the economy and labour market, communities, parenting and social environments interact to affect the growth and well-being of children.

Health Canada, Nutrition for a healthy pregnancy - national guidelines for the childbearing years. http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/hpfb-dgpsa/onpp-bppn/national_guidelines_entire_e.html

These prenatal nutrition guidelines discuss nutrition and healthy eating during pregnancy and throughout the childbearing years.

Hertzman, C. (2000). The case for an early childhood development strategy. ISUMA Volume 1, No 2. Autumn 2000.

This article argues that prenatal and early childhood experiences have a long lasting effect on health and well-being. It proposes policy strategies that reflect recent evidence of the determinants of healthy child development.

Hertzman, C. (2002). Leave no child behind. The Laidlaw Foundation Working Paper Series, Perspectives on Social Inclusion. www.laidlawfdn.org (under Children's Agenda program.)

This paper presents evidence that social exclusion affects Canadian children by the time they reach kindergarten. It argues that differences amongst children in society follow a predictable, systematic pattern, but gradients in the individual can be altered through social change.

Hertzman, C., McLean, S.A., Kohen, D.E., Dunn, J., & Evans, T. (2002). Early development in Vancouver: Report of the community asset mapping project. <http://www.earlylearning.ubc.ca>

This paper presents a population-wide assessment of kindergarten children in the City of Vancouver using the "Early Development Instrument" (EDI).

Koren, D.E., Hertzman, C., & Brookes-Gunn, J. (1998). Neighborhood influences on children's school readiness. Applied Research Branch, Strategic Policy, Human Resources Development Canada. <http://www.hrhc-drhc.gc.ca/arb/>

The study examines the influences of neighborhood and family characteristics on children's competencies associated with school readiness. Results indicate that neighborhood characteristics, particularly neighborhood affluence, cohesion and family characteristics are associated with competencies for children.

McCain, M.N., & Mustard, F.J. (2007). Early years study: 2 Putting Science into Action. The Canadian Institute for Advanced Research, Toronto, Ontario, Canada.

This study argues that the period of early childhood development is equal to or, in some cases greater in importance than the periods youth spend in education or in post secondary education.

Michigan Association for Infant Mental Health. The infant monthly health journal.
<http://www.wiley.com/cda/product/0,IMHJ,00.html>

This monthly journal includes international research related to infant socio-emotional development.

Schweinhart, L. J., Barnes, H. V., & Weikart, D. P. (1993). Significant benefits: The High/Scope Perry Preschool study through age 27. Ypsilanti, High/Scope Educational Research Foundation.
<http://www.highscope.org/Research/PerryProject/perrymain.htm>.

This study focuses on the long-term effects of a high-quality preschool program for children born in poverty. It found evidence of the effects of children's readiness for school and their subsequent educational success and economic success in early adulthood, and reduced number of criminal arrests. These benefits add up to a large return on public investment.

Shonkoff, J.P., & Phillips, D.A. (Eds.). (2000). From neurons to neighborhoods. Washington, D.C. National Academy Press.

This book integrates the current science of early childhood development and presents conclusions and recommendations with the goal of using this knowledge to ensure the well being of all young children for the sake of the individual and society.

Shore, R. (1997). Rethinking the brain. Families and Work Institute New York, New York.
<http://www.familiesandwork.org>

This report presents an overview of the recent findings by neuroscientists about the brain and shows how these insights can guide and support efforts to promote the healthy development of young children.

Stroick, S.M., & Jenson, J., (1999). What is the best policy mix for Canada's young children. Canadian Policy Research Network Study no. F109

<http://www.childcarecanada.org/policy/polstudies/can/bestmix.html>

This paper provides the results of a three-year study on public policy and public values, and the outcomes achieved by children in Canada and a number of comparable countries. It knits together the key findings from several strands of research and demonstrates how policy instruments can be combined across sectors to achieve policy goals that lead to improved child outcomes.

The National Center for Infants, Toddlers, and Families. Zero to three. Washington D.C.
<http://www.zerotothree.org/>

This bi-monthly publication contains practice based current thinking and information on issues impacting young children.

Young, M. E. From early child development to human development. Investing in our children's future. The World Bank. Washington, D.C.

www.worldbank.org/children (under from ECD to Human Development)

This paper, from the proceedings of a global conference hosted by the World Bank in April 2000, argues that the early years are critically important and that by investing in the early years we invest in human and economic development.

Willms, D. J.(Ed.). (2002). Vulnerable children: Findings from Canada's national longitudinal survey of children and youth. University of Alberta Press.

This book is a comprehensive discussion of the results of the national longitudinal survey of children and youth. It identifies central issues to guide policy development and interventions to improve the health and well being of Canadian children. This book includes chapters by many of Canada's leading researchers from different fields and discipline.

