



# Policy Issues Related to Early Prevention of Violence of Children (in Canada)

- Initiatives

  - Community Action Programs for Children (CAPC)

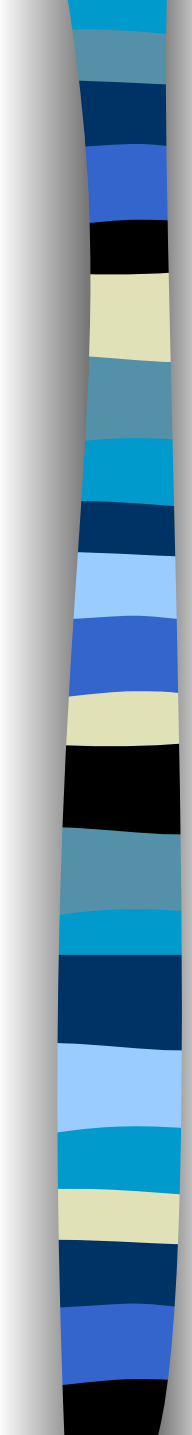
  - Early Childhood Development Agreement

  - Early Development Instrument (EDI)

- Issues

- Suggestions

- Danger



# Community Action Program for Children (CAPC) - I General Description (a)

- the major part of the child development initiative announced by the Government of Canada in 1992
- continues today with annual funding of about 50 million dollars
- allocations are based on the number of children 0 to 6 in each province/territory



# General Description (b)

- support a wide variety of community-based services such as:  
parent training, home visiting, one-to-one child development interventions, mobile units to isolated areas, “moms and tots”, “collective kitchens”, and traditional aboriginal healing programs



# Application procedures

- coalition of agencies and parents in a community identifies gaps in services to young children living in conditions of risk
- coalition members develop a funding proposal with one member assuming legal and financial responsibility
- relevant JMC reviews the proposal, and if approved, the coalition receives funding for a CAPC project



# Management

- responsibility of Joint Management Committees (JMCs)
- include representatives from Health Canada's regional offices, provincial and territorial governments, and community organizations
- JMCs determine the priorities in each region, including the number of projects to be funded and maximum funding levels



## National Evaluation (Boyle and Willms) (a)

- collected assessments over a two-year period on family risk and child functioning covering a sample of CAPC program participants
- comparison from a matched sample of families selected from the NLSCY
- 141 CAPC projects were included in the evaluation resulting in 1,407 participants



# National Evaluation (b)

- probability sample of families interviewed at program entry during 1995 and 1996, and reinterviewed at 9 and 24 months after program entry
- control sample of families participating in the first wave (1994) and two-year follow-up (1996) of the NLSCY



# National Evaluation (c)

- selective improvements in the health and functioning of families participating in CAPC
- significant variation between CAPC programs in the achievement of some beneficial effects, specifically maternal mood and family functioning
- no statistically significant incremental improvements in the health and functioning of CAPC participants above those found in the control groups selected from NLSCY





# Important Aspects of CAPC - I

- “bottom up” approach to programming
- community organizations could develop programs to meet local needs
- general objectives only: focus on young children at risk
- not prescriptive in elements of programs



# Important Aspects of CAPC - 2

Seven categories of programs designed for Ontario initiatives:

- (i) family support program**
- (ii) family/community education and resources**
- (iii) support for women who are having babies**
- (iv) children's healthy development**
- (v) nutrition**
- (vi) community development**
- (vii) service system changes**



# Six Principles of Early Intervention Initiatives

(Ramey and Ramey, 1998)

- (i) timing
- (ii) intensity
- (iii) directness
- (iv) comprehensiveness
- (v) matching
- (vi) maintenance



# Qualitative Evaluation

(O'Hanlan and VanderPlaat, 1997)

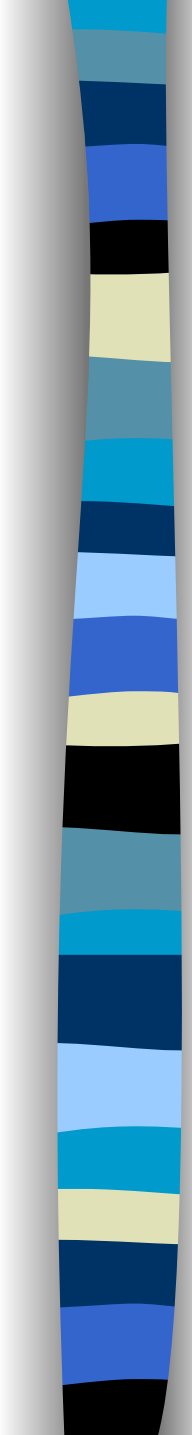
- Focuses on 40 CAPC projects in Atlantic Canada
- participatory action research model
- major conclusions: CAPC works!



# The Early Childhood Development Agreement: 2001-2002

## Two Objectives

- To promote early childhood development so that, to their fullest potential, children will be physically and emotionally healthy, safe and secure, ready to learn, and socially engaged and responsible.
- To help children reach their potential and to help families support their children within strong communities.



# Four Areas to be Developed to Reach these Objectives

1. Healthy pregnancy, birth and infancy
2. Parenting and family supports
3. Early childhood development, learning and care
4. Community Supports

NB: The Government of Canada will transfer 2.2 billion dollars over five years to the provinces.



# The Ontario Initiative

- By April 2003, there will be 103 Early Years Centres established across the Province
  - 42 in 17 communities by Summer of 2002
  - additional 61 in 24 communities by Spring of 2003
- 114 million dollars for Early Years Centres for 2001 - 2002
- Program Effectiveness Measurement: 2 million dollars
- Child Outcome Measurement: 500,000 dollars



# The Early Development Instrument (EDI)





# NAMING THE INSTRUMENT

- Looking Forward:

Readiness to Learn Instrument

- Looking Backward:

Early Development Instrument



# PURPOSES OF INSTRUMENT

- REPORT ON POPULATIONS OF CHILDREN IN DIFFERENT COMMUNITIES
- MONITOR POPULATIONS OF CHILDREN OVER TIME
- ASSESS THE EFFECTIVENESS OF EARLY CHILDHOOD INTERVENTIONS
- PREDICT HOW CHILDREN WILL DO IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
- IDENTIFY STUDENTS WHO MAY NEED FURTHER WORK-UPS



# CHARACTERISTICS OF THE INSTRUMENT

POPULATION LEVEL

FEASIBLE, ACCEPTABLE,  
REASONABLY PRICED

INFORMANT IS THE TEACHER

PSYCHOMETRICALLY SOUND



# SCALE NAMES

Physical Health and Well-Being

Social Competence

Emotional Maturity

Language and Cognitive Development

Communication Skills and General Knowledge

# Steps in Community Mobilization

**1**

Extent of  
Community  
Mobilization

**2**

Provision  
of Initial  
EDI Results

**3**

Dissemination  
of Results to  
Community

**4**

Integration of  
EDI  
Data with Other  
Community Data

**5**

Evidence of  
Community  
Actions

**6**

Effects on  
Proximal  
Outcome  
Variables

**7**

Effects on  
Subsequent  
EDI Results



# Issues

1. Prescribed vs community-specific programs

(Preventive Science (PS) Model vs Collaborative Community Action Research (CCAR) Model)

2. Quantitative vs qualitative evaluation



# Suggestions

1. Clear Objectives
2. Menu of effective elements
3. Beware of watered-down versions
4. Detailed participation records
5. Proximal and distal outcomes
6. RCTs or two-community comparisons
7. First-rate qualitative studies
8. Collaboration between academic centres and community organizations



# Danger

- sincere commitment by Federal Government to the Early Years
- considerable funds allotted
- will not know what is effective
- priorities will shift
- this opportunity will be lost for many years