

2017 EDI PARENT NEWSLETTER

THE EDI...

- is a Canadian-made research tool developed at Offord Centre for Child Studies at McMaster University;
- has been used in BC since 1999;
- is used to measure developmental trends and change in populations of children;
- is NOT used to diagnose individual children.

It is important to note that individual, identifiable data are not released.

THE EDI IS VOLUNTARY...

Once a school district agrees to participate, schools, teachers and parents and/or guardians are able to choose whether or not to participate. If a parent or guardian does not wish his or her child to participate in the study, they simply need to inform the teacher.

WHY DO THE EARLY YEARS MATTER?

The early years are a critical developmental period in determining life-long health and well-being. Children's development is impacted by many interactive influences including government policy, environment, socioeconomic conditions, family and neighbourhood characteristics, play and peers, language and literacy, early learning and care, and their overall health. The Early Development Instrument (EDI) allows us to explore how different early environments and experiences contribute to social inequalities in children's development by school age and to their life chances later on. Knowing how children are actually faring in the province means that communities and governments are able to provide better supports and services for families and young children.

WHAT IS THE EARLY DEVELOPMENT INSTRUMENT (EDI)?

The EDI is a questionnaire that measures five important areas of early child development: Physical Health & Well-Being; Social Competence; Emotional Maturity; Language & Cognitive Skills; and Communication Skills & General Knowledge. Research has shown that these areas are good predictors of adult health, education and social outcomes. The questions on the EDI ask about the developmental stages that we would expect children to be at as they start school. You can find a sample copy of the EDI questionnaire here: www.earlylearning.ubc.ca/edi.

EDI SCALES OF CHILD DEVELOPMENT



PHYSICAL HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

Can the child hold a pencil? Is the child able to manipulate objects?



SOCIAL COMPETENCE

Is the child able to follow class routines? Is the child self-confident?



EMOTIONAL MATURITY

Does the child comfort a child who is crying or upset?



LANGUAGE AND COGNITIVE

Is the child interested in reading and writing? Can the child count and recognize numbers?



COMMUNICATION SKILLS

Can the child tell a story? Can the child communicate with adults and children?

"Every child requires someone in his or her life who is absolutely crazy about them."

- Urie Bronfenbrenner

The EDI is a population-level research tool. The information collected provides important data related to how young children are developing as a population. HELP researchers and staff share non-identifiable, group level information with your child's school, school district and community organizations so that policies and practices that enhance strong early childhood development are supported. The EDI is never used to report on the development of individual children or to compare schools.

The EDI is used province-wide. The questionnaire is completed by kindergarten teachers for children in their classes. It is filled out in February, after teachers have had the chance to get to know their students. This ensures that teachers are able to answer the questions for each student knowledgeably.

WHAT ARE WE LEARNING FROM THE EDI?

With 10 years of population-level data on BC's children, clear trends and patterns are emerging – 32.2% of BC Kindergarten children are vulnerable in one or more aspects of their development. These children live in every neighbourhood in BC.

Supporting children is everyone's responsibility. By evaluating data gathered from the EDI questionnaire, researchers are able to measure population-based vulnerability rates by geographical area, allowing us to understand child vulnerability across the province. Vulnerable children are children who, without additional support and care, may experience future challenges in school and society.

For more information about how HELP determines the vulnerability rate, see the Vulnerability Factsheet: www.earlylearning.ubc.ca/documents/68.

DO YOU NEED MORE INFORMATION?

Please see your EDI PARENT INFORMATION LETTER, distributed by your child's school, for more detailed information about the EDI research project. The letter can also be found at www.earlylearning.ubc.ca/edi/community-resources.

Please visit www.earlylearning.ubc.ca to learn more about HELP and our program of research including the EDI, Middle Years Development Instrument (MDI) and Childhood Experiences Questionnaire (CHEQ).

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EDI BC: 2016 PROVINCIAL REPORT

HELP's EDI BC: 2016 Provincial Report provides a comprehensive overview of the provincial trends that are emerging from over 10 years of EDI data collection and analysis. The information shared in the report offers a common place to start as we work together to improve child outcomes across the province. You can find the Provincial Report here: www.edibc2016.ca.

EDI SUBSCALE DATA

In 2017 HELP released EDI Subscales Community Profiles. Subscale data provide a deeper insight into EDI scale level information. While EDI scales allow us to assess trends and patterns in children's vulnerability rates in each developmental domain, subscale data allow us to refine our understanding of these outcomes by providing information on more specific areas of development and how these are contributing to vulnerability on each of the EDI scales – district by district and neighbourhood by neighbourhood, and over time.

WHAT IS HELP?

The Human Early Learning Partnership (HELP) is a research institute, based at the School of Population and Public Health, Faculty of Medicine, at the University of British Columbia. We represent a unique partnership that connects researchers and practitioners from communities and institutions across BC, Canada and internationally.

We are recognized as a leading research institute in Canada in child development. Our early child development research explores how different early environments and experiences contribute to social inequalities in children's development by school age and to their life chances later on. It is our mission to improve the health and well-being of children by creating, promoting and mobilizing new knowledge. We envision all children thriving in healthy societies.

Community Early Years Round Tables throughout BC extensively use HELP data to plan and implement programs. In addition, HELP data are included in BC government strategic planning and performance measurement documents. As a result, well over 800 community initiatives have been implemented in part because of EDI data.