



YEAR TWO RESEARCH REPORT NEW BRUNSWICK EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTRES

JANUARY 2012

1.0 Introduction

This report describes the ongoing evaluation of the integrated platform of services being demonstrated at the New Brunswick Early Childhood Development Centres, and presents selected outcomes from the first two years of implementation. Research outcomes are expressed in terms of benefits of an integrated model of services; impacts on children, families, staff and service providers; as well as some of the challenges encountered at the community and provincial levels. Findings from the four provincially-funded demonstration sites have served to inform services and the development of policies and procedures at other sites (Carleton-York-Victoria (CYV) sites and La Boussole in Kent/Richibucto) that are at earlier stages of program implementation. The concluding section of this report provides recommendations with respect to policy and promising practices at the community and provincial levels. While these practices represents a predominately educational perspective, plans for year three data collection include the administration of key informant interviews with partners from Family Resource, Early Intervention, VON, Talk with Me, and Public Health, among others, to highlight promising practices that are emerging within these partnerships.

1.1 Early Childhood Context

Internationally, many jurisdictions have moved toward consolidated childcare and education services and supports, combining their multiple structures for legislation, funding, and service delivery. In New Brunswick, Northwest Territories, Nunavut, Ontario, Prince Edward Island, and Saskatchewan, Ministries or Departments of Education and Early Childhood are now responsible for childcare and preschool programs.

Many Canadian jurisdictions have taken steps to enhance access to early education often through the school system. Full-day kindergarten programs now exist in British Columbia, Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Quebec and Northwest Territories. Ontario is currently implementing full-day kindergarten programs for all four- and five-year-olds.. Junior and prekindergarten programs exist in Nova Scotia, Quebec, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta and the Yukon in selected communities and school districts. The Ministries of Education in Ontario and British Columbia currently fund school-based early childhood education programs for children younger than school age and their parents/caregivers.

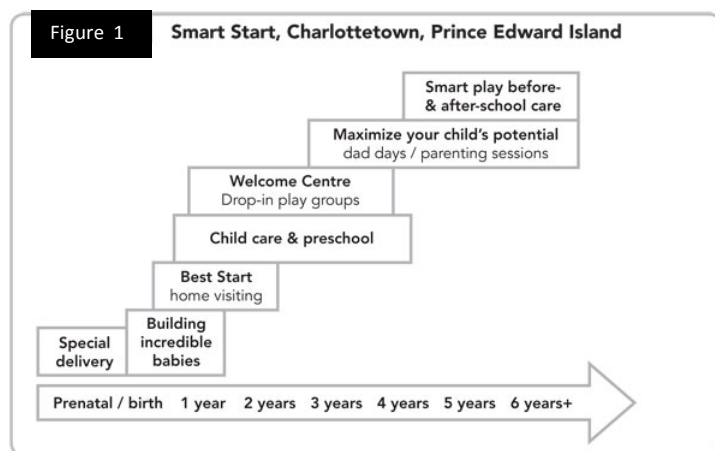
1.2 Promising Practices

The Early Years Study 3 (2011) provides an overview of a variety of initiatives and research findings that can inform practice across the Canadian context. In Quebec, Camil Bouchard's report, *Un Quebec fou de ces enfants* (1992) "became the blueprint for policy makers that ultimately changed the lives of Quebecers" (EYS 3, p.1). More than a decade later, outcomes related to the Quebec government's response to the blueprint include:

- Childcare costs have been capped at \$7.00 per day.
- The number of Quebec women in the workforce has gone from being the lowest in Canada to the highest.
- Eighty-eight percent of Quebec fathers take parental leave as compared to the national average of 12%.
- Quebec students' outcomes on standardized tests have soared from below to above the national average.
- Quebec child poverty rates have decreased by 50%.

- The income tax returned to the province from Quebec mothers who would not be able to work without low-cost childcare, covers the entire cost of provincial childcare services.

From a decade of research at Toronto First Duty, a vision of early childhood centres located in family-friendly schools has emerged. By embedding the education and care of preschool-aged children within the education system, the mandate of public education has been expanded to include children from the prenatal period-18 years, expectant mothers, newcomers and their families, stay-at home mothers or fathers, single parents, and dual income parents and their children. The educational infrastructure (training, financing and curriculum) implies high quality universal services, access and affordability. The vision includes early childhood centres, rooted in the community, that foster social cohesion, nurture social networks, and provide rich learning environments that extend out into the community. These centers are open to all and, as such, celebrate the rich diversity that exists within the community. A holistic and democratic approach to learning characterizes these early childhood centres. Families are recognized as key partners in their children's development and are invited to become partners with the teaching teams. When parents are engaged in early education and care, they are more likely to feel connected to and active in their children's future public school education. From Toronto First Duty, the challenge is issued to "transform schools into vibrant family centres that welcome families before, during, and after the bell rings."¹



Prince Edward Island demonstrates what is possible when government assumes responsibility for providing for all children. In 2008, PEI Premier Ghiz recognized the role of quality early childhood education, as part of a strategic plan for PEI created to embrace new social and economic realities. Actions emanating from the strategic plan included publicly-funded full-day kindergarten in elementary schools across the island, the movement of responsibility for early years programming to the newly-formed Department of Education and Early Childhood and the development of a network of publicly managed Early Years Centres providing quality early learning and care for children under 4-years-old.

¹ McCain, M.N., Mustard, J.F., & McCuaig, K. (2011). *Early Years Study 3: Making Decisions, Taking Action*. Toronto: Margaret & Wallace McCain Family Foundation, p. 21.

1.3 Economic Context

Traditionally, Canadian economists, policymakers and researchers have relied on large-scale, American longitudinal studies to determine the impact of early childhood services on economic development. The Early Years Study 3 (2011) highlights cost benefit analysis of early childhood programming based upon five Canadian research studies. They identify the benefits derived from public investments in integrated early childhood services, including:

- Increased tax revenues from parents who are able to take part in the workforce or upgrade their skills
- Reduction in the use of health, social benefits, child welfare, criminal justice and special education services
- Improved outcomes for children in terms of school readiness, enhanced high school graduation and post secondary achievement and greater workforce productivity.

Researchers have identified early childhood education and care programs as having other economic impacts. Susan Prentice (2004) suggests that childcare be viewed as significant for regional economic development. She discovered that for every childcare position created in one of Winnipeg's 620 childcare facilities, 2.15 other jobs were created or sustained. An analysis by researcher Robert Fairholm² encourages us to consider preschool as an economic stimulus. An investment of one million dollars in childcare yields "43% more jobs than the next highest industry and four times the number of jobs generated by \$1 million on construction spending" (EYS 3, p.69). Not only are more jobs created, but every dollar invested in childcare increases GDP by \$2.50. According to Fairholm, the tax implications are astounding. For every dollar invested, the taxes generated by the resulting increased employment rates generate 90 cents for provincial and federal governments. Pierre Fortin's research indicates that for every dollar invested in Quebec's early childhood initiatives, \$1.05 is returned to the provincial government. Appendix B presents the results of five Canadian cost-benefit analyses of early childhood programming.

1.4 New Brunswick Context

*I knew by the age of 18 months that something wasn't quite right with my oldest son's development. He wasn't attempting to talk; he wasn't socializing or acknowledging other children; he was very set in routines and explosive when this routine was broken. Finding help for him at such a young age was nearly impossible! Even doctors and pediatricians shied away from "diagnosing" a toddler. After speaking to a public health nurse and receiving words of wisdom - "the squeaky wheel gets the oil" - I decided I would find help for <him> myself. As I began searching for someone to help me find the resources I needed to help my son, I realized that even with my knowledge of and access to networks of child-related professionals, I could not find what I needed. **After a one-year wait**, <he> was finally seen by a pediatrician and diagnosed with a developmental delay and "autistic tendencies." After that, he was assigned a speech therapist; **we waited 6 months** before he finally saw her just before his fourth birthday. At approximately the same time, he had his 3.5 assessment*

² Fairholm, Robert. (2009). *Literature Review of the Child Care Labour Market* prepared for the Child Care Human Resources Sector Council, *Understanding and Addressing Workforce Shortages (ECEC) project*. Child Care Human Resources Sector Council, Ottawa, Canada.

with public health and the nurse asked if I had any concerns. Of course I did! She gave me the number for Early Intervention in <our community>, and after receiving a referral we finally met someone who could help. Our intervention worker found books, <identified> assessment tools, researched aids and set goals to help me help him.

Fast forward to 2009 when our early childhood centre opened, and I have this incredible opportunity to be THAT PERSON to someone else - to be the resource that I so badly needed when <my son> and I began our adventure. If only there had been an early childhood centre at that time in my life, I would have had a place to go talk to someone, someone who knew what direction to point me in, a place to bring <him> to meet other children and a place where I could connect with other parents who might have been going through similar things. If I can save one Mom the frustration and tears that I experienced, I will do all I can to be THAT PERSON for another mother.

This story, told by the director of one of the NB early childhood centres, outlines the challenges faced by parents as they attempt to negotiate the myriad of services that exist in our compartmentalized systems. Navigating these systems without a guide or map confounds even those who have worked in or understand the respective systems. Long waiting periods, lack of information and understanding with respect to programs and services/resources, as well as the lack of a central point of entry to services can lead to children and families who fall through the cracks. Vulnerable children may arrive at the preschool screening session lacking social and academic readiness. When the province of New Brunswick conducted its early learning and childcare consultation in 2007, parents indicated that they wanted community-based, integrated services in their communities – “places where they could access information, help their children get ready for school, and receive help with parenting questions”.³

The New Brunswick early childhood centres were designed to demonstrate the benefits of integrating early childhood programs into a coherent, community-responsive service within a provincial framework. Centres in Moncton, Bath, Robertville and Saint John are provided with \$100,000 annually over a three-year period by the provincial government; while five additional sites in the Carleton-York-Victoria (CYV) region and in Kent-Richibucto are supported by the Margaret and Wallace McCain Family Foundation. Four of these five sites are currently active. As part of this support, MWMFF funds communications, development, and research and evaluation activities led by the Health and Education Research Group (HERG) at the University of New Brunswick, in collaboration with the University of Moncton. The experiences of the CYV and Kent-Richibucto sites offer insights into the scaling up of the ECDC model in New Brunswick.

³ NB Early Childhood Development Centres Pilot Project (<http://www.gnb.ca/0000/ECHDPE/PDF/EarlyChildhoodDevelopmentCentresQA-e.pdf>)

2.0 Research Activities

2.1 Analysing the evidence

Two analytic techniques are being employed as part of the general analysis strategy. The first strategy, *explanation building*, builds an understanding of the process by identifying a set of causal links. The creation and revision of case explanations is a cyclical process that continues for the duration of the research project. Furthermore, case explanations and the identification of sets of causal links are also considered in cross-case analysis. *Time series analysis*, or the posing of “how” and “why” questions concerning relationships and changes of events over time, is an essential strategy that deepens our understanding of how key relationships among government departments, community partners, and government policy-makers function over time to facilitate the effectiveness of service integration, to build capacity, and to provide support to communities and families.

Throughout the analysis process, validity and reliability are ensured through the triangulation of data sources, data types and researchers’ perceptions⁴ (Baxter & Jack, 2008). *Member checking* is a technique by which the investigator shares research interpretations with participants for the purpose of discussion and clarification. For this initiative, drafts of site reports are shared with each site director. Through this exchange, new issues emerge and deeper understandings are acquired. Finally, in the process of data collection, theme coding and peer evaluation of analysis are utilized. During such a process, members of the research team code the same data and come together to share findings and interpretations to ensure consensus.

2.2 Areas of Inquiry

The examination of data collected throughout Year Two of this evaluation initiative was guided by following areas of inquiry:

- Was there *consistency* between the early childhood centres’ goals and activities with the overall project service delivery framework? What areas of *convergence and divergence* were noted among site applications?
- Did the initiative effectively *reach and engage* child, family and community participants?
- Were participants, stakeholders and staff satisfied with the implemented activities within the various early childhood centres?
- What specific *challenges* were encountered in the implementation of the program? How were they addressed? Did they impact service delivery?
- To what extent did the initiative contribute to the development of *early childhood service practices of integration* across major program components?
- What *lessons learned* were identified as a result of the implementation of this initiative?
- What specific *developments* should be considered to enhance the effectiveness of early childhood services in New Brunswick?

⁴ Baxter, P. & Jack, S. (2008). Qualitative Case Study Methodology: Study Design and Implementation for Novice Researchers. *The Qualitative Report*. Volume 13 Number 4, 544-559

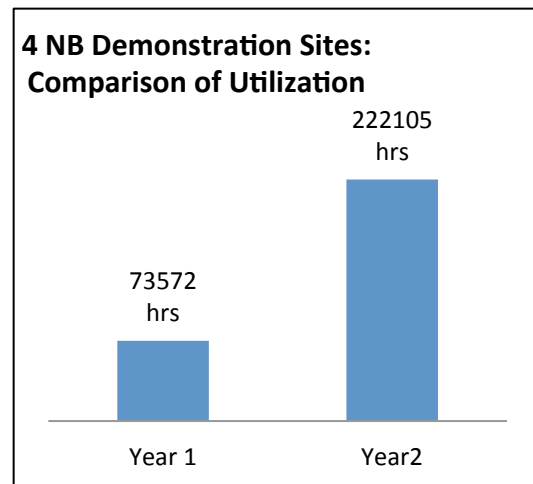
- What were the operational costs and financial supports associated with each ECDC? How do these considerations influence program development, implementation and service delivery?

3.0 Research Findings

This section includes a synthesis of findings from the review of site financial and utilization reports, site observation notes, key informant interviews, and surveys results. Outcomes are presented under the headings: Finances and Utilization; Sustainability; Partner Programs; and Practices of Integration.

3.1 Finances and Utilization

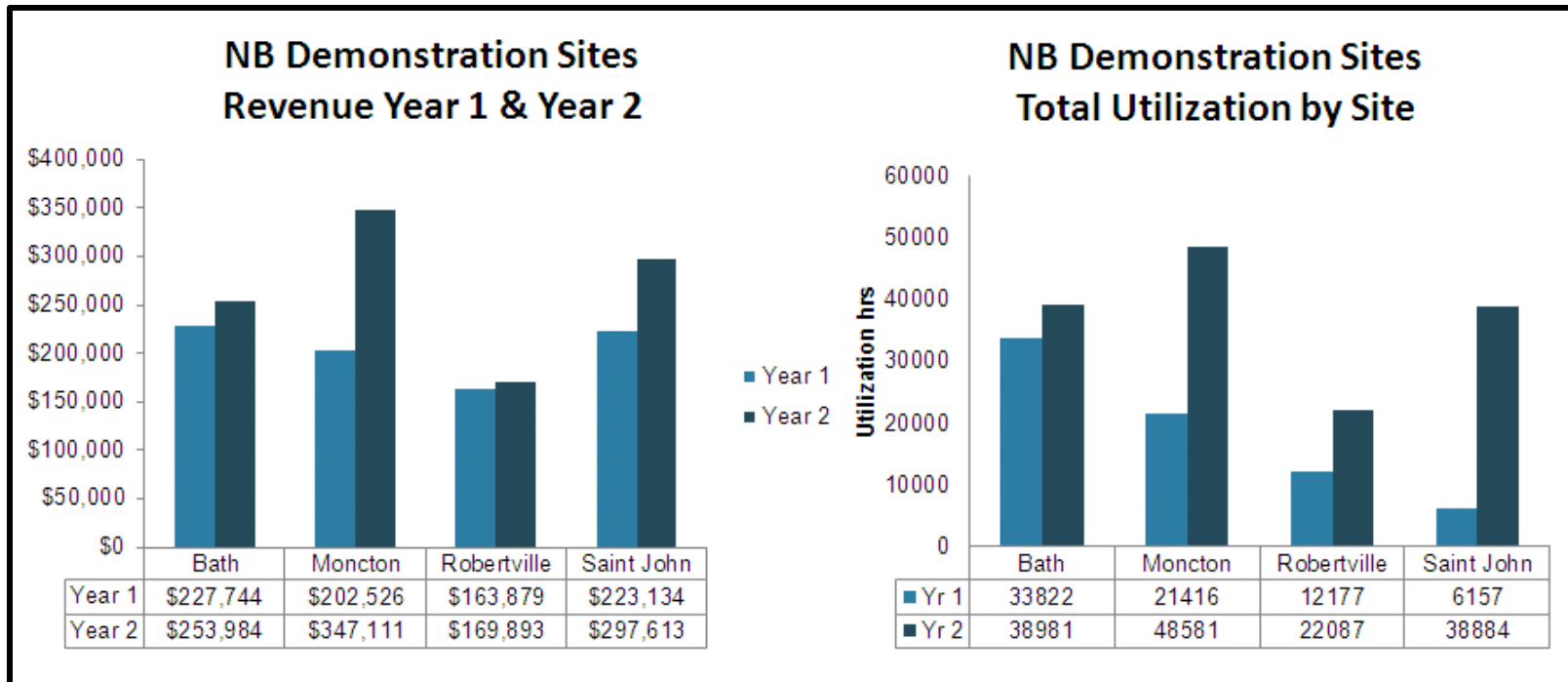
Figure 2



Utilization is reported in hours of usage across three categories: (1) child-only services (childcare, afterschool care, and preschool); (2) adult/child services (drop-in, family celebrations); and (3) adult-only services (parenting programs). In the past year, utilization hours have tripled across the four provincially-funded demonstration sites.

All sites experienced an increase in utilization in year two. Two centres are located in rural areas while two sites are located in urban settings. As the Bath site began at almost full capacity, only a slight change is seen in year two with the expansion of the preschool program. Moncton experienced a significant increase in year two, due to the addition of the afterschool program to continue Francization at the school level at the request of parents. Robertville has had consistent utilization over the two years, but has reduced costs significantly. A significant proportion of Robertville's first and second year funding was designated for renovations to establish early learning and childcare facilities. Saint John opened its program in May of year one, resulting in a significant increase in utilization. The graphs that follow indicate how hourly costs decrease when programming has been fully implemented or expanded.

Figure 3



Year 1 cost/hour:

Bath:	\$6.73
Moncton:	\$9.46
Robertville:	\$13.48
Saint John:	\$36.24
Average	\$16.48

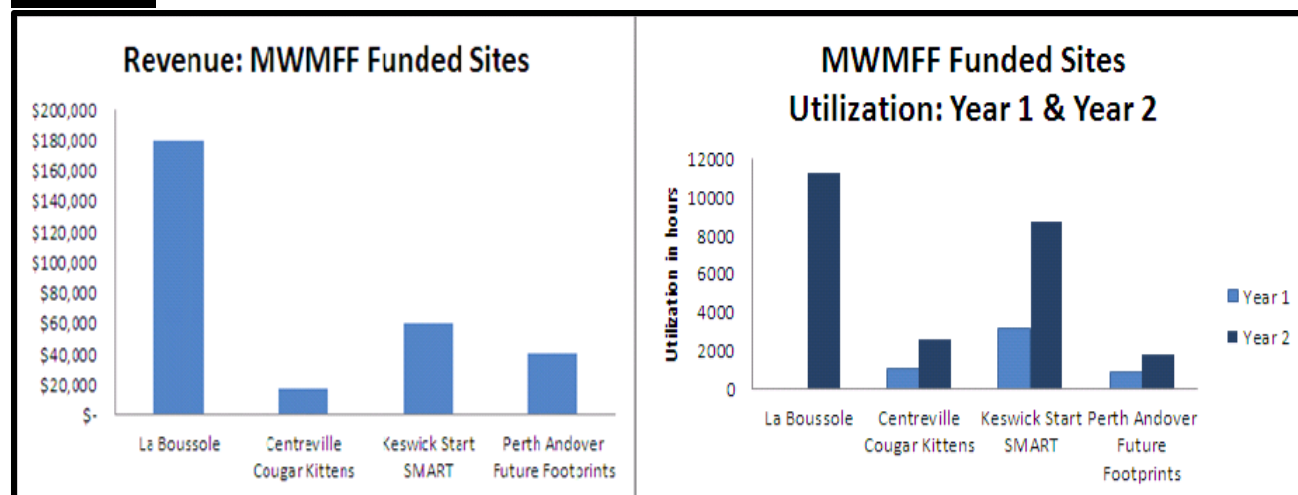
Year 2 cost/hour:

Bath:	\$6.51
Moncton:	\$7.14
Robertville:	\$7.69
Saint John:	\$7.68
Average	\$7.26

Note: Revenue is generated from five sources: government funding, program operating grants, childcare fee subsidies, parent childcare fees, and donations and fundraising. For additional information on sources of revenue, refer to Figure 5.

Among the MWMFF supported sites, La Boussole and Keswick Start SMART report the highest utilization hours due to the fact that they opened their childcare facilities in 2010-2011. Perth Andover has launched new licensed spaces in the elementary school, which will house childcare as well as before- and afterschool care (January 2012). Other programming delivered by VON and the Victoria Family Resource Centre will continue. The higher cost per hour for Perth Andover includes revenue to cover expenditures for start-up costs. As with the New Brunswick government sites, hourly costs at both La Boussole and Perth Andover are expected to decrease significantly during their next year of operation. Centreville is a rather unique early childhood model, in that a successful community childcare facility is already established, located adjacent to the school. A site coordinator was hired for 20 hours per week to work with the Early Childhood Committee to coordinate existing services, and to work with partners and service providers to expand and create new programs and services that are responsive to community needs. These four sites have made significant gains with only a fraction of the funding of the four government sites. This is due, in part, to the lessons learned from the four New Brunswick demonstration sites, as well as the impact of the CYV Network and the efforts of their coordinator to build opportunities for collaboration, sharing, problem solving and professional development.

Figure 4



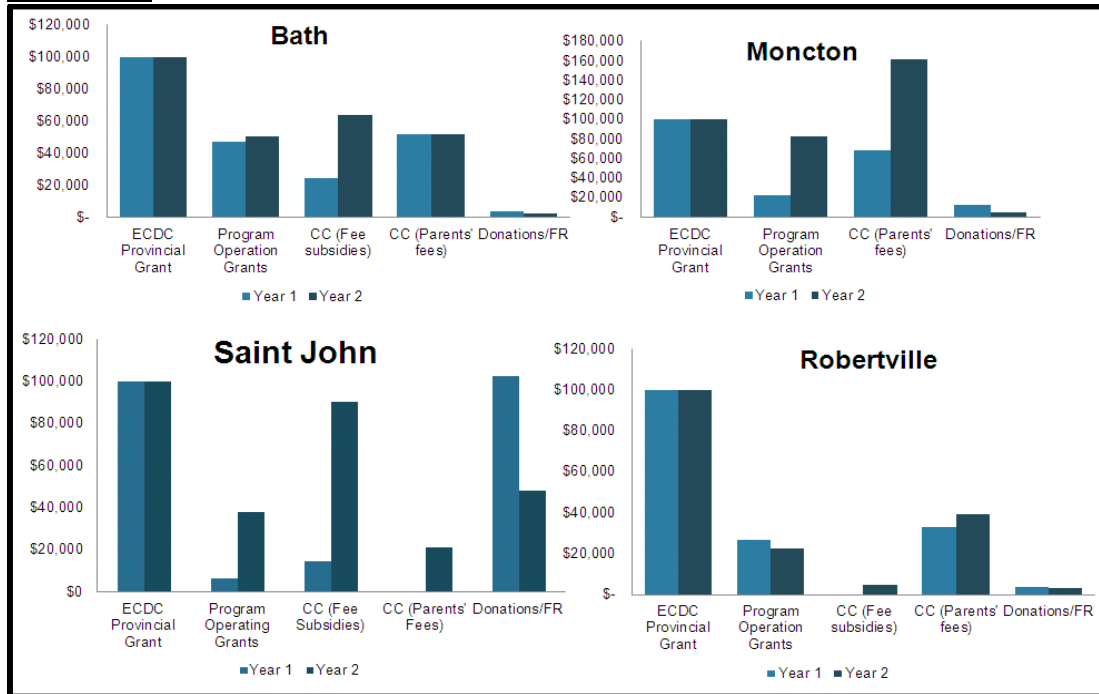
Cost per hour:

La Boussole	\$16.03
Centreville	\$ 6.83
Keswick	\$ 6.86
Perth Andover	\$22.97

3.1.1 Sources of Revenue

The following graphs compare revenues from the four provincially-funded sites. The Bath, Saint John and Robertville sites receive income from parent subsidies as well as parent fees. In Saint John, the *Business Community Anti-Poverty Initiative* engaged in significant fundraising activities on behalf of the Early Learning Centre prior to opening. Resulting donations were spread across the three years of the demonstration. Moncton is the only site in which there are no parents receiving subsidies. Within their program operations, Moncton is receiving support for one child with special needs.

Figure 5



Funding sources include:

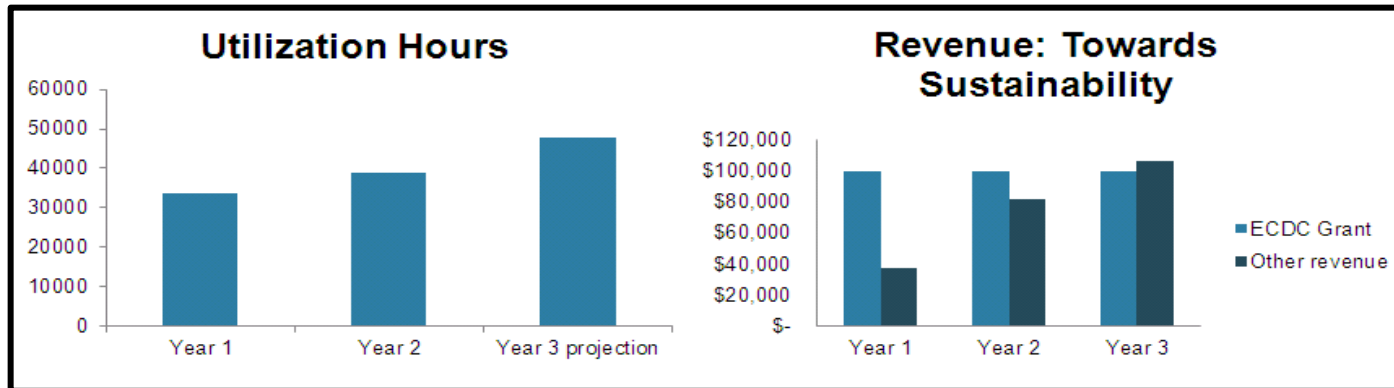
- ✓ ECDC Provincial Grants (\$100,000 per year for three years)
- ✓ Program Operating Grants (Additional grants such as *IWK*, *Active Kids*, *Communities Raising Children*)
- ✓ Childcare Fee Subsidies (Education and Early Childhood Development funding for working parents who meet program criteria, as well as children who have been identified by the Public Health 3.5 Clinic or Early Intervention)
- ✓ Child Care Parents' Fees
- ✓ Donations and Fundraising (Donations come from a variety of community partners. Fundraisers are initiated by the sites themselves.)

3.2 Sustainability

In looking at issues of sustainability, it is important to consider not only the financial viability of the site to continue without the yearly provincial contribution of \$100,000, but also the ways in which the sites are working to increase the availability, accessibility and affordability of high quality early childhood care, education, and resources. Other promising practices related to sustainability include collaboration with other early childhood service providers to strengthen the capacity of communities to support families and young children; ensuring high quality education and care by implementing evidence-based promising practices, and on the success of existing programs; and creating an inclusive, universal and comprehensive program of services that ensure the healthy development of children and families.⁵ Using the financial reports submitted for year one (September 1, 2009 – August 31, 2010) and year two (September 1, 2009 - August 31, 2010), possible actions that could lead to site sustainability are explored in the following sections. The economic context presented in Section 1.3 highlights findings that impact the question of sustainability of the provincial early childhood centres.

⁵ NB Department of Social Development (2009). *Early Childhood Strategy Action Plan 2008-2009*.

Figure 6



3.2.1 Bath Step Ahead Family Learning Centre

Bath has expanded its programming in an number of unique ways. In 2011, the site was provided with additional space in the school, and was able to expand the number of licensed spaces by 15 in before- and after-school childcare. Step Ahead has also been given the go-ahead by the School District to apply for a licensed preschool room located in the elementary school.

A unique partnership with the Village of Bath provided every child aged 2-12 years of age with swimming lessons and two hours of free swimming per day throughout the summer months. Bath's Site Director has incorporated some of the administrative duties that normally fall to partners, allowing some service providers such as VON to offer additional programming to families. Other programs, such as the Valley Family Resource Centre drop-in playgroups (which normally do not run through the summer months) continued at Step Ahead in July and August,.

Public Health offers the 3.5-year-old screening clinic at the Centre. Twenty of the children have been identified as needing developmental support. These families receive funding from the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development for their children to attend the Centre three days per week. Audiologists through *Talk With Me* have offered hearing screens at the centre. Of the 18 four-year-olds eligible to register for kindergarten in the fall, twelve (66%) have registered for the preschool program.

Indicators leading to sustainability at Bath Step Ahead Family Learning Centre

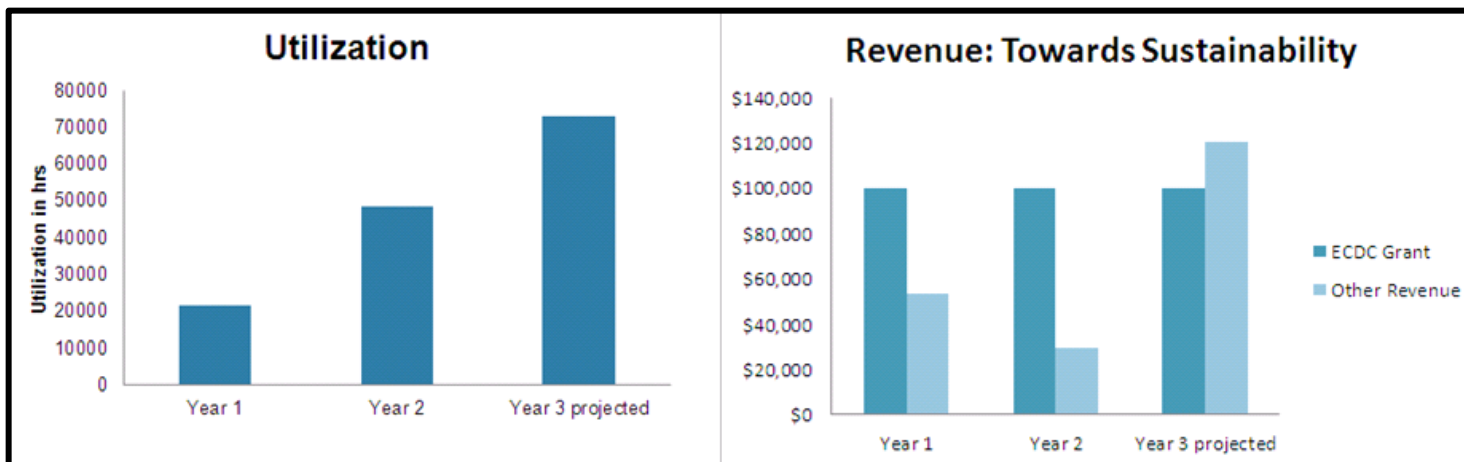
- ✓ Early adoption of before- and after-school programming
- ✓ Combining of resources for school readiness programs
- ✓ 84% of 2011 kindergarten students attended Step Ahead prior to kindergarten
- ✓ Maximizing of public health and early intervention resources
- ✓ Collaborations between K teachers and ECEs
- ✓ Role as anchor for CYV network
- ✓ Strong partnerships with the Family Resource Centre

Bath Step Ahead exemplifies the path toward sustainability – utilization of services has increased, programs and services have expanded, expenditures have decreased, revenue from childcare has increased, and an effective partnership with the Valley Family Resource Centre has furnished resources, drop-in play groups, parenting programs, and strong representation on the Board. Thus, the balance of funds remaining at the end of year two is nearly equal to the amount of the ECDC grant. Projecting a 60% utilization rate, the site’s 15 additional childcare spaces will allow Step Ahead to be sustainable by the end of year three.

3.2.2 Le Phare Moncton

The Moncton site is also demonstrating potential for sustainability. In year one, parents asked for before- and after-school care that would enhance and expand opportunities for Francization. At that time, a private after-school care centre was located in the school library. The site accepted the recommendation of parents and expanded services to provide after-school programming under the auspices of Le Phare, and at the beginning of their second year of operation, had 29 children enrolled in the after-school program (licensed for 44 spaces). The private after-school program was filled to capacity. Le Phare began year three with 20 pre-school children (3 and 4 year olds) on a waiting list. In addition, there are 15 unfilled licensed spaces in the afterschool program. If sufficient physical space were presently available, Le Phare would be sustainable by the end of year three. Le Phare is now seeking to secure sufficient space for an early learning centre to be incorporated in proposed plans for the new school being constructed in the region. With adequate space, Le Phare has the potential to be a viable, self-sustaining early childhood centre, providing Francization for 50%-75% of the children entering kindergarten. If space does not become available, Le Phare would require an infusion of \$60,000 to be operational during year four.

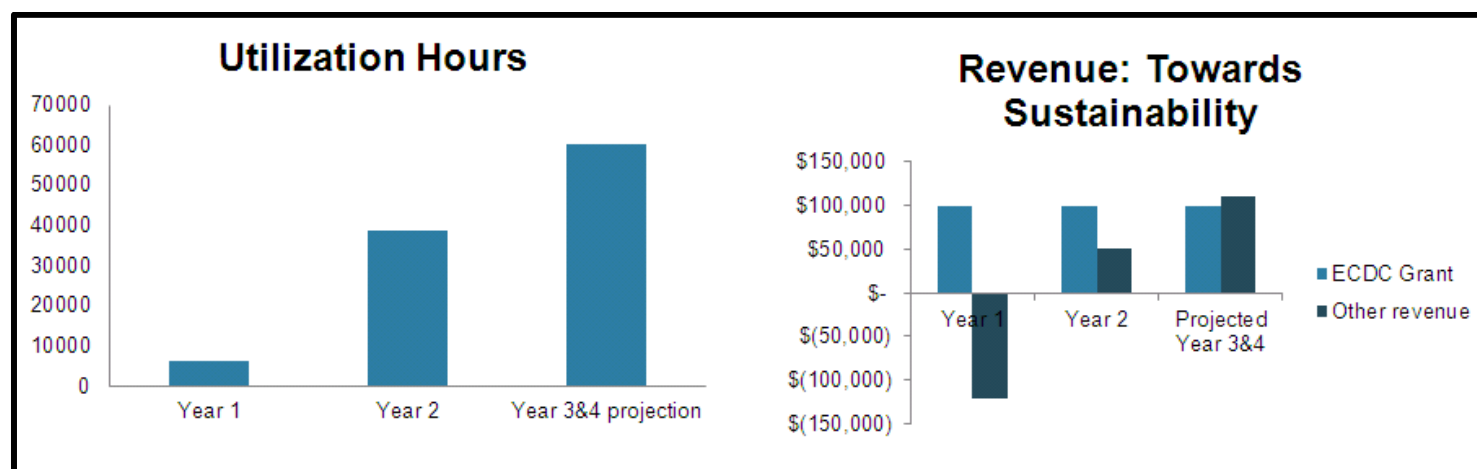
Figure 7



3.2.3 Early Learning Centre, Saint John: Viability linked to expansion of licensed spaces

Saint John's deficit financial position in year one is attributed to the substantial renovations that were completed in preparation for start up. Financial shortfalls were covered by donations and fundraising activities from a variety of sources. Presently, Saint John is licensed for 39 preschool children (ages 2-5). There is adequate space for the centre to increase childcare to include before- and after-school care. The provision of after-school care is in keeping with enrichment programs that the ELC is already undertaking with the school. Currently, school partners offer unlicensed care for over 100 children on a daily basis, free of charge. If licensed programming were to be offered, eligible parents could qualify for childcare subsidy programs. Offering after-school care for 30 children would render the Early Learning Centre fiscally viable.

Figure 8

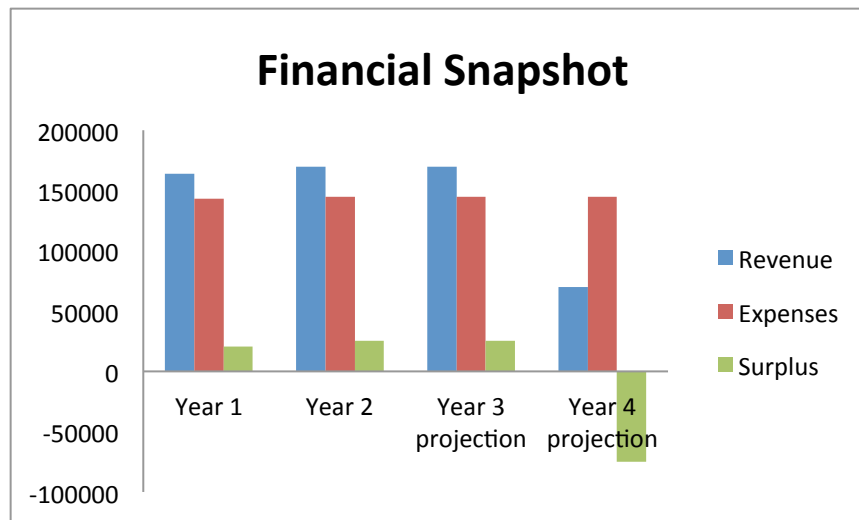


3.2.4 Centre de développement de la petite enfance et familles de Robertville, Inc.: Shifting Perceptions

The centre in Robertville shares the school with a private afterschool childcare operator, as well as with Family Resource Centre programs. Nearby, there are two private childcare facilities providing full day-care. Stakeholders describe challenges in communication between the centre and the private childcare operators that have persisted over the past two years. While overall utilization has increased due to participation in partner programs, the hours of utilization have not increased substantially. Of the 22 children registered in childcare services, 73% are part-time. The chart to the left provides a fiscal snapshot of the Robertville site. The centre reported a surplus of \$20,000 in year one, and \$25,000 in year two. Using the figures from year two, projections were created for year three and year four. Note that in year four, the \$100,000 provincial

grant has been removed. This results in a projected shortfall of \$75,000. Given this scenario, Robertville would be able to use surpluses from the three years to fund some of the operating expenses in year four, with a \$50,000 shortfall. However, once the surplus funds are exhausted, the site is not financially viable.

Figure 9



3.3 Partner Programs

The Valley Family Resource Centre reported a 40% reduction in program costs by delivering programs at ECDC sites in Bath, Perth and Centreville during year two. This organization highlighted the benefits of reduced travel costs when the personnel delivering the program live in the community. Sites report that such linkages with existing service providers are beneficial, in that these individuals and services are known in the community and have built trusting relationships with parents and families, and that such confidence supports the growth of ECDC programming.

The Early Years Sites have been a great complement to the programs and services offered in the Saint John River Valley area. Having the Early Years Study II and the support of the McCain Family Foundation has lent credibility and support to the work we all believe in. There is always room and excitement for another partner when we are trying to support the growth and development of our children and their families, particularly in rural New Brunswick. *(Executive Director, VFRC)*

Partner programs have also expanded as a result of joint initiatives with ECDC sites; for example, Bath was able to continue the drop-in program throughout the summer months, and during March Break and potato break when the VFRC normally does not offer playgroup. The Early Learning Centre in Saint John was able to increase the number of parents that took part in parenting programs due to the fact that the ELC provided childcare in the centre. This represented an increase in the attendance of three to four parents per session - a 25% increase in capacity. Perth Andover did not have a drop-in program prior to the initiation of the Future Footprints Centre. Over the last year and a half, such programs have served 30 families and 45 children.

We have a constant influx of parents and families joining our drop-in group. Some of our families graduate to the school, but new ones just keep coming. It is a continuous cycle. It enables us to reach a wide variety of families. *(Site Coordinator, Perth Andover Future Footprints)*

In order to provide the best programs for our early childhood families in the most economical way, it could prove beneficial for the organizations providing programs within the Early Learning Centre model in Saint John to get together to strategically plan for the future. *(Executive Director, Saint John Family Resource Centre)*

The centres have provided an opportunity to increase our capacity and challenge our boundaries as service providers. As we move towards a more family-centered approach, I find each of us, although at different places in our journey, is being challenged to evolve beyond our silos and into a collaboration approach. Those connections inspire and challenge me to reflect and adapt my perceptions so I can provide quality service. *(VON)*

Key informant interviews indicated that at a provincial level, there has been an expressed desire and commitment on the part of Family Resource Centres to work in partnership with the early childhood centres to develop practices of integration. These partnerships are well established in a number of the sites. At the community level, ongoing conversations are taking place with respect to how to best use resources to deliver school readiness programs and bridge differences curricular approaches.

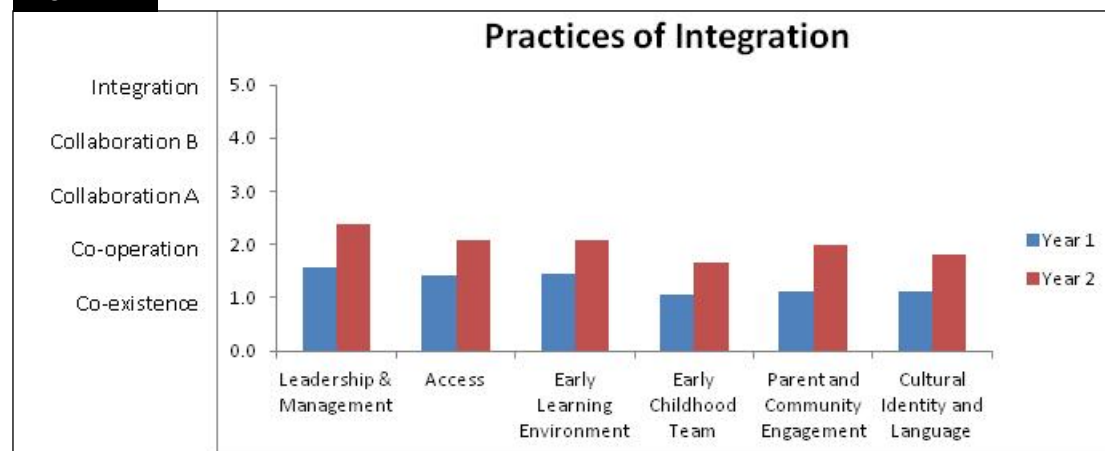
3.4 Practices of Integration

The Indicators of Change Instrument was created to measure the practices of integration at Toronto First Duty (TFD). The purpose of TFD was to demonstrate how a service delivery system could provide a seamless blend of early learning, care, services and supports for young children and their families. The service delivery system model was organized around five core elements - the early learning environment, an early childhood

team, community leadership and governance, seamless access, and family and community engagement.⁶ The Indicators of Change instrument was developed by TFD as a management tool to guide, track and assess the progress TFD was making toward the integration of programs (child care, early childhood education, family support programs and kindergarten) that are linked to early intervention, community and public health, and social services. Partners self-assess their progress along a five-point scale from co-existence, Level 1 (operating in isolation) to Level 5, the integration of governance, funding, service delivery, family engagement and accountability practices. The HERG research team adapted the Indicators of Change to the New Brunswick context and, in consultation with the three Francophone sites, developed a sixth element – Language and Cultural Identity.

Using the six elements of the Indicators of Change Instrument, the leadership and management boards/committees of the four government-funded sites plotted their baseline *Practices of Integration* in year one. In February of year two (using the baseline data from year one), a second focus group was conducted to identify evidence of growth along the *change continuum* from coexistence to integration. The table below presents collated data for the four government-funded sites for years one and two.

Figure 10



Leadership and Management structures

evidenced Incremental change from coexistence to co-operation. By the end of the first year all sites had hired centre directors and developed human resources policy documents. Joint partnership projects had been initiated and implemented with one or more partners. Three indicators are used to measure access to programming. They include capacity, childcare provision and affordability; as well as common intake, enrolment and attendance processes. Access to affordable childcare experienced the most significant growth, moving to level 3

(collaboration) across sites. All sites were offering flexibility in terms of childcare (part-time, full-time and occasional care), while two sites were offering before- and after-school care. Through partnerships with the Family Resource Centres, three of the four sites offered weekly drop-in play groups. All four sites hosted parenting programs during year two.

⁶ Toronto First Duty Indicators of Change

The five indicators within the **Early Learning Environment** include: curriculum framework & pedagogical approach, daily routines and schedules, use of space, and children's development and progress. Both, daily routines and schedules and use of space experienced incremental growth from level 1 to level 3 (Collaboration A). The school and the centres have worked to coordinate schedules. Preschool children are integrated into special school-wide activities such as such as concerts, school-supported presentations and celebrations, and family events. Across sites, the scheduling of gym, library, music room and cafeteria has been challenging due to the need to meet school needs. However, these facilities are often available afterschool and during vacation periods.

The **Early Learning Team** is comprised of four indicators: program planning and implementation, behaviour guidance/child management, roles and responsibilities, and staff development. Staff development reported the most growth. All four sites indicated that they have participated in school-based teacher professional development opportunities. In three sites the centre director sits on a regional Early Childhood Committee with other early childhood service providers and community partners. One site has created a *Transition to Kindergarten Team*.

The fifth category, **Parent and Community Engagement** included three indicators: Parent input and participation in programs, parenting capacity and relationships with families. Relationships with families noted the most growth. All four sites have engaged in communicating with parents both individually as well as through their partners. School voice mail and newsletters have been used to let parents know about centres' events, programs and services. All four sites have created joint activities where they have had opportunities to build shared communications with families. These activities included Family Days (picnics, games and concerts), community suppers, and family dinners centered on enhancing school readiness/transitions.

A common vision, family and community engagement, professional development for early childhood team and partners, as well as cultural identity and language strategies are the four indicators of the sixth element, **Cultural Identity and Language**. The two Francophone sites reported on the sixth element. Growth was noted in the first two indicators. As a Francophone minority within an Anglophone setting, one site articulated that creating a common vision with other Francophone partners was critical. In addition the two Francophone aligned themselves with the school districts for whom cultural identity is a key focus of the school improvement plans. One site has engaged in conversations with both national and provincial partners with respect to strategies to engage families and communities in activities that support the development of language and cultural identity. This is very important to *ayant droit* families where the primary language of communication is English. Both Francophone ECDCs plan a consultation process with parents at the beginning of Year 3.

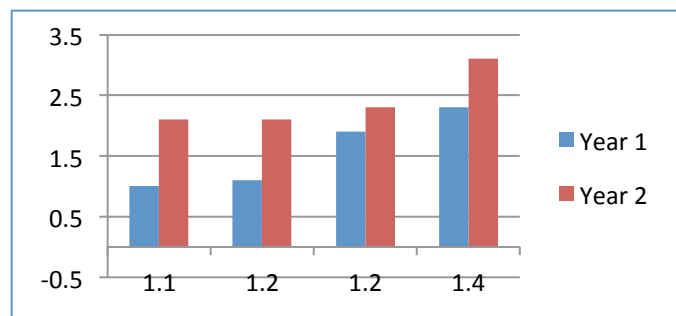
3.4.1 Leadership and Management

Indicator 1, *Leadership and Management*, refers to the creation of a local governance structure (committee or board) that is responsible for program policies, resource allocation, service planning and monitoring, and human resource decisions. This human resources indicator has experienced significant growth in year two. By the end of year one, all sites had hired centre directors and created human resource policy documents. Moncton's Le Phare and Saint John's Early Learning Centre have hired child care coordinators to oversee this aspect of operations, allowing the directors to focus on building and extending partnerships. Bath Step Ahead partnered with the school district to create a joint

professional development initiative on curriculum for early childhood educators and kindergarten teachers.

Aggregate results for Indicator 1: Leadership and Management

Figure 11



1.1 Program mandate, policy, and practices

1.2 Service planning and monitoring

1.3 Allocation of financial resources

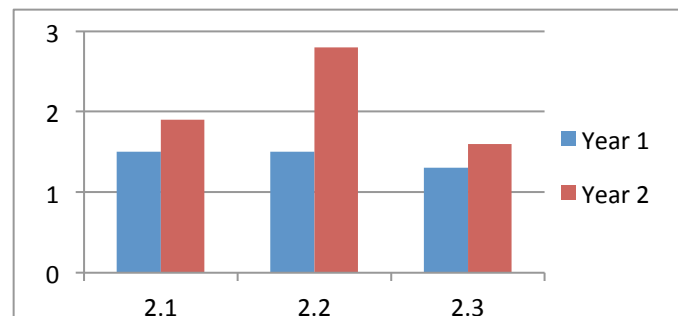
1.4 Human resources

3.4.2 Accessibility of Programs and Services

The practices of integration with respect to Indicator 2, *Accessibility of Programs and Services*, assume that seamless access is available to an expanded and comprehensive early learning and care program, providing a continuum of supports and services to all families and young children, prenatally to six years of age. The greatest area of progress has been related to childcare provision and affordability. Overall, this indicator has experienced significant growth in year two. All sites are offering flexibility in terms of childcare (part time, full time and occasional care). Le Phare has responded to parents' identified needs for after-school care, and was licensed in year two for 29 spaces. The Early Learning Centre increased enrolment in childcare from 4 to 26 in the first nine months of year two. Step Ahead experienced growth in their preschool program with an enrolment that increased from 11 in year one to 22 in year two. Through partnerships with Family Resource Centres, three of the four government sites offer weekly drop-in play groups. The Early Learning Centre offers an additional drop-in play group three mornings per week. All four sites offered parenting programs during year two.

Aggregate results for Indicator 2: Accessibility of Programs and Services

Figure 12



2.1 Capacity

2.2 Childcare provision and affordability

2.3 Intake, enrollment, and attendance

Notable area of progress related to the accessibility of programs and services include:

- Six sites provide licensed childcare.
- Early identification, assessment and the provision of programs/services for children with exceptionalities have increased.
- Early learning centres are becoming known as community “hubs” that provide a continuum of services for and information to children, parents and families
- The trusting relationships that parents have built with site directors and early childhood staff facilitate the linking of families with essential services.
- Children identified by Public Health at the 3.5 Clinic are funded by the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development to attend programming. Survey participants noted the growth and development that they have observed in these children over time.
- All sites have expanded program offerings for families and young children to meet identified community needs. These programs include pre- and post-natal care, drop-in programs for stay at home moms, childcare for preschoolers and school-aged children, parenting courses, and family activities.

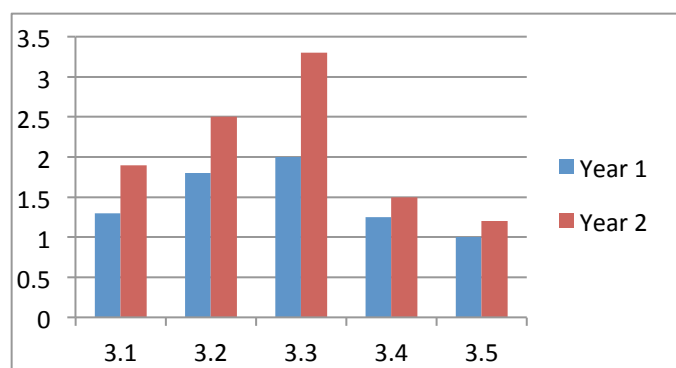
3.4.3 Early Learning Environment

Indicator 3, *Early Learning Environment*, assumes a movement toward high quality learning environments combining learning expectations, activities and routines from existing kindergarten programming, early childhood education/childcare, and parenting/family support programs. There have been some inroads in opportunities for sharing curricula between early childhood educators and Kindergarten teachers in several sites. In Carleton/York/Victoria, the CYV facilitator, along with the District Transition to Schools Coordinator, has worked to provide opportunities for kindergarten teachers and ECEs to gain a deeper understanding of each other’s curriculum. Two events – a Saturday workshop with an external presenter and a joint workshop during a District 14 Curriculum Day – have created a foundation for this work. The latter focused on the commonalities between the Early Childhood Framework and the kindergarten curriculum. In year two, one early childhood

educator has held regular meetings with the two kindergarten teachers for one hour every two weeks. This shared planning time led to the joint organization of Transition Week for four-year-old preschoolers. Having a common meeting time and a definite agenda were seen as critical factors in building collaborative relationships among kindergarten teachers and early childhood educators. The Principal and the Transition to Schools Coordinator were pivotal in facilitating this process. The other demonstration sites have also engaged in regular activities with the kindergarten teachers. Through these activities, the ECEs are becoming familiar with the kindergarten curriculum. Differences between the philosophical foundations of the kindergarten and preschool curricula are still viewed as a significant challenge by participants.

Aggregate results for Indicator 3: Early Learning Environment

Figure 13



- 3.1 Curriculum framework and pedagogical approach
- 3.2 Daily routines and schedules
- 3.3 Use of space
- 3.4 Children's development and progress
- 3.5 Program quality

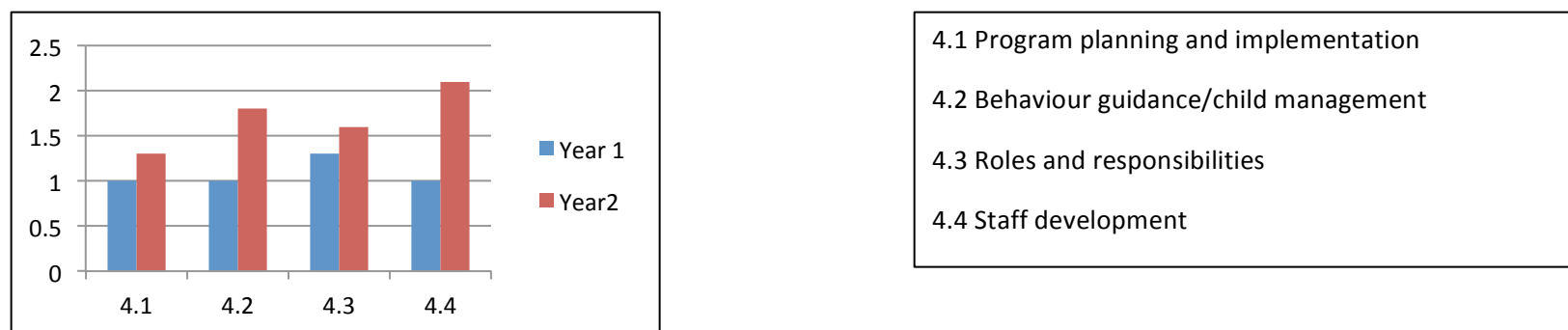
The most significant growth related to environment has been in the provision of space for the early learning centres in schools, and in the utilization of shared space. Keswick, and Perth Andover have space dedicated for before- and after-school care. All sites also have designated areas for partner programs. Some schools have access to shared space such as the cafeteria, gym, music room and library during the day. Other sites access these spaces after school hours or during school holidays and professional development days. Several sites have been able to expand programming; for example, Bath has acquired 15 additional licensed afterschool spaces and plans to license a preschool room in the elementary school. Other schools that have increasing student enrolments, such as Keswick and Ste. Bernadette, are experiencing a shortage of space. At Le Phare in Moncton, space issues are stalling opportunities for expansion and sustainability. Twenty pre-school children are on a waiting list for childcare and could not be accommodated in year two, while 15 licenced spaces in the after-school program remain vacant due to lack of space.

3.4.4 Early Childhood Team

Indicator 4, *Early Childhood Team*, calls for the development an early childhood staff team that works together to deliver and achieve program goals. Two sites have made progress related to transition planning and activities for four-year-olds into the school curriculum. Other sites have experienced challenges with this category as they await more specific direction the New Brunswick Teachers Association.

Aggregate results for Indicator 4: Early Childhood Team

Figure 14



3.4.5 Family and Community Engagement

The fifth Indicator, *Family and Community Engagement*, calls for increased parent participation in children's early learning and development through direct involvement in programs, planning, and decision-making. In terms of parent participation in the development and implementation of programming, seven early childhood centres have parental representation on their Boards of Directors. Enhanced access to and availability of parent/child programming is evidenced in the increased utilization of these programs from year one to year two. Formal consultations with families and communities have taken place in at least four sites via focus groups and questionnaires. Sites have also received feedback from key informant interviews and the year one questionnaires that were administered as part of the research process.

Enhancing parenting capacity has involved partners working together to expand existing programming and create new initiatives. For example, the Early Learning Centre has engaged with the Saint John Family Resource Centre and the school in creating and implementing joint partnerships with the goal of increasing parenting capacity. By providing childcare at the ELC, the SJFRC was able to accommodate three to four more parents per session. At other sites, the provision of childcare and meals during parenting sessions has increased the number of parents who take part in the evening sessions. In one case, other partners are using the centre facility to meet with clients for the purpose of building parenting capacity. The centre has provided a neutral, safe environment for these meetings to occur.

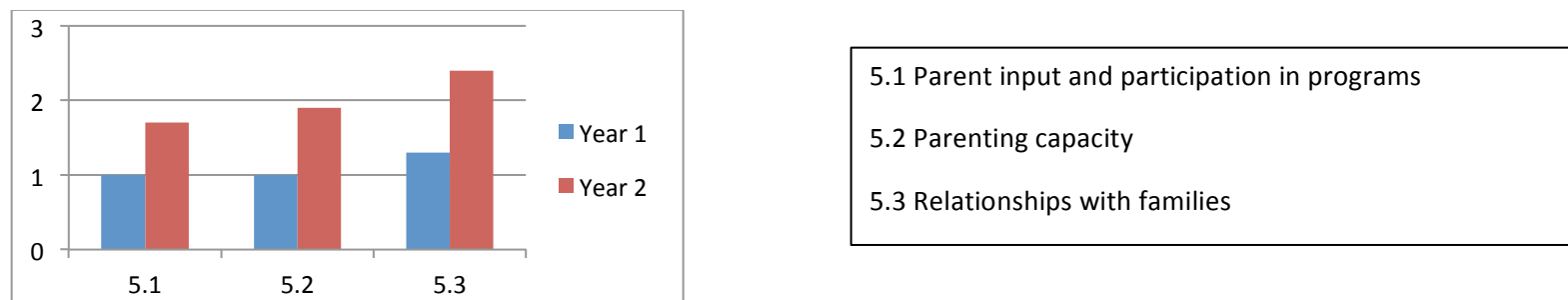
Participants discussed the need to empower parents to become part of ongoing processes. In Saint John, participants described some perceived divisions among parents in their interactions with each during drop-in programs. To bridge this gap, the centre engaged parents in preparing and eating a meal together. The outcome has been that the parents have begun to interact across the divide, to build a sense of trust and to work collaboratively. Certainly, one of the most significant changes noted in the year two key informant interviews is the fact that parents are feeling more comfortable in the school environment, especially those who personally had less than positive experiences of schooling.

Walking into a school is sometimes a very challenging thing for parents to do. Right now they are just coming as observer and enjoying their children. A Christmas concert is a wonderful relationship development vehicle. It is more relaxed and celebratory experience. They [the parents] get to know us in a very non-threatening environment. (Principal)

I wouldn't be sending my child to the centre if it wasn't associated with the school and got them so ready to school by becoming part of the school. In a way schools like this reach out and become part of the community. (Parent)

Aggregate results for Indicator 5: Family and Community Engagement

Figure 15



The CYV sites provide an interesting model in terms of how partners work together to build and enhance parent and community engagement. The Early Childhood Initiative committee that meets monthly in Woodstock has facilitated communication between the sites and community partners and service providers. The site director from Bath and the CYV site coordinator serve on this committee and provide monthly feedback. Membership on this ECI committee also includes such partners as *Talk with Me*, VON, FRC, Public Health, and the Department of Social Development, among others. In these sites, there has been consistent engagement and commitment on the part of these partners at a site level.

Joint initiatives with partners have provided opportunities for enhanced programming to encourage parent participation. Providing more programming to increase parenting capacities has been identified as an area of focus for all sites for year three.

3.4.6 Language and Cultural Identity

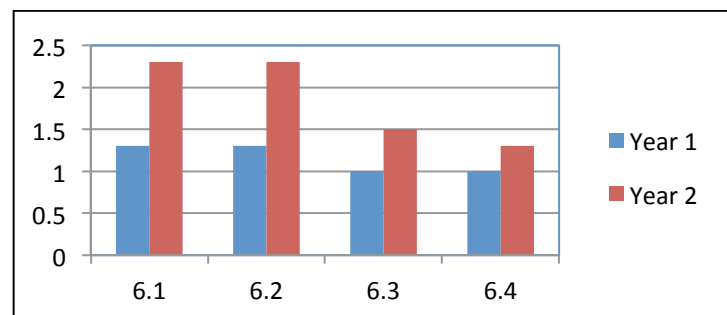
Language and Cultural Identity indicates child, parent and family participation in the activities of the early learning centre is encouraged, with the goal of increasing understanding and capacity with respect to linguistic and cultural identity. As a Francophone minority within an Anglophone setting, Le Phare has articulated that creating a common vision with other Francophone partners is critical. District 1 has indicated that cultural identity is a key focus of their school improvement plans. As such, Le Phare has been involved with the school district in planning and implementing such activities as *la semaine de la fierté française*. In collaboration with Université de Moncton, Le Phare is participating in a research project to evaluate the process by which cultural identity and language are developed in minority French communities living in Anglophone majority contexts.

The two Francophone sites reported outcomes in this category. Due to the move of District French Immersion to a Grade 3 entry point, many *ayant droit* families are exercising their right to send their children to French school. This created a situation for District 1 last year whereby 64% of the children entering kindergarten could not speak French fluently. Hence, one of the major focuses of Le Phare has been to provide two years of *Francization* for three and four year olds prior to entering kindergarten. Other developments in this area include:

- Robertville and Moncton have partnered with the school district in *Francization* programs and in the celebration of cultural events.
- Le Phare has made significant strides in building relationships with provincial and national stakeholders to provide programming for children, parents and families.
- Le Phare's new strategic plan is focused on welcoming and engaging parents.

Aggregate results for Indicator 6: Language and Cultural Identity

Figure 16



- 6.1 A common vision
- 6.2 Welcoming and engaging parents
- 6.3 Training and development of partners and staff
- 6.4 Early intervention pedagogical approach

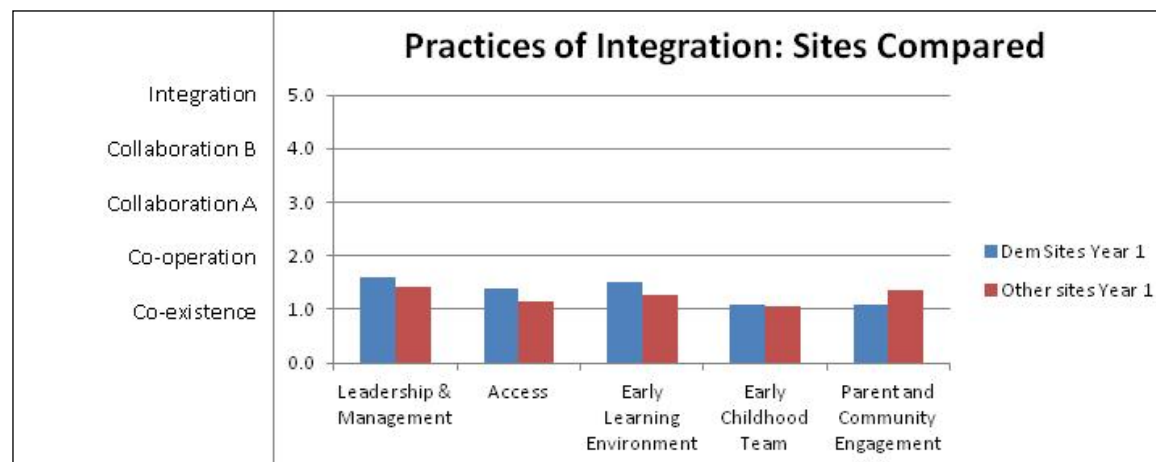
3.4.7 Scaling up of the ECDC Model

The four provincially-funded sites provide a road map of how the integration process unfolds. The additional four functioning early childhood sites have learned from these models and demonstrated that progress can be made using only seed funding. The chart below indicates the progress made by the additional four sites. All sites have committees or boards that include representation from the school, service providers and community partners, as well as from parents. All four sites have hired site coordinators/directors who are coordinating programming and activities. Both, Keswick and La Boussole have preschool and after-school care, while Future Footprints will be opening their childcare programs in January, 2012.

Processes of Integration				
	La Boussole Kent/ Richibucto	Keswick Start SMART	Perth Andover Future Footprints Family Centre	Centreville Cougar Kittens Family Learning Centre
Early Learning Centre				
Designated space in school	*	*	*	*
Leadership and management				
Early childhood committee or board	*	*	*	*
Principal on the board/committee	*	*	*	*
Parent representation	*	*	*	*
Partners and service providers on the board	*		*	*
Partnership agreements with school district	*	In process	In process	In process
HR and Parents' Handbooks	*	*	*	Parents Handbook
Early Childhood Staff				
Site coordinator/director	*	*	*	*
Early childhood educators	*	*	Jan 1, 2012	
PROGRAMS				
Preschool childcare	*	*	Jan 1, 2012	
After school childcare	*	*	Jan 1, 2010	
VON programs	*		*	*
FRC drop-in	*		*	*

The graph below demonstrates that the non-government supported sites were almost on a par with the government supported sites in year one with respect to practices of integration. With respect to family and community engagement, the non-government supported sites were slightly ahead of the government-supported sites. These findings demonstrate that the sharing of lessons learned from government-funded sites to non-government sites allowed for faster growth without substantial financial support from the province. Secondly, the success of the non-government support sites points out the benefits of having clusters of sites (such as the CYV sites in District 14) meet regularly to share experiences, to engage in professional development, and to problem solve. Thirdly, the CYV coordinator has been a critical factor in working with site directors and coordinators during start-up and initial implementation stages.

Figure 17



Practices leading to faster growth in non-government funded sites

- ✓ Building upon lessons learned from government funded sites.
- ✓ Mentoring relationships between experienced and new directors sites
- ✓ Adopting and adapting documents and promising practices from established sites
- ✓ Creating a position for a regional coordinator who creates opportunities for clusters site directors to engage in professional development, develop professional networks, and to problem solve
- ✓ Building upon the strength of partnership relationships established at government funded-sites

4.0 Impacts

The impacts of the early childhood centres have been gathered from key informant interviews and focus groups with diverse stakeholders. Site observations provided opportunities for researchers to confirm emerging themes through observations and member checking. In some cases, impacts are presented in the voice of participants. Findings related to impacts are presented under the following headings:

- Accessibility and availability of programs for children, parents and families
- Creation of a more seamless transition between early childhood and kindergarten
- Impact on early childhood educators
- Impact on service providers and community partners

4.1 Accessibility and Availability of Programs for Children, Parents and Families

My name is Susan and I am a mother of three children who are 3, 5, and 9 years old. If you asked me a year ago if I was a good mother, I would have said, probably not a good one. As a matter of fact, I don't remember ever being told I was good at anything my whole life. My mom loved me as best as she could. My stepfather didn't like me at all and I in turn didn't like him much either. I was seven years old when my stepfather pushed me down a flight of stairs when we were fighting. I remember how hard it was to learn after that. I would go to school and get yelled at by my teacher for not learning right and then go home and get in trouble for not paying attention in school. I hated school and I hated being called slow and stupid.

My first daughter Amy was born with autism. She is a handful but I always tell her everyday how much I love her and how smart I think she is. I don't ever want her to feel like I did. My other children Kayla and Thomas are five and three. Last summer my worker told me that my children had to start going to a daycare to help them to learn things for school. I went to visit the Early Learning Centre daycare to get my worker off my case. I thought I would hate it and I never planned on going back again. I made sure the workers knew it too. I wasn't going to let them tell me how Matthew and I should be raising our kids. I hated walking in the doors of that red brick building which brought back bad feelings of my own experiences at school.

I didn't expect to be treated so kindly from the minute we arrived. I was surprised that these people all took the time to know all of our names and welcome us to their Centre. They asked our advice on stuff about our kids and asked us if we could help them out with stuff too. It was a good feeling and we have been at the Centre since. The best part is we no longer have to take a bunch of buses for all of the kids' appointments anymore. It felt like we were always running from place to place. A lot of times I just cancelled because I was too tired to go. Now our Early Interventionist, Speech Therapist, Occupational Therapist, Physiotherapist and Social Worker all come and meet us at the Centre most of the time. The staff makes us vanilla coffee and cookies and it is so relaxing to sit in the Lounge. I don't miss our appointments anymore.

I help the Centre out too by collecting clothes that are too small for kids in my neighbourhood so they can be given to someone else. We also help out at the coffee house for parents at the school on Fridays. The Centre helps us when we need it and shows us how we can help others when they need it too. We like it here and wouldn't go anywhere else because our kids are happy and learning a lot for school.

Susan's story provides a look at the early childhood centres from a parent's perspective. What is it like to parent with limited income raising three children in an urban setting? Her story speaks of the challenges posed by difficult early childhood experiences at home and at school, as well as the challenges of trying to be a good mother, navigating the transit system with three children to attend various appointments.

Embedded in Susan's story are the advantages integrated service delivery provides, particularly to families living in at-risk circumstances. In addition to regularly attending the wide range of intervention programs provided at the centre, evaluators found other positive spill-overs. Short-term, sporadic interventions are not sufficient for sustainable improvement. In the integrated-centre model, specialists do not work in isolation with the child but involve the family and the entire staff team, raising the bar in their practice and creating an environment that reinforces interventions. The dose effect often reduces the length of time the child requires specialized supports. Professionals also benefit. Relieved of travel and administrative duties, they are able to provide more direct programming to families.

The following actions were identified by all stakeholders as being significant in improving access and availability.

4.1.1 Creation of licensed childcare services that address community needs

Six of the eight sites have created childcare services *to meet an identified need* within their community. Childcare programming offers full time, part time and occasional care, providing quality early childcare for children who would otherwise not have access to such programming. Children identified by Public Health at the 3.5 Clinic are funded by the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development to attend programming for two days per week. Participants noted the growth/development that they have observed in these children and their parents over time.

4.1.2 Implementation of programs and services that meet the unique needs of children, parents and families in their communities

Sites have begun to develop a comprehensive continuum of services including pre- and postnatal, drop-in programs for stay-at-home moms, childcare for preschoolers and school-aged children, parenting courses, and family activities. The sites provide a logical and accessible venue for the delivery of specialized intervention programs.

4.1.3 Expansion of services and programming for parents and children

In some cases, expansion has been facilitated by building on existing programs and services. In other centres, new services have been added to meet unique needs identified by parents.

4.1.4 Creation of a welcoming learning environment

Accepting the parent as an integral part of the child's education and care is critical to creating capacity for learning and development. Parent stories such as Susan's demonstrate a growing sense of autonomy and worth as they engage in both accepting and giving support. Efforts on the part of centre staff to create welcoming and inclusive learning environments facilitate the building of respectful, reciprocal relations with children, parents and families.

4.1.5 Early identification, assessment and provision of programs/services for children with exceptionalities

Within the context of preschool, childcare and drop-in programs, children who have been identified as needing support are participating in appropriate programs, and receiving timely services and supports.

4.1.6 Creation of the early learning centre as a “hub” providing a continuum of services for children, parents and families

Parent stories demonstrate how the centres have become a hub for care, education and services located in an environment where they have established relationships, and where they feel valued and safe.

In community schools, the addition of the learning centres extends the continuum of services available for children and families. Educators in schools with an early childhood centre express the belief that quality education begins at birth, and that the earlier children and families are engaged, the more successful these children will be when they enter kindergarten. Without such integrated, centralized services, many families in rural areas would have to travel great distances to access supports; and in some cases, may lack transportation to travel to appointments. Having services located in the learning centres also addresses any potential sense of stigma associated with accessing support services in other locations.

4.2 Creation of More Seamless Transitions Between Early Childhood and Kindergarten

4.2.1 Facilitating communications between early childhood educators and kindergarten teachers

Creating seamless transitions for children and parents involves providing opportunities for the educators in the early childhood setting and kindergarten to communicate and interact with each other.

We were freed for a morning visit to the centre. It was a very positive experience for us. One of the important things was for us to see the ECE interacting with the children. She puts numbers and literacy into anything that she can – they had a number line and they were counting the jumps. *(K teacher)*

The facilitation of educator communication begins with the creation of opportunities for joint initiatives between the kindergarten students and the preschool children. Initially, these activities may be organized around special events, and then move to more regularly scheduled events. Through these interactions, kindergarten teachers become aware of the interests, strengths, and special considerations of each child through their portfolios and joint kindergarten/early childhood activities, thus reducing transition time in the Fall.

It is helpful to be able to know the children from our interaction with them and from what we observe of them in their environment. It is good to see early childhood education as teaching - to see how play is assisting in [children's] learning. It is valuable to see learning from a different perspective. *(K teacher)*

In some centres, joint initiatives have been created between the school and the early learning centre to address social, emotional and cognitive readiness for school culture. Key individuals in these initiatives include the school principal, transition to school coordinator, kindergarten teachers and early childhood educators.

4.2.2 Providing opportunities for parents and children to become part of the school community

I wouldn't be sending my child here [Step Ahead] if it wasn't associated with the school and getting them <to feel> part of the school. In a way, schools like this reach out and invite us to become part of their community. *(Parent)*

Creating a welcoming environment that encourages the building of positive relationships has been an important goal of the schools and the early learning centers. School-wide celebratory events (e.g. Family Fun Night, Christmas Concert, Movie Night) provide opportunities for building relationships and for children and parents to feel part of the school-wide community. Through the joint activities with the kindergarten classes, the preschool children become familiar with the culture of the school (e.g. routines, expectations) and build relationships with the principal, teachers and staff. Through activities with older classes (e.g. Book Buddies), they build relationships with older students who often take on a mentoring role. Other initiatives (such as Meet the Teacher and Coffee Club) allow parents to gain a level of comfort and confidence in the school setting and with school personnel. One principal spoke of the power of this relationship in reframing the “story of schooling” for many parents.

4.2.3 Lowering anxiety and concerns with respect to school

Expectations related to math and literacy for children in kindergarten, leave parents concerned about how to prepare their children for school. Through the preschool programs, parents are reassured that their children will be ready for their “school experience”. Parents cited the VFRC Drop-in Play Group and other parenting programs as instrumental in creating awareness of learning activities they could practice at home. There was also a sense that parents felt less intimidated in initiating dialogues with teachers and school administration.

My oldest son had huge issues in school and I was scared to send my others there. Being here at the centre has helped. I had so much anxiety, but he [my oldest son] never had preschool or playgroup and such. It was just the two of us and he never knew how to behave in the different settings. He was first in everything and he had a lot of trouble because he didn't know how to behave in certain places and situations. He still struggles with it. The preschool, playgroups, and daycares are helping kids learn how to exist on social level with other people. *(Parent)*

4.2.4 Furnishing high quality early learning programs that promote emotional, social and cognitive growth

You can just see the confidence in the little ones who have been there for a year – you just see their confidence! It is interesting to see the comparison between the EYE-DA testing this year as compared to two years ago. The comfort level of the children – they all came over one at a time and introduced themselves. Their ability to interact with strangers is amazing! *(Transition to Schools Coordinator)*

Participants reported that the early childhood centres foster a culture of learning. Parents and early childhood educators commented on the change in the way children talk about their learning experiences. The narrative documentation appears to provide a vehicle for children to talk about what they have done and how they feel about their accomplishments. Secondly, the early childhood activities encourage students to develop a sense of autonomy and competency. Learning in a social context also encourages children to recognize strengths, to challenge themselves and to use the support of their peers when necessary. Parents and early childhood educators noted that children often learn coping strategies that they carry into other aspects of their lives.

We have one little boy who is very impulsive – we are working on his self-control. He wants your attention *now*. He has grown as a person. He is the most creative little boy. We focus on what he does well and this builds his self-esteem and influences his impulsivity. Yoga has really helped <the children>. I have pictures of their poses, and this little boy – he went home and tried to teach his mom. *(ECE)*

4.3 Impact on Early Childhood Educators

Early childhood educators report building professional learning communities with other ECEs and kindergarten teachers. According to ECEs, participating in such professional learning environments, both locally and provincially, encourages and supports personal and professional growth, thereby increasing their sense of value and worth. These educators highlight the importance of being part of a team with a common vision. Further, they report personal growth in the building and acquisition of professional skills with respect to the narrative documentation and sharing of children's learning, as well as through provincial professional development opportunities related to the Early Childhood Framework document.

For me it is like begin revitalized. I have been in early childhood for a long time. I needed this to get back to the roots - the importance of the work; the importance of the programming. Being at this centre, I feel that my work is being valued and is being honoured by the outside. When you see everyone around the table, it draws me in and I want to give it my all. When I look back ten years ago, and I see the professionalism that there is now, there is no comparison. *(ECE)*

4.4 Impacts on Community Partners and Service Providers

A number of early childhood centres meet regularly with their community partners and service providers. In some cases, the early childhood partners meet as part of an Early Childhood Initiative Committee (ECI), while others have created a partners' committee directly associated with their centre.

The New Brunswick Family Resource Centre has provided significant support to this initiative at both the provincial and local levels. In the centres that have created strong partnerships with FRC, the partnership has enhanced program offerings, reduced costs, and increased utilization and reach. Being part of an early childhood centre has allowed partners and services providers to:

- Gain access to a space designed specifically for early childhood education
- Provide flexibility in scheduling programming during the day and evening to meet the needs of children, parents and families
- Communicate with the site director who acts as a liaison for parents, connecting them with appropriate service providers or community partners
- Observe and work with children in their learning environments
- Work with parents in a familiar setting where they feel safe and secure, and where opportunities for communication are enhanced

5.0 Key Challenges

The purpose of identifying key challenges is to identify barriers that inhibit the practices of integration at a community and provincial level. Many of the successes at the site level can be attributed to the “good will” of the solid relationships that exist among early childhood stakeholders. However, stakeholders caution that good will alone will not sustain the kind of change that is needed for New Brunswick to reap the economic, academic, social and health benefits associated with universally accessible, quality early childhood education and care. The following sections present data pertaining to challenges, which were gathered through key informant interviews, focus groups, site observations and monthly reports.

5.1 Leadership and Sustainability

Key informants reported that defining the roles and responsibilities of early childhood centre board members remains a challenge. Some sites spoke of the need to recruit specific individuals within the community with essential skill sets to serve as board members. In year two, concerns with respect to the sustainability of leadership structures were prominent. Government funded centres expressed concern regarding leadership, governance and sustainability following the completion of the demonstration projects at the end of June 2012. Other issues around

sustainability included how to engage more partners to become involved with the site, how to attract more families to afterschool care services, and how to move forward in planning for parenting programs.

5.2 Early Childhood Centre Licensing

Some early childhood sites described the licensing process as complex and confusing. Understanding the different requirements of the policies and practices of the Departments of Social Development and Education and Early Childhood was described as frustrating for site directors and coordinators tasked with preparing documentation and ensuring that requirements were met. The sharing of information and experiences among CYV sites, as well as the support of the CYV Coordinator, contributed to the alleviation of some of this stress.

5.3 Recruitment and Retention of Early Childhood Staff

Finding and retaining qualified staff was reported as a significant challenge, especially for the Francophone centres. Concern was noted regarding the pay inequities existing among early childhood educators, kindergarten teachers and other service providers. The province is in the process of creating more online spaces in the Community College system's early childhood education programs to accommodate potential students who are in the workforce.

5.4 Partnerships

Partnerships with the schools and districts have continued to develop throughout year two. Informants noted key challenges related to the lack of clear communication protocols with the district, as well as the lack of specific guidelines in the partnership agreements. Other partners note issues and barriers around the difference in mandates between universal and targeted programs. Also noted as an area of challenge are the differences in geographical boundaries among the Departments of Education and Early Childhood, Social Development and Health, which can lead to difficulties for some centres when trying to connect with their regional service providers. A third challenge related to partnerships is the gap in service delivery during the period between the end of preschool and the beginning of kindergarten. Informants reported that even if children in kindergarten are immediately assessed and services requested, the wait time for services could be between nine months and one year. Finally, informants report that some service providers and community partners have not engaged with the sites, and cite the need for clear communication at the provincial level in terms of their roles and responsibilities with the early childhood centres.

5.5 Family and Community Engagement

While there are many successes to celebrate in terms of family and community engagement, informants report that there are still some families who are falling through the cracks. Lack of communication, understanding of the function of the early childhood centre, transportation and

scheduling of programs were identified as inhibiting factors. Informants report that in several centres, the provision of childcare services is seen as competition by the private childcare operators. An additional noted challenge is related to having a means of understanding the unique needs of the parents and the community. Parental representation on the board and the creation of a formalized plan to collect feedback from parents are two strategies used by sites.

5.6 Policy Issues at the Provincial Level

Stakeholders were united in their belief that the practices of integration are improving care and education for families, parents and children. However, four key challenges that require structural change were identified by stakeholders. They include:

- Gaps in services that occur between preschool and kindergarten. Services are terminated when the child enters school - testing must reoccur and interventions are reintroduced. Frequently the wait time is significant.
- Changes to the *Schools Act*, which presently includes educational responsibility for children 5 to 21, to accommodate the addition of Early Childhood to the Department of Education
- Resources/funding that are not pooled so that service providers can work together to provide a holistic approach to children and families
- Privacy legislation that poses a barrier for partners wanting to share information and work together in building comprehensive services for children and families.

5.7 Barriers to Integration

When considering opportunities for integrating four-year-old preschool programming with that of kindergartens, some sites have encountered barriers related to the teachers' collective agreement and its guidelines around class size and teacher work load. Stakeholders also indicated that perceived lack of communication between the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development and the New Brunswick Teachers Union posed a significant challenge in moving forward with innovative, integrated programming.

6.0 Lessons Learned

6.1 Leadership and Management

Lessons learned have emerged from centres that have boards that function effectively, as well as from those that have experienced difficulty. Clearly, where principals and teachers are engaged in the planning of the early childhood initiatives, greater and more rapid success has been

attained. A strong director and board with representation from community partners and service providers tend to move initiatives forward more effectively.

At a provincial level, a redefinition of the roles and responsibilities of principals to include the children and staff of early childhood centres would facilitate closer ties to schools, and more effective integration of services and programming. Educational and professional development opportunities would increase principals' understanding of early childhood education and care. Similar to Parent-School Support Committees, (PSSCs), the early childhood centres would benefit from leadership/advisory committees with clearly stated guidelines with respect to structure, roles and responsibilities.

Parent representation on ECDC boards has facilitated the development of programs and services that meet the unique needs of the community. Such linkages between ECDCs and their communities have led to closer ties with service providers and regional support systems. When there is strong representation from community partners and service providers, sites move more fluidly toward engaging stakeholders in joint initiatives, based on common visions that expand capacity and reach. Finally, growth is experienced most consistently among sites with regularly scheduled meetings that focus on considering site directors' reports, leading to joint decisions regarding program policies and resource allocation, and the prioritization of community-driven service planning and program implementation.

6.2 Accessibility of Programs and Services

The Community Schools model can highlight valuable lessons for the integration of service at the school level. Within this model, parents and families already view the school as the "hub" of the community where they can access services, programs and activities five New Brunswick sites are currently located within designated community schools; while others have well-established sports and community programs that allow them to function like community schools. While Ste. Bernadette is not a community school, it can benefit from models in schools such as École Ste. Anne in Fredericton and Samuel de Champlain in Saint John, which serve Francophone minorities living in Anglophone settings.

It is foundational to the development of integrated service platform that Early Childhood Centre programs and services evolve in response to family and community needs. A balance of flexible childcare services, no cost activities for parents and children (drop-in play groups, family celebrations, etc.) and family/parenting sessions must be accessible to both stay-at-home parents and to those who work full-time, part-time or in shifts. Embedded processes and procedures must ensure a site's ability to understand and implement programming to meet the needs of children, parents and families. Such responsiveness has been observed in sites that have begun to work on minimizing the transition for children and their parents from early childhood to kindergarten. The appointment of a transition team facilitated by the principal and Transition to Schools Coordinator has resulted in the creation of joint activities that recognize the contributions of both early childhood educators and kindergarten teachers in the development of integrated programming.

In the CYV sites and La Boussole, the planning and implementation of the early learning centres has been accelerated due to the opportunity to implement the "lessons learned" from the pilot sites. A second contributing factor to the success of these sites has been the availability and role

of the CYV Coordinator, who has facilitated frequent networking meetings where sites have been able to exchange ideas, ask questions, and share successes and lessons learned.

6.3 Early Learning Environments

The location of early childhood centres in schools has facilitated the transition to school for New Brunswick families through increased access to a broad range of early childhood services, providing a hub for accessing information and supports related child, family and parenting needs. Further, school-based centres serve a role in both preparing children and parents for school, and for preparing schools for the entrance of children with exceptional needs into the public school system. Such linkages allow for identification and application of early intervention services for children and families, building stronger relationships between the school and parents. In this model, parents are encouraged to take a more active role in the ongoing education of their children from Pre-kindergarten onward.

Other benefits of school-based centres include more efficient use of open spaces due to declining enrolments in New Brunswick schools. In an article in the October 24, 2011 edition of Fredericton's Daily Gleaner, it was noted that: "While the numbers show a two per cent drop in enrolment in the province over last year, the real story is the startling free fall over a little more than a decade: The number of students in kindergarten to Grade 12 has declined from just under 125,000 to about 103,000 between 2000-11. Overall, that's a net loss of about 22,000 students, or an 18 per cent skid" (retrieved October 28, 2011 from <http://dailygleaner.canadaeast.com/front/article/1450196>). Such a decline necessitates and paves the way for the creative and thoughtful allocation of space to ensure ongoing viability for many New Brunswick schools. The inclusion of early childhood centres also allows for the use of traditionally unused spaces during school holidays and professional development days.

6.4 The Early Learning Team

Stakeholders participating in ECDC evaluation activities have called for the articulation of provincial policy that articulates "how" early learning teams should be created, and identifies team mandates, vision, and roles and responsibilities. Lessons learned from the ECDC sites highlight that the development of a successful early learning team depends upon:

- The hiring and retention of qualified early childhood educators
- Opportunities and time to understand each other's vision, mandates, goals, and curricula
- Common scheduled planning times for early childhood educators and kindergarten teachers
- Opportunities for common professional development
- Commitment to plan and implement joint initiatives
- The support of the principal in facilitating the factors listed above

6.5 Family and Community Engagement

Family and community engagement is enhanced when participants have a voice in planning and implementing programs and services. The embedding of community consultation processes as a consistent component of ECDC services ensures the understanding of community needs in planning programs and services. Communication protocols can utilize existing tools such as school newsletters, local bulletin boards, church bulletins, social media, school voice-mail, and email distribution lists to raise community awareness of programs and services. Further, using existing regional committee infrastructures to facilitate relationships between ECDC sites and community partners/service providers increases both family and community engagement.

The continuity of positions and service among early childhood staff, along with the trusting relationships forged among staff, families and community partners, strengthens the impact of ECDCs. Specifically, the role of the Site Director is critical in:

- Providing information to the community regarding services and programs for parents
- Connecting families to essential services
- Coordinating programs and services at the centre that meet identified needs, and
- Facilitating the delivery of partner programs at the centre.

7.0 Promising Interactions

This section draws upon the lessons learned from New Brunswick's nine early childhood demonstration sites as they have engaged in a two-year process (of a three year commitment) of fostering the integration of programs and services that focus on the unique needs of families, parents and children, prenatal to five years of age. In some cases, these services and programs have been extended to include children in elementary schools (K-5). Lessons learned have been gleaned both from the successes and challenges of the Centres. The promising practices have been drawn from data gleaned from provincially funded sites, as well as sites supported by seed funding from the Margaret and Wallace McCain Family Foundation (MWMFF). In addition, promising practices draw equally upon the experiences of sites that have private or not-for profit childcare services located within the school, and those that work closely with offsite privately owned or not-for-profit childcare facilities. Graphic representations are used to enhance understanding of the emergent promising practices. It is essential to note that the promising practices are outcomes of the generous, passionate, and committed work of grass roots community-based individuals, as well as the Memorandum of Understanding signed by four government departments to support financially the creation of four early childhood demonstration sites. The creation and expansion of the early childhood programs and services depend upon the relationships and shared visions that have been formed at the community level. These relationships and the policies that facilitated them have been essential in demonstrating how the process of integration takes place at the community-based level. Sustainability and "scaling up" is dependent upon the creation and implementation of public policy to support these initiatives.

Suitability of the school as a location for Early Childhood Centers:



The "HUB" - Early Learning Centres in Schools

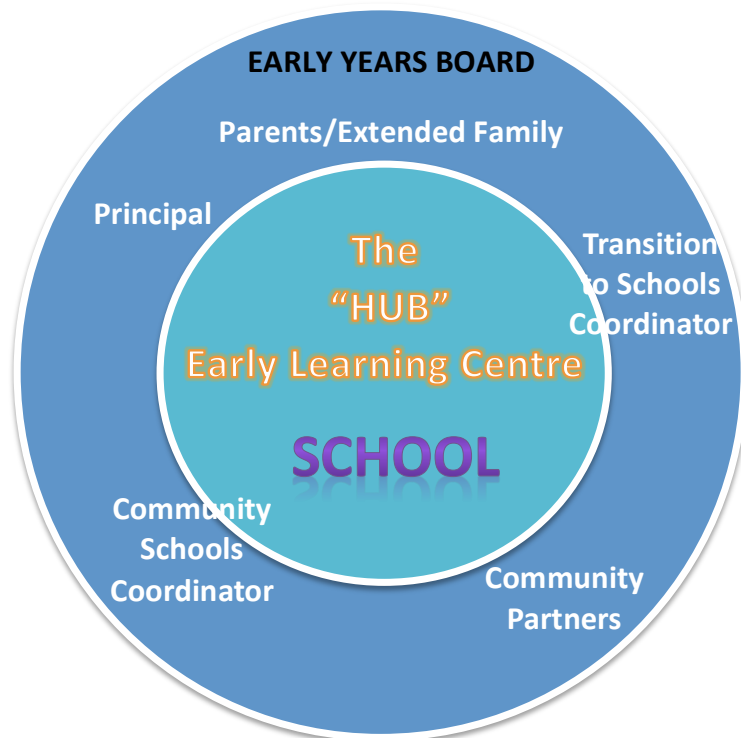
Why locate Early Learning Centres in schools?

- Builds on the image of school as a "hub" that already exists for community schools and those that function as community schools without the designation
- Makes effective and efficient use of open spaces due to declining enrollments
- Helps ensure the feasibility of small rural schools
- Creates smoother transitions for children and parents from preschool to kindergarten
- Facilitates the building of strong relationships between children, parents, families and the schools
- Utilizes the school's infrastructure and public image as a place of learning and care on which to build a comprehensive continuum of services from prenatal onwards
- Reduces costs for delivery of services and programs
- Increases collaboration of partners involved with four and five year olds as well as younger children
- Supports communication across sectors involved with children with special needs

The evolution of leadership and management structures of the Early Childhood Centres highlight some of the promising interactions that have emerged over the past two years, including those among members of the early childhood boards and committees.

Board Membership requires individuals who are:

- *Community-based, with a common vision and passion*
- *Good communicators and team players who understand what it means to be connected to the community*
- *Cognizant of the value of building family supports in their communities*

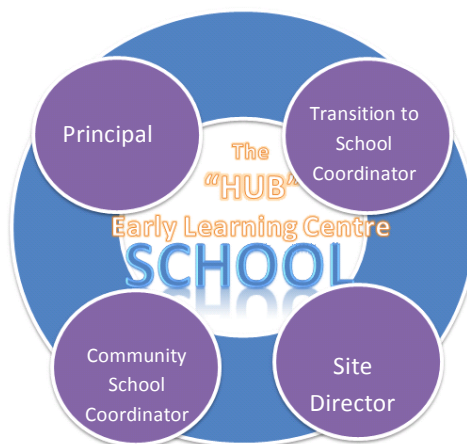


Early Years Board: Leadership and Management of Early Years Centres

1. **Representation:** Having members from the following sectors ensures a wide representation of diverse social networks, skills, knowledge and abilities.
 - Education: Principal, Transition to Schools Coordinator, Site Director, Community Schools Coordinator, Teachers, and other district personnel (Francization Coordinator, Learning Specialists, etc.)
 - Service Providers: VON, FRC, Talk with Me, Health, Autism Services, Early Intervention
 - Community: Parents/Extended Family, representatives from town/village councils, service organizations and local businesses, as well as retired individuals.
2. **Key members:** The participation of four key professionals (Principal, Site Director, Community Schools Coordinator, and Transition to Schools Coordinator) has been identified as critical to the building of an early childhood integrated service delivery model. *(Their roles will be explored in the following sections.)*
3. **Infrastructure:** Formation of a board leads to the creation of formal processes to support planning, implementation and long-term sustainability. Such processes include:
 - Conducting consultation to ascertain needs of the community, families, parents and children
 - Creating vision and mission statements, as well as strategic plans guided by the NB Early Childhood Logic Model
 - Defining roles and responsibilities; creating HR documents and Centre handbooks for parents and programming
 - Expanding and creating joint program initiatives with community partners and service providers
 - Hiring a site director, early childhood educators and educational assistants
 - Creating comprehensive communication protocols

Role of the Principal

- Embraces the concept of locating Early Childhood Centres in schools
- Understands and supports the benefits of early childhood integrated service delivery in school-based Centres
- Assumes responsibility for all children and educational staff in the school
- Engages school staff in planning and implementation of the Early Childhood Centre
- Facilitates the formation of partnerships between early childhood educators/service providers and kindergarten teachers
- Provides opportunities for collaborative professional development
- Invites the parents, children and staff of the Early Childhood Centre to become active members of the school community
- Works with the School District office on creating practices that support the development and ongoing operations of the early child sites



Many individuals have been critical to the growth and successes experienced by sites in the planning and implementation of the Early Childhood Centres. The roles outlined on this page are those that have been assumed by participants, and go beyond their traditional areas of responsibility. These additional roles have facilitated the process of integration of activities, programs and services.

Role of Transition to Schools Coordinator

- Understands current early childhood research and supports the benefits of integrated service delivery in early childhood
- Makes connections between all partners delivering services to pre-kindergarten children for the purpose of identifying gaps in services, and providing opportunities to engage in joint planning around their individual needs
- Works with all stakeholders to identify and build relationships with vulnerable children and their families
- Organizes joint district professional development activities for kindergarten teachers and ECEs
- Provides opportunities for all Early Childhood Centers in the catchment area to network, and to receive ongoing PD
- Has flexible working hours that allows for attendance at community committee meetings that pertain to early childhood
- Shares with all stakeholders current research and promising practices on early childhood

Role of the Community Schools Coordinator

- Makes linkages between existing community partners and the Early Childhood Centre
- Facilitates the building of relationships between families and the early childhood staff
- Works with the Early Childhood Centre to expand existing programs to include early childhood children and their families
- Assists with community consultations to identify community needs
- Promotes the programs and services of the Early Childhood Centre

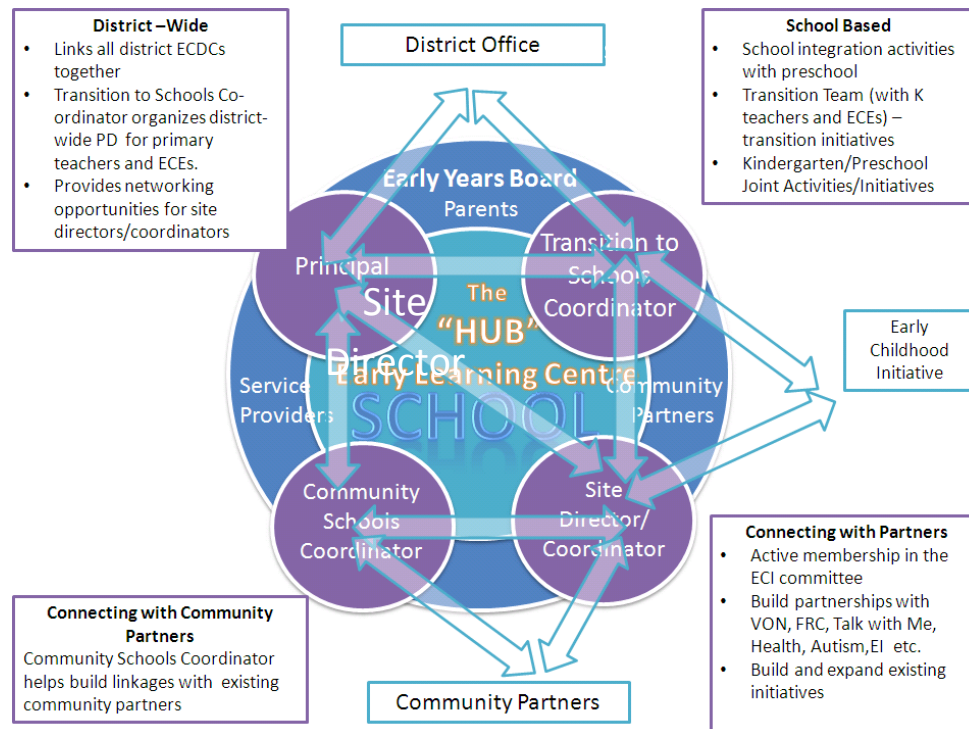
Role of the Site Director

- Oversees the day-to-day operations of the Early Childhood Centre
- Builds strong relationships with children, parents and families
- Works with service providers to facilitate opportunities to build relationships with parents and children
- Assists parents in accessing essential information and services
- Collaborates with kindergarten teachers and the Transition to Schools Coordinator to plan transition activities for pre-kindergarten children

Interactions that Enhance Practices of Integration in Early Childhood

Among the demonstration sites, several specific interactions have facilitated the understanding and implementation of practices of integration at the school, community and district levels. The graphic below combines the identified interactions. The promising practices embedded in each of these interactions will be explored individually.

At a provincial level, Family Resource Centres (FRCs) have made a commitment to support the development of the ECDC demonstration sites. The relationship between ECDCs and FRCs has demonstrated many promising practices for other partners to consider. These involve such actions as donating equipment, materials and human resources. FRCs have also relocated programs into the Early Learning Centres in schools, expanded existing programs, and developed new joint initiatives to address local community and family needs. In addition, FRC educators often serve as members of the Early Childhood Boards or Committees.



Interactions that Facilitate Practices of Integration

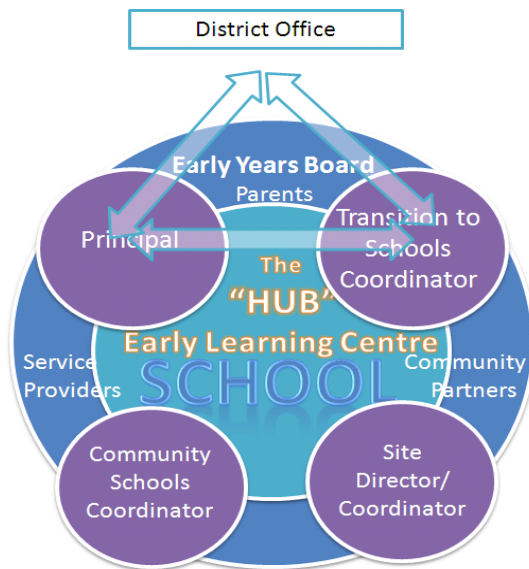
School-based Interactions

At a school level, the Principal, Transition to Schools Coordinator and the Site Director work together to facilitate linkages between the children in the Early Childhood Centre (preschool, childcare, etc.) and the larger school community. The goal of minimizing the transition from early childhood to kindergarten is at the forefront of all activities. The goal would be the same regardless of whether the childcare and preschool were located in the school or near the school (in well established, licensed centres). The creation of a transition team comprised of the administrator, kindergarten teachers and early childhood educators is one promising practice that has demonstrated success in bridging the gaps and creating opportunities to work as a team with a common vision. Providing regularly scheduled meeting times and a specific agenda has worked successfully at several sites.



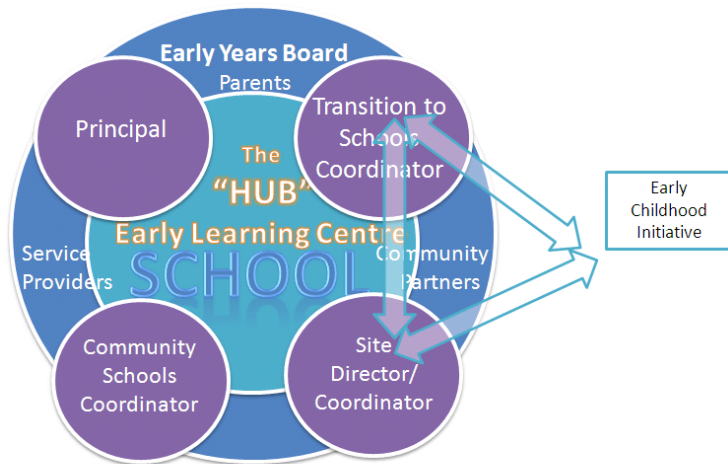
Other successful integration

practices have included monthly activities between the kindergarten classes and preschool, school wide activities such as concerts or family day, and shared library, physical education and music activities.



District-Wide Interactions

One of the emergent promising practices is the way in which the Principal and Transition to Schools Coordinator provide clear communication from the school level to district personnel. In one district, the Transition to Schools Coordinator assumed responsibility for bringing together Site Directors on a regular basis (i.e. four times a year) for the purpose of networking, sharing and ongoing professional development. In addition, the Transition to Schools Coordinator worked at a district level to facilitate opportunities for professional development for all educators working with children (0-6 years).



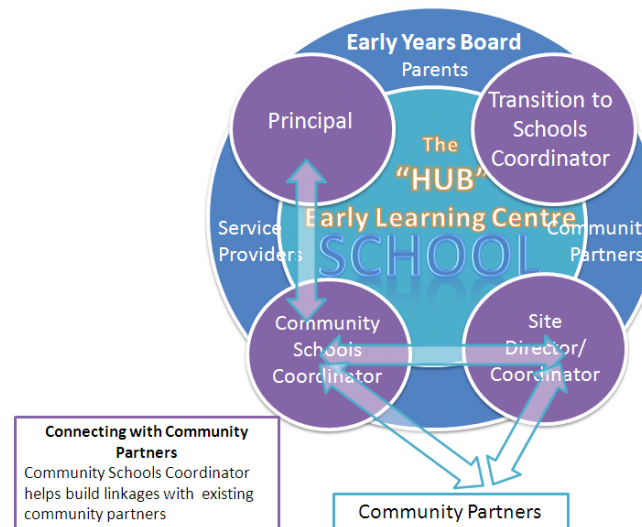
Interactions that Build Connections with Service Providers

Another promising practice emerged through the participation of the Transition to Schools Coordinator (TSC) and a Site Director (SD) in the regional Early Development Initiative Committee, which brings all early childhood service providers and community partners around a common table for monthly meetings. The TSC and SD were able to share the vision and needs of the Early Childhood Centres in the area. They established relationships with partners, invited service providers and community partners to offer programming at the Centres, and worked with them to expand existing programs and build new ones. As shown earlier in this document, these relationships break down existing silos, allowing programs/services to be delivered more effectively, efficiently and economically. It is important that the early years boards at each site

have representation from service providers. The PEI sites have demonstrated that parenting programs offered by partners should be opened to include all parents who have children from 0-8 years. Such accessibility has helped to close the gap that exists between early years programs and kindergartens. In addition, this practice supports parents as they move with their children into the public school system.

Interactions that Connect the Centre with the Community

In community schools, the Community Schools Coordinator works with the Site Director to build linkages between the Early Childhood Centre and existing community partners. Through these interactions, some programming has expanded to include families with preschool children. Joint initiatives between the Early Childhood Centres and communities designed to address identified gaps have been successively implemented and subsequently expanded.



8.0 Moving Forward

The Year Two Research Report reconfirms and builds upon the findings from the Interim Report of 2011. A series of promising interactions have emerged from the demonstration sites that extend infrastructures that are already in place. The promising interactions detailed in the previous section represent a primarily educational perspective, due to the fact that the schools and districts have represented two of the most crucial partnerships with the early childhood sites in years one and two. The Final Research Report to be submitted at the close of year three will focus on expanding the view of *Promising Interactions* to take into consideration the strong partnerships developing with Family Resource Centres, as well as partnerships within the Departments of Health, Education and Early Childhood Development and Culture, Tourism and Healthy Living.

The following discussion is built around the four tenets presented in the Interim Report that are foundational to moving towards practices of integration that are sustainable over time:

8.1 Early Childhood Centres should be located within schools or closely associated with schools

The research from Year 1 and Year 2 supports the development of practices of integration on the foundation of successful infrastructure. The *Promising Interactions* emerging from the sites outline the ways in which key individuals (i.e. principals, transition to school coordinators, community schools coordinators, site directors, and family) expanded their roles and responsibilities at the community level in working with the early childhood centres. In order to sustain and grow the positive changes that have taken place, structural changes in terms of policy are required at the provincial level. For example, the extension of the roles and responsibilities for principals might include:

- Expansion of responsibility to include children (0-5 years) and staff of the early childhood centre
- Membership on the Early Childhood Leadership Team or Board
- Knowledge of Early Years Framework and philosophical foundations that could include professional development for existing principals and the inclusion of an early years course as a requirement for a Principal's Certification.
- Understanding how to build curricular transitions between early years and kindergarten, increasing knowledge and awareness of all parties.

8.2 Early childhood and education should be integrated at the community, departmental and provincial levels

The New Brunswick government has moved toward the integration of education and early childhood at the provincial level by creating the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development. Currently, New Brunswick is one of four Canadian provinces that have combined early childhood and education into a common department. Key informants expressed their perspective that, if this political merger is to create sustainable change, the province must articulate a clear, overarching provincial vision supported by policies, long-term objectives, and implementation plans including timeframes and descriptions of comprehensive service delivery. When creating supporting policies, key

informants cautioned that political decisions should be guided by the needs of children and families. The existing silos of service delivery systems often create gaps in service, redundancies, fragmented programs, and barriers to information-sharing and collaboration. Suggestions offered by informants included:

- The alignment of geographical boundaries for service providers and community partners (school districts, health zones, etc.)
- The continuation of services (i.e. speech and language, early intervention, autism support, physiotherapy, etc.) from age 0 through grade two to bridge the gap that occurs between preschool and kindergarten. Some informants called for a continuum of services that spans from conception to the end of elementary school.
- The creation of an access to information policy that allows service providers to share information for the purpose of creating a comprehensive continuum of services and programs for children, parents and families
- The reconfiguration of legislative acts (e.g. Schools Act), educational policies, unions (e.g. New Brunswick Teachers Federation) and professional organizations (e.g. New Brunswick Teachers Association and Early Childhood and Care New Brunswick) to recognize that education encompasses children from conception to age 21 in the new Department of Education and Early Childhood Development
- The creation of professional requirements for early childhood certification and educational opportunities, working in partnership with the community colleges and provincial universities. Prince Edward Island has provided a model of how governments work in partnership with educational institutions to help fulfill aspects of the overarching provincial vision for early childhood, which is to provide quality education and care for preschool children, as well as their parents and families.

8.3 Early Childhood Centres should be restructured to ensure universal access and the preparation of all children for school

This report documents increases in utilization, expansion of services, and growth in terms of early childhood sites' capacity to engage children, families and communities. Yet, key informants reported that many families are not accessing centre services, activities, and programming. The narrative of Susan's experiences with one of the early childhood centres points to the ease and comfort that she feels in accessing all services in one central location or hub. The school as a hub provides potential continuity and seamlessness of services for children and their families. Within present fractured offerings, parents must figure out how to access and fit into programs. In an integrated system, educators and service providers work together with families in a comprehensive continuum of services, programs and resources. The Early Childhood Education Index suggests that a common early childhood education policy framework, supervisory unit, and community-based management and administrative authority are necessary components of such a system (Early Years Study 3, 2012).

8.4 The leadership and management structure of the early childhood centres must guarantee that programming and services respond to the unique needs of children and families in each community.

The lessons learned from the cross case analyses in years one and two, as well as the *Promising Interactions* that have emerged at the site levels

point to a leadership and management structure that recognizes the unique needs of the community, and builds upon the strengths of existing programs, partnerships and relationships to provide foundations for new initiatives. The *Promising Interactions* identify key stakeholders who have facilitated actions and relationships that have led to practices of integration. Some of the interactions and practices that have emerged include:

School Level

- Role of the Principal in facilitating the creation of professional learning communities such as the Early Childhood Transition Team, and in creating opportunities for the early childhood centre in which children and parents are engaged as part of the school community
- Role of the Principal as a key member of the Early Childhood Administrative Board or Committee to facilitate practices of integration with the school, to support efforts to minimize transitions, and to create seamless access to programs
- Role of Family Resource Centre personnel as board members who work with site directors to create programs that meet the needs of parents and preschool children
- Role of parents on the Early Childhood Administrative Board or Committee, providing sites with an understanding of the unique needs of the community. Research findings support the importance of grass roots, community-level engagement and ownership of early childhood centres supported by provincial policies and actions.

District Level

- Role of the Principals, Site Directors and Centre Directors in facilitating on-going communication between the school/centre and the district. In one district, a learning specialist is the key contact responsible for updating partnership agreements, facilitating communication protocols for requests and updates, and organizing bi-annual meetings for district personnel, Site Directors, Principals and Transition to School Coordinators.
- Role of Transition to School Coordinators in creating opportunities for early childhood sites in district catchment areas to meet on a regular basis for ongoing professional development and sharing
- Role of Transition to School Coordinators and District Learning Specialists in creating opportunities for joint professional development between early childhood educators, kindergarten teachers and other early childhood service providers, educators and school staff members.

Community Level

- Role of Transition to School Coordinators in developing opportunities for parents and children to become involved in existing programs
- Role of Transition to School Coordinators and Centre Directors in connecting with other early childhood service providers by becoming members of regional committees (e.g. Early Childhood Initiatives Committee in Woodstock; Table de Concertation de Chaleur in Bathurst)

Provincial Level

The relationship of Family Resource Centres (FRC) with early childhood centres has been the focus of several provincial discussions. At a community level, the FRCs have already partnered with some sites. Potential benefits of formalizing linkages with FRCs at a provincial level include:

- FRCs knowledge of and established relationships with vulnerable families and children in each region of the province
- Enhanced access to resources and programming
- Proven methods of delivering programming to parents and children
- Flexible outreach programming that can be delivered in locations that best meet needs of children and families

In years one and two, FRCs have moved drop-in, parenting and school readiness programs to the school sites; donated toys, books and human resources; and developed partnership programs with the early childhood centres. At a provincial level, FRCs already work in partnership with the Departments of Health; Education and Early Childhood Development; and Culture, Tourism and Healthy Living (formerly known as Wellness, Culture and Sport). It is expected that year three activities and observations will result in the documentation of other emerging practices with FRCs, as well as with other service providers and community partners.

Appendix A: Cost-Benefit Analyses: Early Childhood Programming

FIGURE 4.3

Five Canadian cost-benefit analyses of early childhood programming

Study	Year	Description	Benefits	Ratio
Economic Consequences of Quebec's Educational Child Care Policy Pierre Fortin, Luc Godbout, Suzie St-Cerny	2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Examined benefits of enhanced maternal employment due to low cost child care 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quebec gains \$1.5B in increased tax revenue Pays \$340M less in tax and social benefits to families Increased provincial GDP by \$5.2B (+1.7%) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For every \$1 spent on ECEC, Quebec receives \$1.05 Federal government receives \$0.44
Better Beginnings, Better Futures Ray D. Peters, et al.	2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$580,000 per site for 5 years to enrich child, parent and neighbourhood programming 3 sites involving children 4-8 yrs 5 sites involving children 0-4 yrs Matched similar neighbourhoods Children followed to grade 12 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No difference for BBBF sites focused on 0-4 yrs Reduced use of health, social benefits, special education, child welfare and criminal justice in sites focused on 4-8 yrs cohorts compared to control neighbourhoods 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For every \$1 spent, \$2 in reduced costs to public and community agencies
Workforce Shortages Socio-Economic Effects Robert Fairholm	2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analysis of potential benefits for every \$1M spent on child care Child care an effective job creator and economic stimulant 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$2.02 / \$1 spent on operations \$1M = 40 jobs \$1.47 / \$1 spent on capital \$1M = 29 jobs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For every \$1 invested \$2.42 in increased earnings, improved health, reduced social costs
Child Care as Economic and Social Development Susan Prentice	2007	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Examined economic multipliers from existing child care services in 4 Manitoba communities: Winnipeg, Thompson, Parkland and St.-Pierre-Jolys 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Winnipeg child care sector has gross revenues of over \$101M/year Employs 3,200 with annual earnings of \$80M 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Every \$1 creates \$1.38 in the local economy and \$1.40 in the Canadian economy Every 1 child care job creates 2.1 spinoff jobs
The Benefits and Costs of Good Child Care Gordon Cleveland & Michael Krashinsky	1998	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Estimated costs of a universal child care program for every child 2-5 yrs Assumed educators earn \$36K and parents pay 20% of overall costs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 170,000 jobs created Increased maternal labour force participation Lower welfare & related costs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Every \$1 spent creates \$2 including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$0.75 in social savings \$1.25 increased tax revenue from job creation/working mothers

Sources: Cleveland, G., & Krashinsky, M. (1998); Fairholm, R. (2009); Fortin, P., Godbout, L., & St-Cerny, S. (2011); Peters, R.D., Nelson, G., et al. (2010); Prentice, S., & McCracken, M. (2004).