

Hamilton  
**Best Start**



# **Collaboration and the Early Development Instrument**

*Implementation, Data Linking and Analysis,  
Dissemination and Use*

The Association of Educational Researchers of Ontario  
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# The Early Development Index (EDI)

## *A fast introduction/recap*

The EDI measures children's developmental outcomes:

- populations (groups), not individuals
- *pre*-school results, not school results
- five domains of development (16 sub-domains)
- scores and vulnerability



## Collaboration and the EDI: Implementation

- A joint project of:
  - the Offord Centre for Child Studies (McMaster University),
  - the Ministry of Children and Youth Services,
  - the local Data Analysis Coordinator host agency, and
  - local school Boards
- Completed by SK teachers – and perhaps soon by SK ECEs



## Collaboration and the EDI: Implementation

- Key coordination challenges include:
  - planning – timelines, support and knowledge of contact
  - Collective Agreement requirements (release time, costs)
  - the supply of Supply teachers – which ECEs will make worse
  - data-sharing agreements and parent notification letters
  - teacher training – time, location, format
  - data requirements for implementation
  - customized local questions (Section E)
- The Kindergarten Parent Survey – a whole additional set of problems



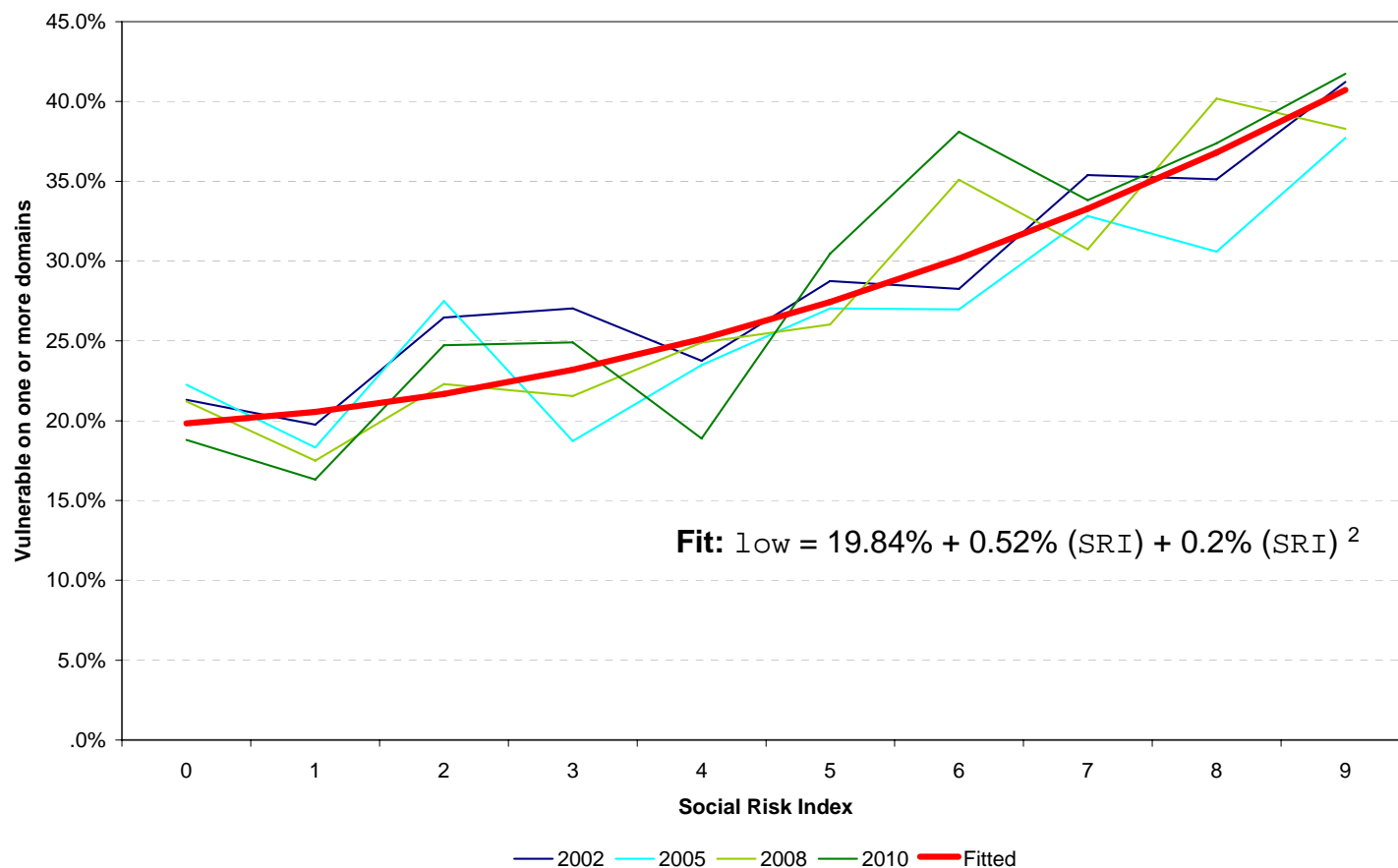
## Collaboration and the EDI: Analysis

- Data cleaning – help with the fiddly bits:
  - assistance with missing data (e.g., added cases)
  - assistance with geographic data (e.g., postal code corrections, direct assignment to DAs, CTs, school catchments, or other neighbourhoods/communities)
- What do you want to know?
  - Community-wide priorities for child development monitoring
  - Sector-specific questions (e.g., impact of child care)
  - Agency-specific questions (e.g., early identification of speech and language impairments)



## Community-wide questions

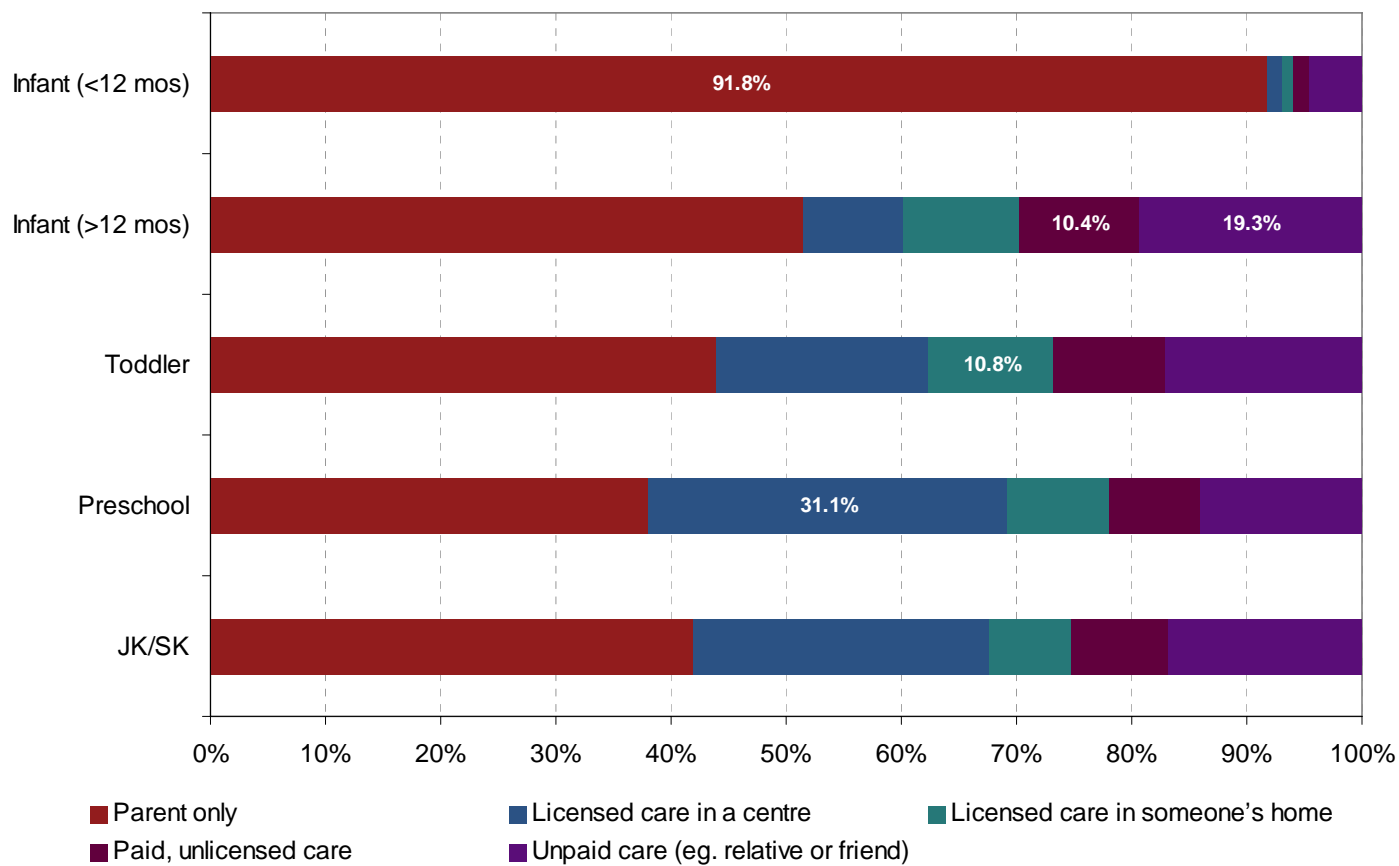
Vulnerability by Social Risk





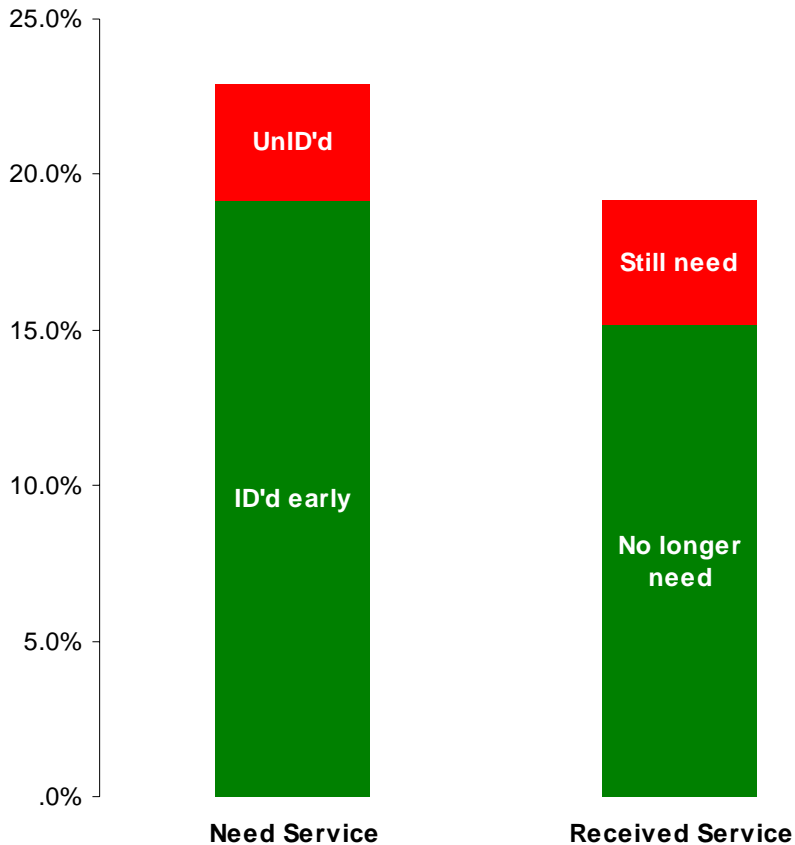
## Sector-specific questions

Main type of care by age group





## Agency-specific questions



Based on EDI and KPS data, preschool speech & language support:

- identified 84% of need
- met 79% of identified need.





## Collaboration and the EDI: Dissemination

- Reports v. presentations and data requests
  - The expectations for a report – search for a template
  - Looking for *findings* and sharing them
  - Use-focused dissemination
- Who should speak?
  - The EDI Working Group experiment
  - Developing capacity to understand/direct
  - Developing capacity to share/present



## Collaboration and the EDI: Use

- Some examples:
  - Site location
    - Full Day Kindergarten implementation
    - OEYCs
    - Early intervention services
  - Funding decisions for programs supporting disadvantaged children and children with special needs
  - Support for grant proposals (early literacy, transition to school)
  - Sub-domain vulnerabilities as pedagogical guidance
  - Coverage studies for early intervention services (identifying the unidentified)



## The Special Challenge of Data Linking

- Perhaps the greatest challenge in collaboration and service integration
  - For service delivery purposes (e.g., common intake, case management, case history)
  - For planning purposes – obtaining a system-wide view of need and usage
  - For evaluation purposes – tracking children’s outcomes, across services, to assess impacts over time



## Collaboration and the EDI: Linking

- EDI/KPS is recognized as a key resource for assessing outcomes
- The KPS is designed to be linked to the EDI – a key part of its value
- As an impact measure of pre-school experiences, benefits from linking to pre-school service and home/peer life data
- As an input measure for school outcomes, benefits from linking to school intervention and outcomes data



# Community-wide Data Linking: The Big Bang Approach

- Provincial models:
  - Population Data BC
  - Manitoba Centre for Health Policy
  - Plans for an MCYS “Long-term Data Strategy” ...
- What can we achieve at the *local* level?
  - Hamilton Best Start Data Warehouse proposal (2007)
  - Data Linking Study for MCYS (2009-10)
  - Hamilton Child & Youth Data Linking Project (in progress)



## **Starting Small: HWCDSB EDI-EQAO Data Linking**

- EDI as predictor of EQAO results
- Deterministic links, unlike Provincial efforts
- Plan anticipates inclusion of student program information (e.g., Reading Recovery) as mediating variables
- Took two months to get an agreement, a year to get the agreement before the Board



## **Starting Small:**

### **HWDSB/HWCDSB Full-Day Kindergarten Evaluation**

- Locally-financed EDI on sample drawn from Phase I FDK classes – both educators completed independently
- Parent and educator surveys completed separately
- Intention to link DRA and related data from administrative records
- Started a year in advance to plan, still had last minute heart attacks



## **Starting Small:**

**ISCIS – Healthy Babies, Healthy Children**

**ISCIS – Preschool Speech & Language**

- Public Health offering access to ISCIS-HBHC
- Regional PSL service (Early Words) looking for assistance with ISCIS-PSL
- Projects pending, but show the direction of travel





## Collaboration and the EDI: Conclusions

- EDI is a collaborative endeavour at every stage
- The more collaboration occurs, the more valuable it is
- EDI can *foster* collaboration, by provoking questions that only more collaboration can answer
- Takes time to build understanding and momentum
- And more time to fully realize the value of collaboration once momentum is built!



# QUESTIONS?



For further information, please contact the Early Years Research Team

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