

Help children do their best [CA] ^[1]

Author: Kenny, Nuala

Source: Toronto Star

Format: Article

Publication Date: 21 Jun 2006

AVAILABILITY

See text below.

EXCERPTS

...

The Health Council of Canada will release a new report in Winnipeg, *Their Future Is Now: Healthy Choices for Canada's Children and Youth*. The report looks broadly across health issues — from immunization and obesity risks to mental health and crime prevention — and hears from a wide range of experts about what works to make policies and programs succeed for children and families.

The reasons we did this work are simple: The moral imperative — children and youth deserve society's attention; and the economic imperative — evidence tells us clearly that the sooner we invest in nurturing healthy, competent, productive citizens, the greater the return. This is not just about individual health and demands on the health-care system. It's about the health of our society, today and for the future. We all invest now or we all pay later.

As with so many areas in health and health care in this country, however, efforts are fragmented and isolated; political will blows in the wind. Almost every expert the Health Council consulted could identify initiatives that proved to be effective but that have not been widely implemented or sustained over time because of waning commitment. We can make the choice to do better.

Among the promising initiatives we learned about are:

...

- A remarkable inter-agency program called Toronto First Duty that integrates child care, kindergarten, preventive health services for kids, and support services for parents such as help with housing, jobs or language training — all under one roof and at a cost for parents as low as \$7 a day. Early evaluations suggest the program helps preschoolers overcome learning and behaviour problems. Think of the waste if Canadians fail to learn, through sustained support and evaluation, what makes programs like First Duty work and how we can replicate them in other cities and smaller communities.

Canada needs a responsible balance of universal programs to reach all children and targeted programs to reach children and youth disadvantaged by circumstances such as being poor, aboriginal or newly landed in this country.

We also need to pay attention to the key ingredients for successful programs. Parents matter: They are best able to set their own children on a path to lifelong success, but they need support to do so. Place matters: Where and how we deliver services will determine who we reach. Practice matters: We will get more value and momentum when we support children and families in a more collaborative, integrated way.

...

- reprinted from the Toronto Star

Region: Canada ^[2]

Tags: health ^[3]

integration ^[4]

Source URL (modified on 27 Jan 2022): <https://childcarecanada.org/documents/child-care-news/06/06/help-children-do-their-best-ca>

Links

[1] <https://childcarecanada.org/documents/child-care-news/06/06/help-children-do-their-best-ca> [2] <https://childcarecanada.org/taxonomy/term/7864> [3]

<https://childcarecanada.org/category/tags/health> [4] <https://childcarecanada.org/category/tags/integration>