

It takes a child to raise a community: 'Population- based' measurement of early child development ^[1]

HELP Research Brief No. 1

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AVAILABILITY

Brief in pdf ^[2]

Excerpts from the brief:

The environments that are responsible for fostering nurturant conditions for children range from the intimate realm of the family to the broader socioeconomic context shaped by governments, international agencies, and civil society.

These environments and their characteristics are known as the "social determinants" of early child development (ECD). We know that many adult health problems: obesity, mental health (depression), heart disease, high blood pressure, non-insulin dependent diabetes, as well as literacy and numeracy skills, have their roots in the early years. Therefore, not only is ECD socially determined but ECD is also a determinant of health, well-being, and learning skills across the balance of a life time. As a result, and in order to improve the health of the population, it is critical for societies to understand trends in ECD at a population level. Community-based population-level outcome measures of early child development can help us to understand trends in ECD. The Early Development Instrument (EDI) provides us with such an indicator because it reflects all the key domains of children's early development. Notably, the EDI offers British Columbia an opportunity to assess differences in ECD between places and trends in ECD over time.

If we are to improve the health, well-being and competence of the population of British Columbia, we need an outcome measure that will inform communities about how the programs, policies and social environments that we provide for young children combine to support or undermine their development.

Region: Canada ^[3]

British Columbia ^[4]

Tags: child development ^[5]

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