Contributions of school-based parenting and family literacy centres in an early childhood service system [1]

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Abstract

Increasingly, governments are seeking ways to integrate early childhood education and care services as a social policy strategy to maximize child and family outcomes. This study examines the role of a school-based parenting and family literacy program to a system of services in one community in Ontario, Canada. Using an appreciative inquiry approach, focus groups and questionnaires conducted with participants of the programs provide a view of how these programs are contributing in a community where there are a range of programs in place. These programs were described by parents as welcoming places with interesting and engaging program activities, facilities, and resources that support child development. Additionally, supports for all family members—including referrals to services which helped families in many aspects of their lives—were described as benefits of participating. The contributions of Parenting and Family Literacy Centres (PFLCs) are evident from the data and are discussed in relation to the contributions of other services and programs in the community. Additional findings examine participants' patterns of service use across the community, which shows they are using school-based services more than community-based early years services. These findings are discussed in relation to the service integration goals of provincial social policy strategies.

Region: Ontario [4]
Tags: integration [5]
    school system [6]
    pre-school [7]