



## **Toronto First Duty- Parents, Community, and Integration**

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## Education & EC: more than good economics

Education is not only about economic investment and preparing children for academic success and participation in the workforce.

Other aims are also important (Kahne, 1996)

- Developmental/humanistic
- Children's and Parents' rights
- Community building and a civil society

*EC and PCI are foundational for all of these aims*



## The TFD model & PCI



## TFD1 Core Model

Integrated core:  
{kindergarten, child care & family support}  
+ other services

- Integrated on dimensions of
- early learning environment,
  - staff team,
  - governance,
  - seamless access &
  - **parent participation**

Neighbourhood schools as hub

**Different starting points – opportunities, partners & communities**



## TFD Aims

To transform public policies on early childhood programs

*By implementing & evaluating a universal early learning and care program for every child that:*

- Supports the healthy development of children, *and at the same time*
- **Supports parents in their parenting role**
- **Supports parents to work or study**



## Research Strands



## TFD effectiveness "process"



TFD Program with **outreach**

- Staff teamwork: eye on results
- **Parents: parenting, self-efficacy, & family life**

Children's development



## TFD findings on parents & community

TFD Partners: TDSB, City, ACF  
 Community service organizations  
 Outreach  
 Parent involvement & family life  
 Community awareness



## TFD community building

Parent & community input into the development and implementation of TFD site programs, via consultations & governance

Building community awareness of the project

Building the service community through site level steering committees



## It's all about outreach & equity

Well-intentioned programs can increase inequities in our society

- If they don't reach those most in need
- if they are more effective for more able children and families

Ceci, S. & Paterno (2004). The rhetoric and reality of gap closing. *American Psychologist*.60(2), 149-160.

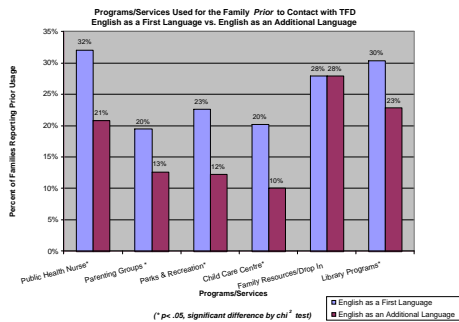


## TFD sites ( ) mapped on community demographics & school readiness

Yellow= more than 40% of children in low-income families  
 Red dots= schools with more than a third of un-ready children



## TFD & Outreach: Closing Service Gaps



## TDSB research: Preschool service use

Table 35: Children's preschool service use by ethnicity

Ethnicity	30%	5%	27%
East Asian	30%	5%	27%
Latin American	30%	6%	20%
Middle Eastern	26%	3%	17%
Mixed	39%	11%	33%
South Asian	9%	3%	29%
Southeast Asian	13%	4%	20%

O'Reilly, J. & Yau, M. (2009). 2008 Parent census, kindergarten-grade 6: System overview and detailed findings. Toronto District School Board Research Report. [http://www.tdsb.on.ca/wwwdocuments/about\\_us/media\\_room/docs/2008ParentCensusK-6SystemOverviewAndDetailedFindings.pdf](http://www.tdsb.on.ca/wwwdocuments/about_us/media_room/docs/2008ParentCensusK-6SystemOverviewAndDetailedFindings.pdf).



## **Outreach in TFD**

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Referrals across services  
Professional outreach staff  
Health screening days



## TFD effects on family stress & daily hassles

### Context-

Literature on parent stress and hassles (PDH-Crinic Greenberg, 1990) shows impact on family functioning and child development

How parents and kids affected by disconnected EC services has not been studied until now-EC-PDH

We compared 2 TFD sites to 2 matched sites with off site childcare and examined parents' reports of hassles and social support, and children's reports of their experiences.

Tomoko Arimura's MA thesis



## Hassles and Family Life

TFD parents reported fewer hassles and lower levels of stress relating to "having a hard time:

- picking up my child at the end of the day
- dealing with my child's behavioural difficulties at school
- finding information on how to deal with my child's behaviour
- finding the opportunity to talk to other parents at my child's school
- approaching the teacher or people at the school to talk about what's going on with my child"



## Parents' Social Support

Parents in TFD sites reported that child care professionals and teachers were part of their "social support network"

Parents using off-site child care reported that only child care professionals were part of their support network, not teachers



## PCI piece still needs work

- Felt left out of design of TFD programs early on
- Some cultural groups "missed" by some programming
- Some individual families missed by outreach
- Parents like the services but PCI doesn't reach the point of full ownership.



## Community Survey

In 2005 person-in-the street interviews in TFD neighborhoods among a diverse sample (35% high school or less, 44% non-parents, age 18 to 64) showed that:





Child

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## Conclusions

- Use integrated EC services to foster parents' role in early learning
- Use integrated EC services and full year provision to improve the quality of family life
- Solve the puzzle we all need to figure out: How to build public awareness and community buy-in for the Vision
- Research!



Thanks for Listening!

