

# THE DAC POST

A Newsletter from the Toronto Region Data Analysis Coordinators

Fall 2014

## Welcome!

Greetings from the Toronto Region Data Analysis Coordinators (DACs)! We're pleased to launch our new e-newsletter. This quarterly publication will allow us to keep you up to date on new information and issues in the early years sector, provide you with information about EYSIS (Early Years Services Information System) and include a section on the most current research findings in child development. If there's something specific you'd like to see in the newsletter, let us know and we'll make sure to include it in a future issue. Please send your feedback and suggestions to Jean Varghese at [jean.varghese@mothercraft.org](mailto:jean.varghese@mothercraft.org).

## What's a DAC?

The DAC position was created by the provincial government in 2003-2004, following the release of the Early Years Study (McCain & Mustard, 1999)\* as part of the introduction of the Ontario Early Years Centres across the province. Every region has DACs. In Toronto, there are three of us and we are "housed" within Mothercraft. The mandate of DACs is to support evaluation and planning activities for all agencies that serve children aged 0-6 years and their families. DACs also liaise with key stakeholders, build research and evaluation capacity within the community and support knowledge mobilization and exchange.

\*McCain, M.N. & Mustard, J. F. (1999). *Early Years Study: Reversing the Real Brain Drain*. Toronto, ON: Publications Ontario.

## Services We Provide

- ❖ Provide support to community agencies in the implementation of evaluation activities
- ❖ Collect, analyze and report on information that is important to the Early Years sector
- ❖ Provide support, training and resources for recording data elements and generating reports through EYSIS
- ❖ Lead Early Development Instrument (EDI) implementation in Toronto; support EDI knowledge mobilization by planning, coordinating and disseminating EDI results across the early years sector



### DID YOU KNOW?

In 2013-2014, the Toronto DACs:

- served 698 participants
- created and/or maintained 102 protocol/official linkages
- engaged in 114 hours of training, workshops, media events and conferences

EYSIS recorded the following service delivery statistics in 2013-2014 for the City of Toronto!

Parent Visits to OEYCs:	280, 671
Children's Visits to OEYCs:	317, 819
Referrals to Other Services:	30, 324

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## The Early Development Instrument

A key part of the DAC mandate is to play a leadership role in the implementation of the Early Development Instrument (EDI). The EDI is a teacher-completed survey developed by the Offord Centre for Child Studies at McMaster University. The instrument measures 4- to 5-year-old children's ability to meet age-appropriate developmental expectations at school. The EDI is a population-level measure which is implemented to various degrees in all Canadian provinces and territories and in a number of countries across the world. Combining EDI data with demographic and service-related information provides a contextual background to children's development. This information has been used by communities to understand how children are doing and to inform ongoing planning of services – at both local programming and broader system levels.

The EDI has now been implemented three times in Toronto since 2004. With each cycle, our knowledge mobilization activities have evolved to meet the needs of the community. In the last cycle (2010-2011), our community-based workshops included general EDI information and facilitated discussion of EDI data for each riding, co-presented with community partners. During these sessions, participants studied the EDI results of their community, engaged in planning activities using worksheets and shared their work with the larger group. It was amazing to watch new partnerships being formed at these workshops! The next EDI cycle will take place across Ontario in early 2015. For more information about the EDI, Toronto implementation and results from your riding, visit our website at [www.mothercraft.org/TorontoEDI](http://www.mothercraft.org/TorontoEDI) or contact Nikita Desai at [nikita.desai@mothercraft.org](mailto:nikita.desai@mothercraft.org).

*"The EDI data, its ease of communicability and your incredible outreach and collaboration...has inspired new collaborations...and led to all kinds of specific integrated data development..."*

*~ Dr. Lee Ford-Jones, Hospital for Sick Children*

## New Research in Child Development

### Early Attachment Experiences are Important for Self-Regulation and School Engagement

In a recent American study (May, 2014), researchers looked at the relationship between attachment, self-regulation and engagement with learning at school.

The study included 1149 children and their mothers. Researchers assessed infant-mother attachment security at 15 and 36 months. They then assessed self-regulation between Grades 1 and 5 using teacher ratings and children's performance in a variety of self-regulation tasks. School engagement was measured in Grades 1, 3 and 5 by looking at the degree to which children were engaged in classroom activities and teacher-child interactions. The main results showed that secure attachment in infancy predicted better self-regulation skills during the school years. Moreover, self-regulation measured in Grade 1 predicted the level of school engagement in Grade 5. Finally, analyses showed that the effect of attachment on school engagement is mediated by self-regulation. That is to say, attachment indirectly influences school engagement *through* self-regulation. Overall, the results of the study demonstrate that (1) secure attachment during the early years allows children to better regulate themselves and (2) school-aged children's ability to regulate their emotions in response to various types of challenges allows them to continually develop their capacities to engage in learning activities within the classroom.

This study emphasizes the importance of nurturing secure attachment with children during early childhood. Secure attachment not only affects the quality of early relationships, but influences long-term developmental outcomes in the different domains of development.

#### Reference:

Drake, J., Belsky, J., & Fearon, R. M. P. (2014). From early attachment to engagement with learning in school: The role of self-regulation and persistence. *Developmental Psychology, 50*, 1350-1361.

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## EYSIS Training and Support

EYSIS was developed by the Toronto Region DACs at Mothercraft in 2004. We continue to support OEYCs in Toronto and across Ontario in service data collection, data management and data analysis. The flexible, streamlined and centralized approach of EYSIS allows for consistent data tracking and reporting. Currently, OEYCs use EYSIS at the main and satellite sites in about 70% of ridings in Ontario. EYSIS has also been adopted by a number of family resource centres.

Regular EYSIS training is offered every quarter at Mothercraft. We also welcome special requests for immediate training of new staff who will be involved in EYSIS data collection. We provide general EYSIS support regarding update inquiries/support, system set-up/network (excluding updates), report inquiries and data entry. We also create custom queries for specific reports upon request (cost associated for non-Toronto agencies). When these custom queries are beneficial to larger groups, they are broadly disseminated to all EYSIS user agencies. For all EYSIS inquiries, please contact Jean Varghese.

### DID YOU KNOW?

In 2005, EYSIS was awarded the "Making IT Work for Volunteers" Award and was profiled on the Partnership Platform website, a site committed to recognizing projects that help Ontario's non-profit and charitable organizations.



## UPCOMING EYSIS TRAINING SESSIONS

### Monday, November 24

10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

2A: Family and Person Registration

This course teaches users how to register and edit client information records.

### Monday, November 24

1:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.

2B: Programs and Events

This course provides instruction on how to enter client participation and event details in programs and events.

### Tuesday, November 25

10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

2C: Generating Reports

This course teaches users how to generate reports for program and resource tracking.

### Tuesday, November 25

1:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.

3A: Data Cleaning

This course provides instruction on data cleaning and best practices in data entry.

Prerequisites: 2A and 2B or familiarity with EYSIS

### Wednesday, November 26

10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

2D: Resource Library

This course teaches users how to set up resource libraries within EYSIS.

\* Registration is first come, first served, so sign up early!

\* Sessions are held at Mothercraft (646 St Clair Ave W).

\* Fees:

DACs & Toronto OEYCs: No charge

Non-Toronto OEYCs: \$25 per person per course (Full refund given if a 2 business days' notice of cancellation is provided)

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## OTHER PROJECTS

### Wellbeing Toronto

Wellbeing Toronto (<http://toronto.ca/wellbeing>) is a mapping tool that helps evaluate community well-being across Toronto's neighbourhoods. City of Toronto staff and the Toronto Region DACs co-facilitate introductory training sessions to the tool twice a year. At the first session, participants identified a need for OEYC-specific training sessions, emphasizing practical use of the tool by OEYCs. The DACs led a training reference group and developed OEYC-specific training sessions.

### Work with Indicators Group

In 2012, The Toronto Child and Family Network's Steering Committee established an Outcomes Workgroup to develop an outcomes framework that measures child and family well-being. The Toronto Region DACs were part of this workgroup and helped develop a set of shared outcomes for children and families in Toronto (*Raising the Village: Measuring the Wellbeing of Children and Families in Toronto Part 1*). The DACs continue to be actively involved in the outcomes project and are part of the Indicators Workgroup that is working towards identifying indicators for the Child and Family Outcomes Framework.

### Work with Early Literacy Specialists of Toronto

In 2013, the Toronto Region DACs developed a new tracking system for the Early Literacy Specialists of Toronto. This system simplified their data entry and reporting process.

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