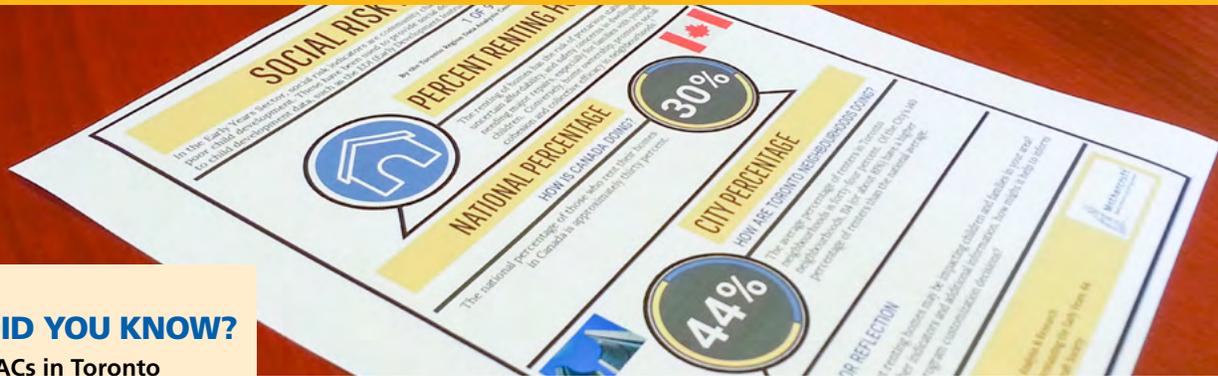


- » In the news
- » Updates on DAC activities
- » New research in child development
- » EYSIS information and training opportunities



## A Newsletter from the Toronto Region Data Analysis Coordinators



### DID YOU KNOW?

DACs in Toronto achieved the following from January to March 2016:

9 Data sets analyzed

3 Social Risk Indicator infographics developed and distributed

14.5 Hours of training, workshops and conferences delivered or attended

101 Protocols/official linkages created and/or maintained

“Awesome! Can’t wait to start using the tools to help make my job easier!”  
—EYSIS Training Participant

## IN THE NEWS

### International Research using the Early Development Instrument (EDI)

A special issue of *Early Childhood Research Quarterly* dedicated solely to research using the EDI is now available online. The research presented is based on EDI data from Canada, Australia and Hong Kong. The articles in this issue examine predictive influences on early child development and longitudinal markers of developmental progress as well as provide insights into implications for educational practice and mechanisms for intervention. Click [here](#) to access the articles for free until July 4.

### Living Arrangements of Aboriginal Children

Statistics Canada recently released a study concerning living arrangements of Aboriginal children 14 years and under, based on 2011 National Household Survey (NHS) data. Results indicated that while Aboriginal children represented 7% of all Canadian children in 2011, they accounted

for 48% of all foster children in the country. Recommendations include looking at stability of such findings and possible associations with health, education and social outcomes observed within this population. The full article can be found [here](#).

### Memorization May not be the Best Strategy to Learn Math

A recent Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development Working Paper examined how particular teaching and learning strategies are related to student performance on PISA (Programme for International Student Assessment) test questions in mathematics. The results showed that although memorization strategies are useful and may even be necessary to solve simple problems, complex problems require children to think strategically and creatively. The full paper can be found [here](#).

## UPDATE ON MAIN ACTIVITIES

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### Early Development Instrument (EDI)

Social risk indicators are community characteristics that correlate poor child development and health outcomes. In the early years sector, they have been used to provide a social determinants of health context to child development data, such as the EDI. In anticipation of EDI knowledge mobilization, the DACs are creating a series of nine social risk indicator infographics that compare Toronto's results with national averages. Released infographics can be found [here](#).

### DAC International Reach

The Carnegie UK Trust approached us about tools and information related to wellbeing. We offered insight in three areas: (1) Using [Wellbeing Toronto](#) to map demographics, service-related indicators and service locations and highlighting the importance of training service providers to use the tool; (2) Our role in the development of City of Toronto's [Raising the Village Shared Outcomes Report](#) regarding outcomes related to wellbeing of children and families and subsequent work identifying indicators; (3) Work with the EDI – using data in the mapping tool and identifying it as an indicator for the City's shared outcomes project and provincial poverty reduction strategy.

### EYSIS Custom Queries

In order to identify families with children about to enter school, custom queries were built for a Toronto Region Ontario Early Years Centre (OEYC) that generated parent contact lists based on children's age. Knowledge around query-building with other DACs in the province, including reporting family member types and frequency of OEYC service participant visits, was also shared.



## RESEARCH BRIEF

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### Epigenetic study investigates whether maternal sensitivity buffers the effects of maternal depression on infant stress response

Epigenetics describes how life experiences can cause genes to be either expressed or silenced. In a recent U.S. study, researchers looked at whether maternal sensitivity could moderate the negative impact that maternal depression can have on infants' stress response system. Maternal depression can result in a frequently activated infant stress response system, leading to high levels of cortisol. Cortisol, a hormone released during times of stress, is beneficial in small doses, but has negative effects if circulating in the body for long periods of time.

The study comprised 128 mothers and their 4-month-old infants. Mothers were assessed for maternal depression, anxiety and sensitivity and then engaged in face-to-face interaction with their infants. Salivary cortisol was collected from infants and DNA methylation was analyzed. DNA methylation is a process that influences gene expression. This study looked at methylation of genes specifically linked to the stress response.

The results showed that mothers with depressive symptoms who were more responsive and engaged in more appropriate touch during face-to-face play had infants with less DNA methylation. These infants were better at handling stress and had lower levels of circulating cortisol. The study provides preliminary evidence that maternal sensitivity does indeed seem to buffer infants from the negative effects of maternal depression.

Conradt, E., Hawes, K., Guerin, D., Armstrong, D.A., Marsit, C.J., Tronick, E., & Lester, B.M. (2016). The contributions of maternal sensitivity and maternal depressive symptoms to epigenetic processes and neuroendocrine functioning. *Child Development*, 87, 73-85.



## Reporting Referrals

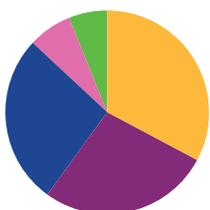
The [Service Data Elements Dictionary](#) defines referrals as the total number (made) to early learning and family-centred services. A referral is the outcome of a process that begins with a

parent/caregiver bringing a question about the child/family to a centre staff member or with a staff member bringing an observation about the child's development to a parent/caregiver. When the discussion results in the parent/caregiver being given contact information (in-person, over the phone or by email) for a particular program or service that could be of assistance but is not offered at your OEYC or OEYC satellite, a referral has been made. Referrals are counted only once in each budget year and by types of early learning and family-centred services.

Here are some tips:

- 1) Providing contact information for three different providers of the same type of service (e.g. Doctors) counts as only one referral because it is only one service type.
- 2) Providing contact information for two types of services within the same agency (e.g. child care and a food bank) counts as two referrals as contact information has been provided for two types of service.
- 3) Recommending that a parent/caregiver attend programs at one of your satellite sites closer to their home does not count as a referral as it is not 'other' or external to your OEYC.
- 4) Recommending that a parent/caregiver attend programs at another OEYC closer to their home can only be counted if the recommendation is to programs or services which are provided by that OEYC but not by your OEYC or satellite sites.
- 5) Referrals to other early learning or family-centred programs and services provided by your host agency may be counted, as long as they not offered at your OEYC or satellite sites.

## EYSIS Support January – March 2016



33%	Query Request
27%	Data Entry Inquiry
27%	Updates / Support
7%	System Setup
6%	Reports Inquiry

## TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

### Tuesday, May 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.

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.

### Wednesday, May 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.

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

### Thursday, May 26

10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

#### 2D: Resource Library

This course allows participants to learn how to use the resource library.

Prerequisites: 2A and 2B

- » Registration is first come, first served, so sign up early!
- » Sessions are held at Mothercraft College, 646 St. Clair Avenue West

### FEES

- » DACs and Toronto OEYCs – free!
- » Non-Toronto OEYCs – \$25 per person per course (full refund if 2 business days' notice of cancellation is provided)



## DACS OUT AND ABOUT

### 1 Best Start Conference

Earlier in 2016, the DACs attended the annual Best Start Conference. Delegates came together to discuss key issues in maternal and child health, including child discipline, physical activity and the early years, breastfeeding, prenatal education and the health of Indigenous children in Canada. The DACs attended workshops about physical activity and building life-long habits as well as strategies, tools and resources to identify best available evidence to

support an evidence-based approach. Material from the conference can be found [here](#).

### 2 Ontario Education Research Symposium

In March 2016, the DACs attended the Ontario Education Research Symposium. This year's theme, *Networking & Partnerships: The Core of Achieving Excellence in Education*, focused on collaborations toward an accessible, integrated and responsive education system. We attended a

number of workshops covering topics such as education and academic partnerships, understanding the whole child and addressing health and well-being needs of inner-city students. Presentations from the conference can be found [here](#).

### 3 Raising the Bar, Lifting the Field Conference

In April 2016, the DACs delivered a presentation at the Raising the Bar: Lifting the Field Conference, hosted

by Toronto Children's Services in partnership with George Brown College, Humber College, Conseil Scolaire Viamonde, Conseil Scolaire de District Catholique Centre-Sud, Toronto District School Board, and Toronto Catholic District School Board. Our presentation entitled *Using the Early Development Instrument For Collaborative Planning in the Early Years Sector*, addressed this year's theme which was on building relationships. The presentation can be found [here](#).

## Contact Us

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