



North East Edmonton ECD Coalition

## **North East Edmonton Early Childhood Development Coalition Frequently Asked Questions**

### **1) What are coalitions?**

Coalitions are groups of people who have come together to plan and promote community-based supports for young children and their families. They are independent organizations that work with Early Child Development Mapping Initiative (ECMap) in sharing and contributing to research results. There are 75 coalitions in Alberta.

### **2) Who belongs to the North East Edmonton Early Childhood Development Coalition?**

A dynamic group of community members, including parents and service providers from many agencies consisting of education, community services, libraries, schools, community development, health care and child care working together to enhance early childhood development opportunities in Northeast Edmonton.

Visit <http://www.needmontonecdcoalition.com/> for more information on the North East Edmonton Early Childhood Development Coalition.

### **3) Who can join the Coalition?**

Everyone is welcome! Participation will be of most interest to those people who live, play, and/ or work in North East Edmonton. Coalition members can range from people who are directly involved with early learning and care, such as parents and family members and service providers to those with a more indirect interest, such as business people and non-profit groups. The Coalition wants to expand their membership to include more community members, parents and business associates.

### **4) What is with Early Child Development Mapping Initiative (ECMap)?**

ECMap is a research and community development project that is part of the Early Child Development (ECD) Mapping Initiative funded by Alberta Education. ECMap is led by the Community-University Partnership for the Study of Children, Youth and Families (CUP) at the Faculty of Extension, University of Alberta.

Visit [www.ecmap.ca](http://www.ecmap.ca) for more information on ECMap.

## **5) Why the special attention on 0 – 6?**

The early years lay the foundation for all later development and have lifelong implications on everything from health to school achievement, success at work, relationships and overall well-being.

To learn more watch the video “EDI: Benefits to Children, Families, and Communities”:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QMrxdzKYIYw&feature=related>

## **6) Why focus on the community?**

Communities — along with families, public policy and society as a whole — play a fundamental role in early childhood development. Studies show that children tend to do better in strong communities and that accessible, high-quality services and supports can buffer the negative effects of poverty and other social disadvantages.

Having good information about local development will enable communities to:

- better understand how their young children are doing,
- see how development varies across Alberta and Canada,
- identify strengths and gaps in supports and services, and
- work together to improve their children’s outcomes.

## **7) What are the components of the ECMap project?**

The ECD Mapping Initiative gathers data on child development from three sources:

- determining the ‘readiness to learn’ of 5-year olds as measured by the Early Development Instrument (EDI)
- collecting information on the socio-economic factors that influence children’s development, and
- taking inventory of the local services, programs and facilities for families with young children in each community across the province

The data has been ‘plotted’ on maps for every community in the province. This type of information can help parents, communities, school authorities, service providers and policy-makers in planning and understanding their community, the differences across communities in child development; and where strengths and gaps exist in programming, facilities and services.

## **8) Why was the EDI chosen as a research instrument?**

The EDI is a reliable, population-based measure of early childhood development that was developed in Canada. It gathers information on kindergarten children across five areas of development, and thus provides a more complete picture of development than tools that just measure one area.

## **9) What are the five areas of development measured by the EDI?**

1. Social competence: gets along with others, is curious, likes to explore, respects authority, can control behaviour
2. Language and thinking skills: is interested in reading & writing, can count & recognize some shapes/colours
3. Physical health & well-being: well rested, nourished, physically independent, has gross and fine motor skills
4. Emotional maturity: able to express emotions at age appropriate level and empathize with others
5. Communication skills & general knowledge: able to communicate needs & wants, can tell stories, general knowledge of outside world.

## **10) What are some results across Canada?**

Similar projects have been conducted across Canada. These projects have found that approximately 25 per cent of children in Canada are experiencing difficulty in one or more areas of development.

One of out every four five-year-olds struggle with basic age-appropriate tasks, such as holding a pencil, climbing stairs, following teachers' instructions, getting along with other children on the playground and recognizing 10 letters.

## **11) What does the data for North East Edmonton tell us?**

Generally children in this area are developing appropriately. Yet, the data also tells us that communication skills and general knowledge, emotional maturity and social competence are areas in which a large proportion of children are experiencing difficulty or great difficulty.

This is important to us because the ability of young children to manage their emotions and behaviours and to make meaningful friendships is an important prerequisite for school readiness and academic success.

The North East Edmonton Early Childhood Development Coalition is working with the community to enhance early childhood development opportunities focusing on the areas of vulnerability while maintaining or improving in language or thinking skills and physical health and well-being. The results will guide the planning and action phases of the Coalition.

## 12) How can I make a difference?

- Learn about Early Development Instrument (EDI) community information for North East Edmonton by visiting [www.ecmap.ca](http://www.ecmap.ca).
- Invite the Community Coordinator to your event, meeting or community gathering; or host a coffee party to discuss ways to enhance early childhood development in your area.
- Share your ideas for improving early childhood development opportunities in your community.

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**Funding is available in terms of limited grants to support action plans and build community capacity and knowledge to promote early childhood development. Grants may be used to fund events like parents' information nights, workshops and lecture series, as part of North East Edmonton's capacity-building activities.**

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## 13) Who should I contact for more information?

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### FAQ References:

Early Child Development Mapping Project Alberta Website:  
<https://www.ecmap.ca/About-ECMap/FAQs/Pages/default.aspx>

Webster-Stratton & Reid (2004) Strengthening Social and Emotional Competence in Young Children – The Funding for Early School Readiness and Success, *Infants and Young Children*, 17 (2), pp. 96-113.