



SECTION I : OVERVIEW

To develop this strategy, we used the Canadian Health Services Research Foundation's "Developing a Dissemination Plan" as a guide (found online at http://www.chsrf.ca/knowledge_transfer/pdf/dissemination_plan_e.pdf), and drew on the knowledge of the team at the Saskatchewan Population Health and Evaluation Research Unit.

Project Overview:

The Southeast corner of Saskatchewan is a community of communities: rural and urban, agricultural and industrial, First Nation and non-First Nation, tried tradition and new realism, economic boom and abject poverty. Residents share in the struggle to remain part of their communities of origin or face the transition of relocation to a large urban centre. Schools close, hospitals shut down, businesses relocate, and family farms are sold – resulting in the decline of localized services for families and children. Innovative solutions are sought and partnerships are formed to address needs – but with less than definitive information. What are the needs of young children? What resources exist? Are children ready to learn when they enter kindergarten? If not, why not? These are vital questions to parents, educators, service providers and community members.

The Southeast Saskatchewan Understanding the Early Years Coalition represents these people. Educators from five school divisions, representatives from three health authorities, members of First Nations tribal councils, and service providers from both government and community organizations have united to facilitate this UEY project. The need for accurate, localized data to assess the readiness of children to learn and develop appropriate resources for these children provides the coalition with strong and cohesive goals. This data collection will guide strategic planning and program development, building capacity and mobilizing communities to take action to improve developmental health, well-being and competence of children. The opportunity to link this data with longitudinal research inspires confidence that



the impact for children will be felt into the future.

We started our UEY study in the summer of 2007, and will complete it in March 2010. Key activities include:

- conducting a community inventory of programs and services for children and families in 2008
- Releasing our first Community Mapping Report, which will encompass socioeconomic data from the census and our Community Inventory of Programs and Services
- collecting Early Development Instrument (EDI) data in 2009 (The EDI is a checklist that measures children's "readiness to learn": physical health and well-being; social skills; emotional maturity; language and cognitive development; and communication skills and general knowledge)
- releasing our second Community Mapping Report in 2010, which will include EDI and socioeconomic data
- receiving a Community Research Report that includes the Parent Interviews and Direct Assessments of Children (PIDACS) done with a sample of our kindergarten children

Partnership with the Saskatchewan Population Health and Evaluation Research Unit (SPHERU), University of Saskatchewan

An important part of our project is our partnership with Dr. Nazeem Muhajarine and his Healthy Children research team at SPHERU; we will be working with them closely throughout our study. Dr. Muhajarine co-led the Saskatoon UEY project with Sue Delaney of Saskatoon Communities *for* Children from 2000 to 2007. They used an innovative mix of dissemination methods that resulted in documented changes in policies and programs for young children and their families. Dr. Muhajarine's work has been recognized as exemplary and was recently awarded the 2006 CIHR Knowledge Translation Award for impact at a local/regional level, based largely on the impact of the Understanding the Early Years in Saskatoon



study. We will be able to draw on their expertise, supplementing it with our own knowledge of what will work in our community, to develop and deliver communications and knowledge translation activities.

Our Communications Committee

The Communications Committee consists of a large number of members who sit on the Prairie Children...Prairie Futures Coalition.

Membership is comprised of representatives from:

South East Regional Intersectoral Committee

Department of Social Services

KidsFirst—Targeted and Regional

ECIP– Parkland, Regina, Southeast, Weyburn and Area, Touchwood

School divisions - South East Cornerstone, Holy Family RCSSD, Christ the Teacher, Good Spirit, Prairie Valley

First Nations Education Departments—Yorkton Tribal Council, File Hills

Qu’Appelle Tribal Council, Touchwood Agencies Tribal Council

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File Hills Qu’Appelle Tribal Council Health Region

Health Regions—Sun Country, Sunrise, Regina Qu’Appelle

Communications Committee Mandate:

- To provide communities with evidence-based research on factors influencing early childhood development, through accurate and timely communication methods.
- To enhance local EDI committees’ capacity to use this knowledge to study early childhood development and develop effective community-based action plans.
- To enhance early childhood networks across communities by sharing knowledge with a wide audience, building regional response and formulating action plans.



Meeting Schedule:

Generally meetings are scheduled to take place in a central location, often back to back with other Early Development committee work that is taking place in the Region.

Meeting Frequency has been determined to take place every 2 months with additional meetings when necessary.

Much communication takes place via the email in order to reduce travel time and accommodate the schedules of very heavily committed members.

The Committee is currently investigating the possibility of holding meetings via the use of Telehealth Video Conferencing.

Additional direction and input is sought from our Research Team under the Direction of Nazeem Muharjarine and his Healthy Children Research Team at SPHERU.

Regular communication lines are in place through email, planned meetings every 2 months as well as Teleconferencing meetings with both the committees as well as Sponsoring Organization and Community Coordinator.