



SECTION 5: BUDGET

Budget

Current Budget includes funding for Transportation, Communications and Forums. Given the geographical expanse of the project there will be limitations and challenges to overcome. This dissemination plan as laid out has taken these challenges into consideration.

Key Considerations including:

The Training of Spokespersons for the sharing of information will greatly reduce the costs and time requirements of meeting with such vast audiences.

Utilization of the Telehealth Video Conferencing System will enable many audiences and groups to be included in a very financially effective manner.

The Development of a Website for sharing of information will include the opportunity of posting, posters, brochures, fact sheets, power point presentations as well as Community mapping Reports and the Research Report. This will broaden the capacity of the project to further share information.

Priority expenditures will include the development of Dissemination Packages for Spokespersons, and the printing of various materials including posters, fact sheets, and reports.

Funding Challenges:

While opportunities to partner with other organizations are numerous and extensive limitations will be realized in regard to actions requiring financial contribution. The project may be limited to partnering and assisting in these circumstances only when outside sources of funding are available. Prairie Children...Prairie Futures will make every effort to support these efforts who are working toward improving the opportunities for Children ages 0-6 and their families throughout the region and will seek to find ways to collaborate.



SECTION 6: EVALUATION

Evaluation

As part of our Quarterly progress reports, we will be tracking our dissemination efforts on a regular basis. Evaluation will be ongoing with all activities including the develop of a reporting and evaluation system for use with the various spokespersons involved in the project.

We will also work to track outcomes: changes that have happened based on our research. Saskatoon's UEY team has had considerable success in this area, and we will draw on their expertise for evaluation (see attached SPHERU poster: Influencing Policy and Practice with Research for examples)



SECTION 7: CONCLUSION

Conclusion:

The purpose of this Sharing of Knowledge plan has been to summarize the overall work of the Prairie Children...Prairie Futures UEY initiative and to clearly map out the project's action steps for the futures. Implementation of our Key approaches for information dissemination is considered essential to achieving the UEY Vision for the Prairie Children...Prairie Futures neighbourhoods in South East Saskatchewan.

Prairie Children...Prairie Futures UEY initiative is unique in regard to its vast geographical expanse, both rural and urban, diverse communities, and its work with a large representation of First Nations Communities. While there are many diversities Prairie Children...Prairie Futures has identified a growing understanding of the importance of the Early Years and providing Healthy and safe environments for our Children.

Many are catching the vision that Investing in the lives of Prairie Children will Ensure a Thriving Prairie Future. It is our goal that as the knowledge gathered via the Understanding the Early Years project and is shared throughout the region, others will begin to move forward and take action to provide a stronger opportunities for our Children promoting healthy early development.

It is imperative that our message goes forward and continues to spread through out the region to the many audiences not yet reach.

To this end, Prairie Children...Prairie Futures moves forward.



APENDIXES

UEY SASKATOON 2007 FORUM FACT SHEET

POSTER: INFLUENCING POLICY AND PRACTICE WITH RESEARCH

Understanding the Early Years in Saskatoon: influencing policy and practice with research

Measuring young children's outcomes

What is this research project about?

The Understanding the Early Years Study (UEY) examines the role of families and communities in the lives of Saskatoon children by measuring kindergarten children's "readiness to learn." The study then compares children's outcomes to the resources available and accessible in their communities, and to their neighbourhoods' characteristics.

UEY is a national initiative that helps community members understand the needs of children in their own communities, so that they are better able to develop programs and services to meet these needs. Each UEY research team conducts research in their own community, and works with other community members to share this knowledge and address local issues.

The Saskatoon study started in 2000, and will be finished in mid 2007. It is a community-university partnership, led by *Communities for Children*, Saskatoon's Planning Council for a Child and Youth Friendly Community



(C4C, www.communitiesforchildren.net), and the Saskatchewan Population Health and Evaluation Research Unit (SPHERU, www.spheru.ca) at the University of Saskatchewan, in association with Saskatoon Public Schools and Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools. A community advisory group has provided ongoing support and advice to the study.¹ This project is funded by Human Resources and Social Development Canada.

The study's objectives are to:

- build knowledge of healthy childhood development;
- monitor progress in children's outcomes; and
- catalyze community action.

What is "readiness to learn" and why is it important?

Children are born "ready to learn" – the neurosystem is equipped with the ability to learn and develop, depending on the experience it receives.² In this study, we are measuring children's ability to meet the task demands of school – how well they get along with others, their coping strategies, and their openness to new experiences – so that they are able to take advantage of the learning opportunities provided by school.

Research, including work conducted for UEY nationally, has repeatedly shown that a kindergarten teacher's assessment of a child's readiness to learn is the single strongest predictor of academic success in early grades. Subsequently, success in early grades is a strong predictor for high school completion, and measures to improve children's readiness to learn in kindergarten are protective against both premature drop-out (before completing high school) and adolescent delinquency. Research has shown, both our own work and that of many others, that children who are successful in school tend to be successful in other parts of their lives – maturing into successful adults.³

Influencing policy and practice with research

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BACKGROUND

- To the extent that researchers practice linkage and exchange with policy makers and practitioners, they can influence both public policy making and delivery of "on the ground" services
- Our own experience in linking with decision-makers and disseminating findings from numerous studies indicate that the early and ongoing involvement of decision-makers promotes research use
- Knowledge exchange can drive the full cycle of idea conception, knowledge creation, synthesis, dissemination and uptake
- Our approach is based on strong collaborative research partnerships between academics and community leaders, such as those in our *Understanding the Early Years in Saskatoon* study (UEY; 2001-08). This study is conducted as a community-university partnership between SPHERU and Communities for Children, Saskatoon's planning council for a child and youth-friendly community, in association with Saskatoon public and separate school boards
- The model below shows how we envision the overlapping roles of researchers, policy makers and practitioners in enhancing child health and well-being. These roles exist within a dynamic societal context which influences and is influenced by activities in the three domains and their interactions



More information on our research is available on our website: www.spheru.ca or by contacting fleur.macqueensmith@susask.ca or Dr. Mujaferina, nazeem.mujaferina@susask.ca

OUR DECISION-MAKER BASED APPROACH

Our approach to conducting research that is useful for decision-makers begins with identifying potential users of research knowledge, involving them early and often, being open to their suggestions when generating research questions, and giving them results in ways that they can use

✓ Identify decision-makers

- Determining the groups of people who will be interested in the research is key. For us, it included parents, teachers, school administrators, children's advocates, children's program and service providers, and government policy makers at various levels
- Partnering with Communities for Children enabled us to reach key constituencies in the community and beyond

✓ Involve them early

- Decision-makers can help drive the research process if they are involved from the outset. Our UEY project has had ongoing input from our research team that has both community and academic members, and from our advisory group of policy makers and program planners

✓ Involve them often

- Research projects go through many stages, and going back to potential users often is important so that researchers don't lose touch with users' needs
- Our community partners, as active and well-respected advocates for a child and youth-friendly community, are able to spread our research messages further and more effectively than we could working alone

✓ Conduct research they can use

- To make research results relevant, we need to know how they can help solve problems decision-makers have. What better way than to ask them, which we do often

✓ Give them results they understand

- Decision-makers don't usually read academic journals or attend research conferences, so we need to present our findings to them in other, more accessible formats
- We have disseminated our findings through colourful fact sheets, plain language research reports, and newsletter articles, in print and online. We have made numerous presentations, given workshops and organized forums for decision-makers
- Clockwise from top: a fact sheet, a brochure for community forums, an article we published in a health promotion group's research newsletter, a page from our community mapping report, and our website (www.spheru.ca)



OUR SUCCESSES: CHANGES BASED ON OUR RESEARCH

We have been able to track many instances where our research findings have influenced decision-making:

- the school boards we are working with have introduced major literacy initiatives and are testing full-day, every day kindergarten
- the public school board is developing one of their schools into an integrated school and child care centre, and our community partners, Communities for Children, are serving as advisors for this project
- the provincial ministry of learning has contracted us to conduct an assessment of full-time kindergarten programs in several school boards who are pilot-testing it
- the provincial ministry of learning has increased funding for additional speech and language pathologists
- the Saskatoon Public Library has improved access to service in areas that we identified as underserved

In addition, this work has influenced both research partners in this collaborative project:

- Communities for Children has committed to conducting and facilitating local research, and making their advocacy and program development evidence-based
- SPHERU's child health research program is following this model in other projects, and sharing what we have learned with others