

Government of the Northwest Territories
Early Childhood Development

**Baseline Report 2000 – 2001
Activities and Expenditures**

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September 2002

Early Childhood Development Baseline Report: Activities and Expenditures 2000 – 2001

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Introduction

At a meeting of First Ministers in September 2000, the Government of Canada, provincial and territorial governments announced the Early Childhood Development Agreement. This agreement recognized the importance of supporting families and communities in their efforts to ensure the best possible future for their children. Within this agreement, the First Ministers agreed on four key areas for action:

- promoting healthy pregnancy, birth and infancy;
- improving parenting and family supports;
- strengthening early childhood development, learning and care and
- strengthening community supports.

All governments committed to “report annually to Canadians on their investments and their progress in enhancing early childhood development programs and services in the [four key areas for action]...beginning with establishing a baseline of current early childhood development expenditures and activities. Governments will begin reporting within one year and will strive to continue to improve the quality of reporting over time.” (*First Ministers’ Meeting Communiqué on Early Childhood Development*).

Through this Agreement, the federal government will invest \$2.2 billion over five years to provincial and territorial governments. The Northwest Territories’ allocations are:

Year	2001-2002	2002-2003	2003-2004	2004-2005	2005-2006	Total
Funding	\$413,000	\$556,000	\$700,000	\$705,000	\$713,000	\$3.086 mil

This report is the baseline report of the fiscal year 2000 – 2001 early childhood development expenditures and activities in the Northwest Territories and will be used to measure advancements and enhancements in the coming five years.

Early Childhood Development The Northwest Territories' Commitment

In keeping with the Early Childhood Development Agreement, the Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT) began work towards the development of a framework for action. The purpose of this key document is to lay out the context, vision and components of a comprehensive strategy to address the needs of young children in the Northwest Territories (NWT). Action plans addressing the following four areas are also being developed:

- Health and Wellness and Risk Prevention
- Parenting and Family Supports
- Child Development – Care and Learning
- Community Supports and Community Building

Early Childhood Development 2000 - 2001 Activities and Expenditures

In fiscal year 2000 – 2001, the GNWT, through the Department of Education, Culture and Employment (ECE) and the Department of Health and Social Services (HSS), provided funds for the Healthy Children Initiative, the Child Care User Subsidy, the Early Childhood Program and the Health Promotion Fund. These funds supported a wide variety of activities such as community driven programs and enhanced services, as well as made available health information and promotion of healthy lifestyle choices.

Healthy Children Initiative

Total expenditure - \$ 1,995,514.00

This initiative supports the development of children from prenatal to age six. It focuses on prevention and health promotion and supports a wide range of programs and services from primary intervention to therapeutic services. The Healthy Children Initiative is based on a more family-centered model. The family-centered approach places more emphasis on family needs and strengths.

The Healthy Children Initiative provides:

\$ 1.58 million for Community Initiative funding based on community allocations for the enhancement of programs and services for children, from prenatal to six years of age, and their families. Contributions are committed based on proposals submitted by communities or community

groups, proposals meeting the program criteria and decisions made by the regional joint management committees.

Activities funded include:

- Preschool programs
- Support staff
- Early literacy programs
- Equipment/food/resources
- Family support/counseling
- Parent and Tot programs

\$ 240,000 for Supportive Child Services funding based on community allocations for the enhancement of services for children requiring intensive support or specific assistance.

Activities funded included:

- Early Intervention Program
- Special Needs Assistants
- Enhanced speech and language programming

\$36,000 for funding to regional offices for administration,

\$100,000 funding provided to Aurora College for delivery of the Child and Family Support and Development Certificate.

\$21,000 funding provided for research and evaluation at the Department of ECE.

\$22,000 funding provided for resource development.

Child Care User Subsidy

Expenditure – not available

The Child Care User Subsidy is delivered through the Income Support Program and provides funding for low-income families needing support to access licensed, good quality childcare services. Income Support expenditures are not sufficiently broken down to indicate the exact amount dedicated to the Child Care User Subsidy. This issue will be rectified for future reporting.

Early Childhood Program

Total expenditure – \$ 867,000

This program supports the development of childcare programs that enhance the growth and development of children who are in daycare or preschool programs.

There are currently 70 licensed early childhood programs in 26 of the 33 NWT communities. These licensed programs include childcare programs in 14 communities, preschool/nursery programs in 16 communities, and after-school programs and family day homes in two communities each.

The Early Childhood Program provided:

\$779,000 for Start Up and Operation and Maintenance Funding, which assists licensed programs and is provided on a first come, first served basis until the budget is expended.

Start Up contributions are based on:

- The number and type (infant, preschool, full/part time) of spaces created
- The community in which the spaces are created.
- Contributions are paid in lump sums, up to three months prior to the expected opening of the program.

Operation and Maintenance contributions are committed based on:

- The number and type of spaces,
- Community daily rates, and
- Maximum possible attendance in the program.
- Actual amounts received over the year are based on the actual documented daily attendance in the program.
- Payments are made quarterly, in advance, based on expected occupied spaces and adjustments are reconciled according to submitted actual attendance numbers.

\$70,000 funding provided to Aurora College for the delivery of the Early Childhood Certificate program.

\$18,000 funding provided to regional offices for administration

Health Promotion Fund

Expenditure - \$ 160,000.00

The Health Promotion Fund supports community-based health promotion programs aimed at improving the health of prenatal women, infants, children and youth. It focuses on healthy pregnancies, active living and healthy eating promotion, tobacco harm reduction and cessation, injury prevention and dental health.

Activities funded included:

- Breakfast programs
- Dental health promotion
- FAE/FAS workshops
- Nutrition promotion
- AIDS information
- Wellness programs, healthy living choices and active living promotion
- Parenting programs
- Child car seat safety

Early Childhood Development Summary

In order to report annually to Canadians for the next five years on the federal and NWT investments in early childhood development and the progress made in enhancing programs and services in the four identified areas, the fiscal year 2000-2001 provides the baseline. The NWT's 2000-2001 expenditures in early childhood development total approximately \$3.5 million¹. Activities were funded through four programs administered by the departments of ECE and HSS and provided for a variety of programming and services including prenatal care and public health, health promotion, early literacy programs, child care, preschool education, recreation and support to high risk families.

The Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT) began work on developing its own framework for action with a planned release date of May 2001.

Following the release of the framework document, there will be the development and release of an action plan on early childhood

¹ As noted, expenditure for Child Care User Subsidy is not available for 2000 – 2001. An estimate of \$500,000 is included in the total expenditure based on earlier data.

development in August 2001. The action plan will provide more details to move the vision forward. Several specific activities will be outlined to address enhanced support for communities, families and individuals. These will be:

- Home Visitation Program
- Nipissing Screening
- Child Development Resource Kit
- Healthy Family Kits
- Northern Parenting and Literacy Program
- Language Nests
- Language Support Workers
- Speech and Language Services
- Child and Family Resource Centres
- Public Awareness

As well, an evaluation framework is being developed and will provide the starting point for the evaluation of the Early Childhood Development Initiatives being undertaken by the GNWT. The evaluation framework will be an important tool throughout the implementation process, outlining the anticipated outcomes, indicators and key questions for each of the initiatives that will be identified in the action plan.