



SUPPORTING ALL CHILDREN TO REACH THE MOST VULNERABLE

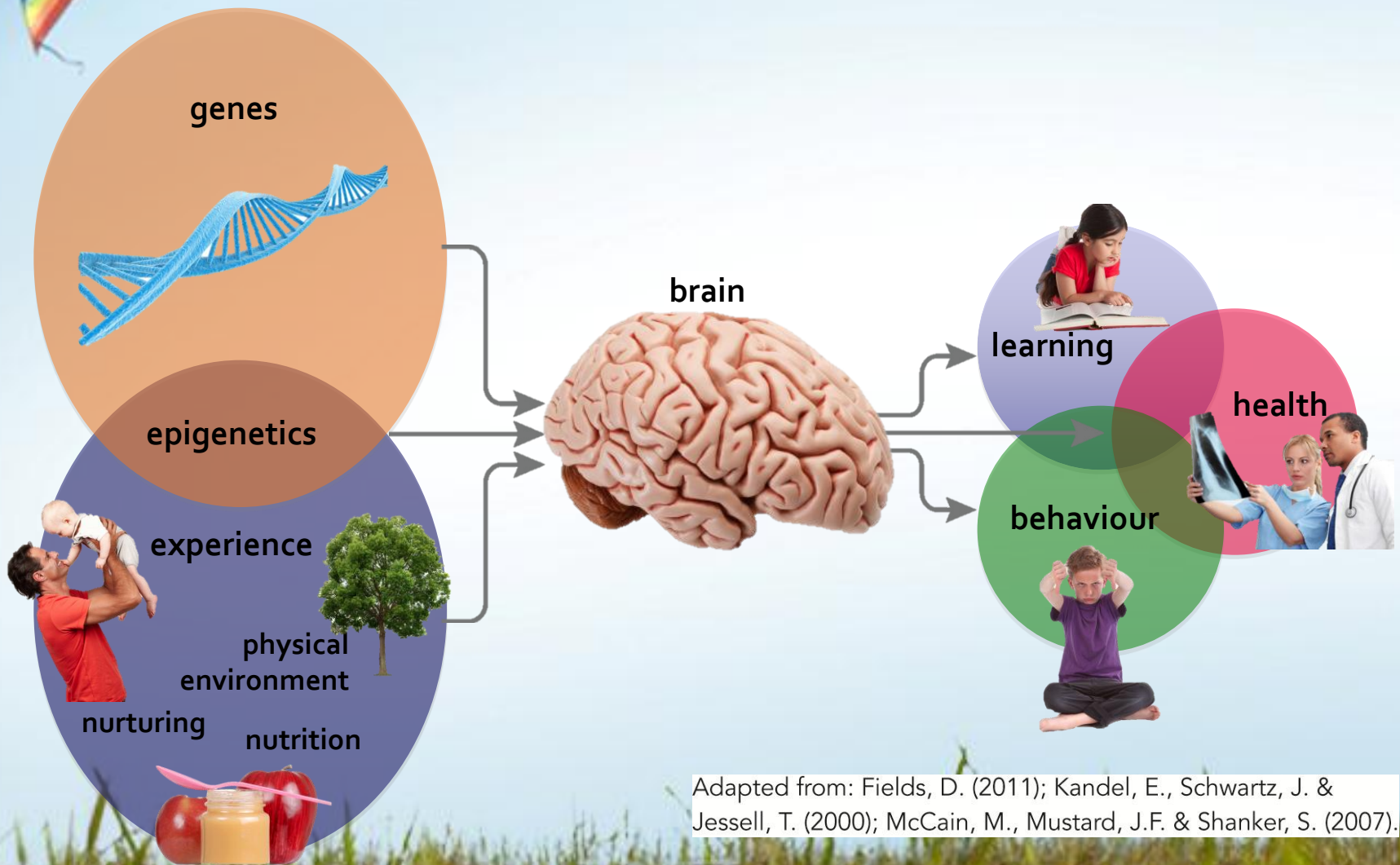
**Report to the Commission of Inquiry into the
Circumstances Surrounding the Death of
Phoenix Sinclair**

**Kerry McCuaig, Atkinson Centre/University of
Toronto**

Winnipeg, May 30, 2013



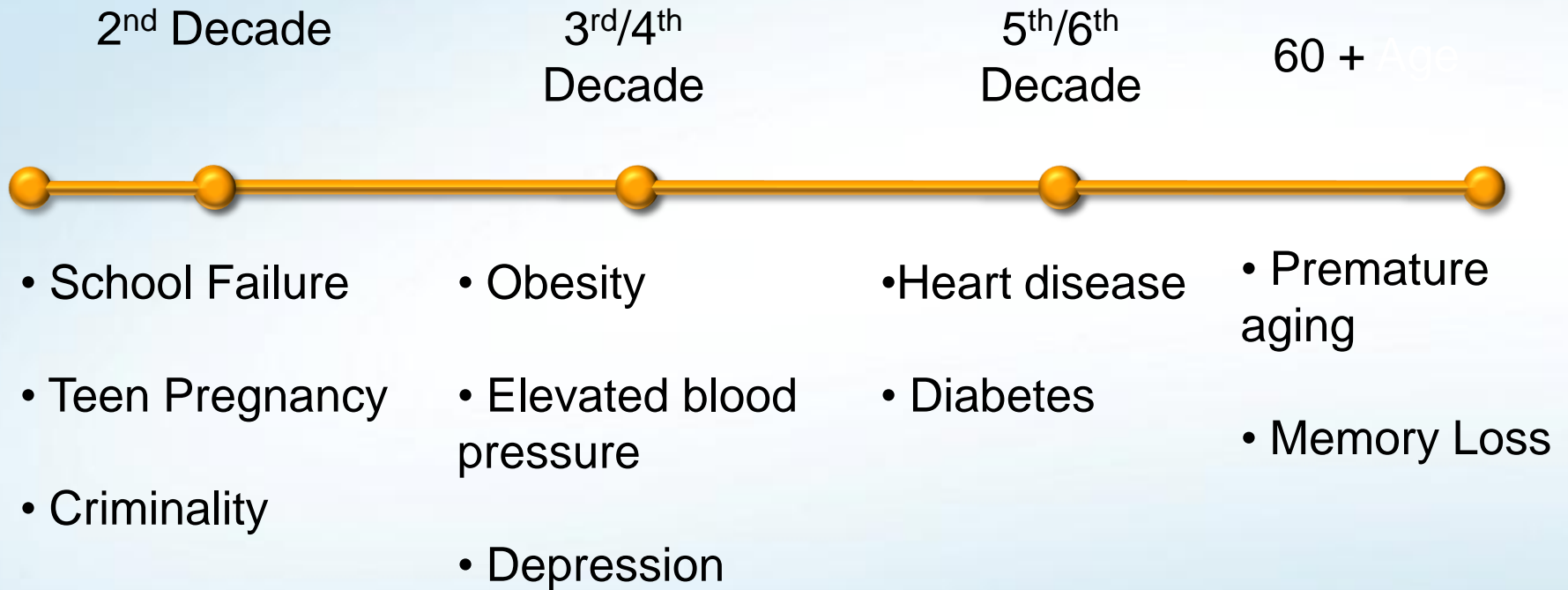
Experienced-based brain development



Adapted from: Fields, D. (2011); Kandel, E., Schwartz, J. & Jessell, T. (2000); McCain, M., Mustard, J.F. & Shanker, S. (2007).

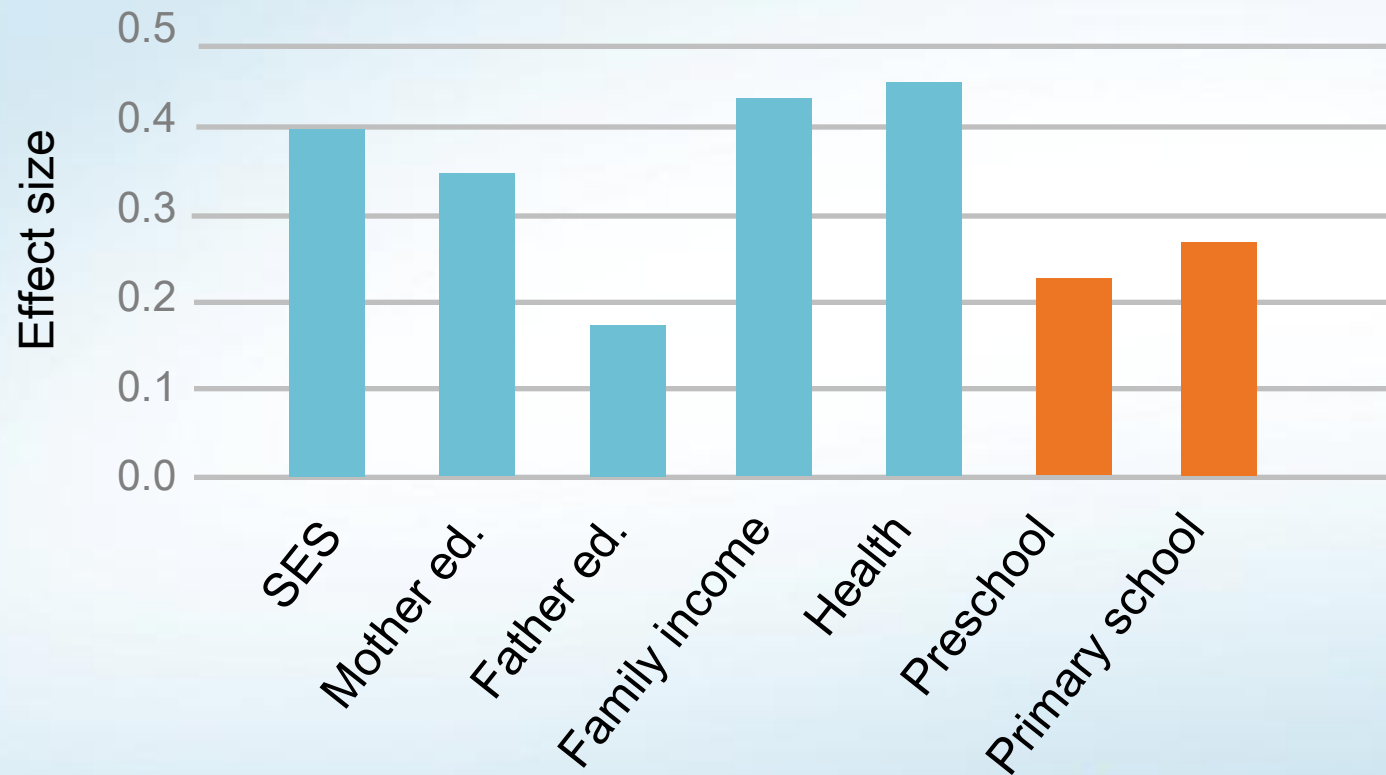


Life course problems related to early life





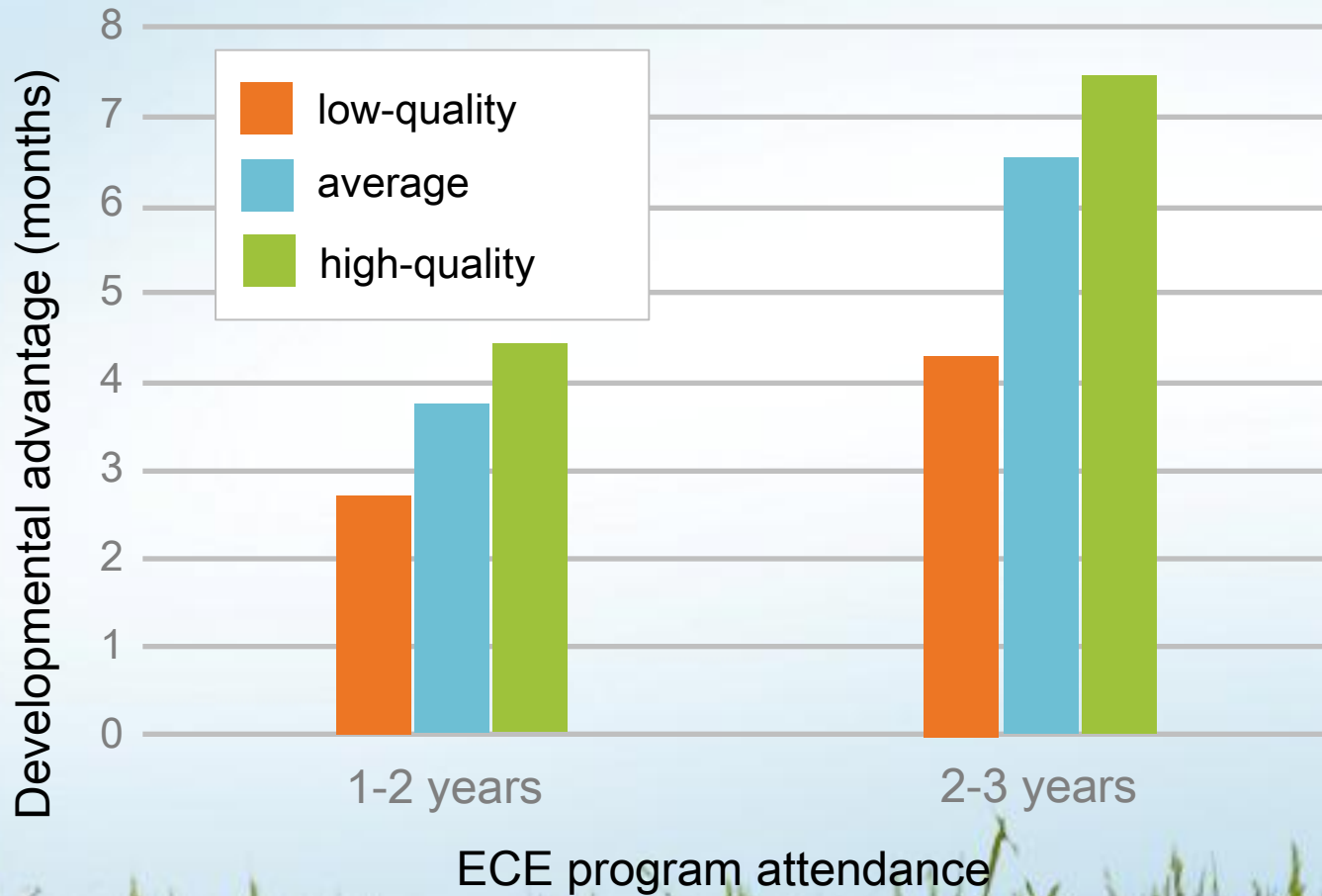
Factors affecting academic achievement – Age 11



Source: Melhuish, E. in Roseveare, D. (2011).



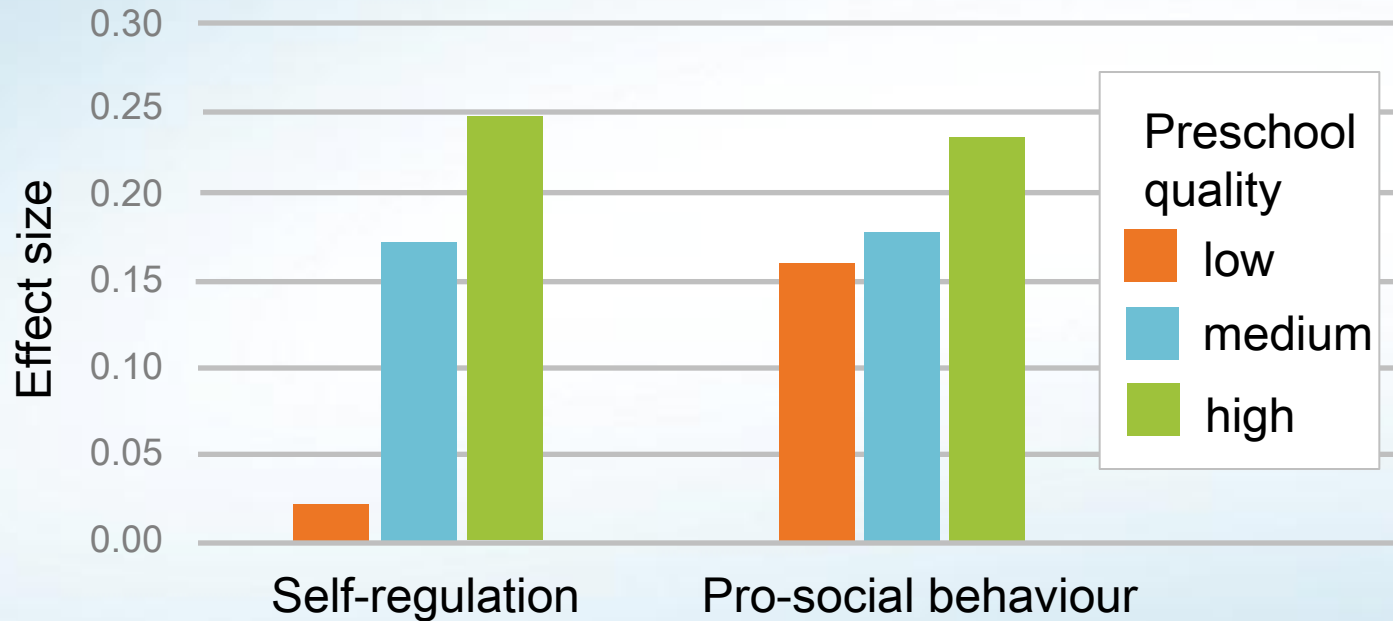
Quality and duration matter (months of developmental age)



Source: Melhuish, E. in Roseveare, D. (2011).

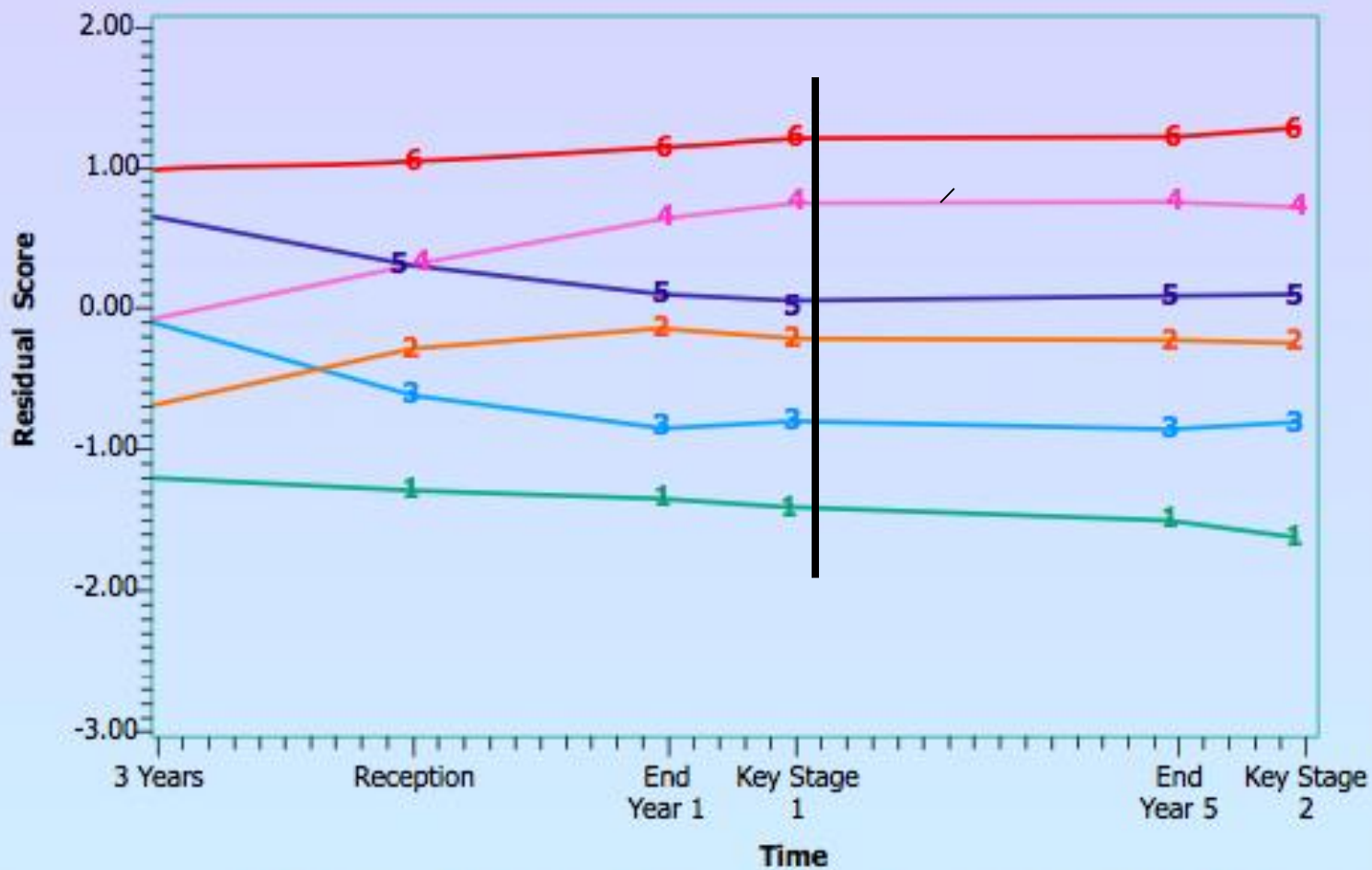


Quality linked to better outcomes
*Preschool quality and self-regulation and
pro-social behaviour (age 11)*



Source: Melhuish, E. in Roseveare, D. (2011).

Trajectories for Numeracy



Group %

1-1-1 8.2%

2-2-2 19.6%

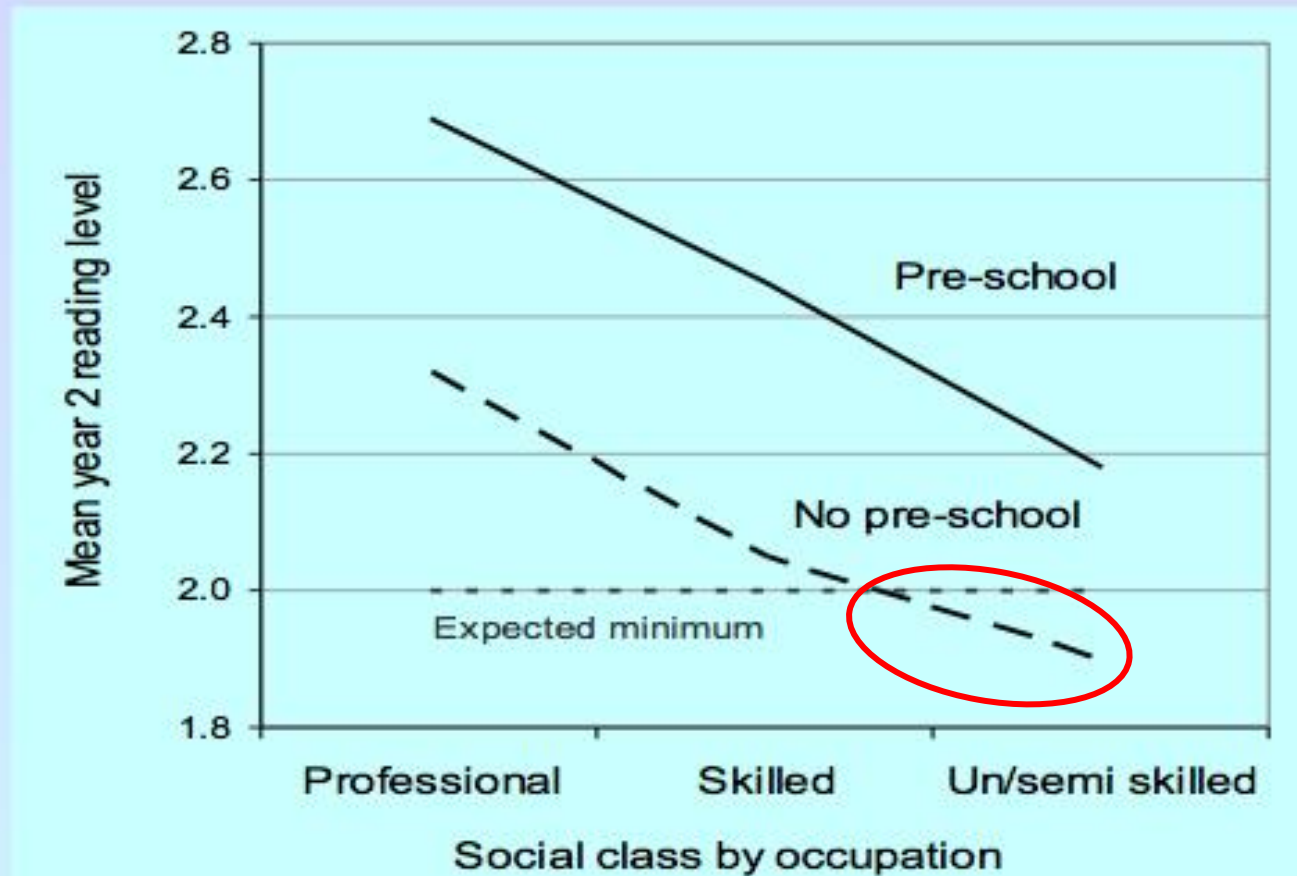
3-3-3 18.8%

4-4-4 17.3%

5-5-5 23.2%

6-6-6 12.9%

Social class and pre-school on literacy (age 7)





What makes a quality environment?

Five areas were particularly important:

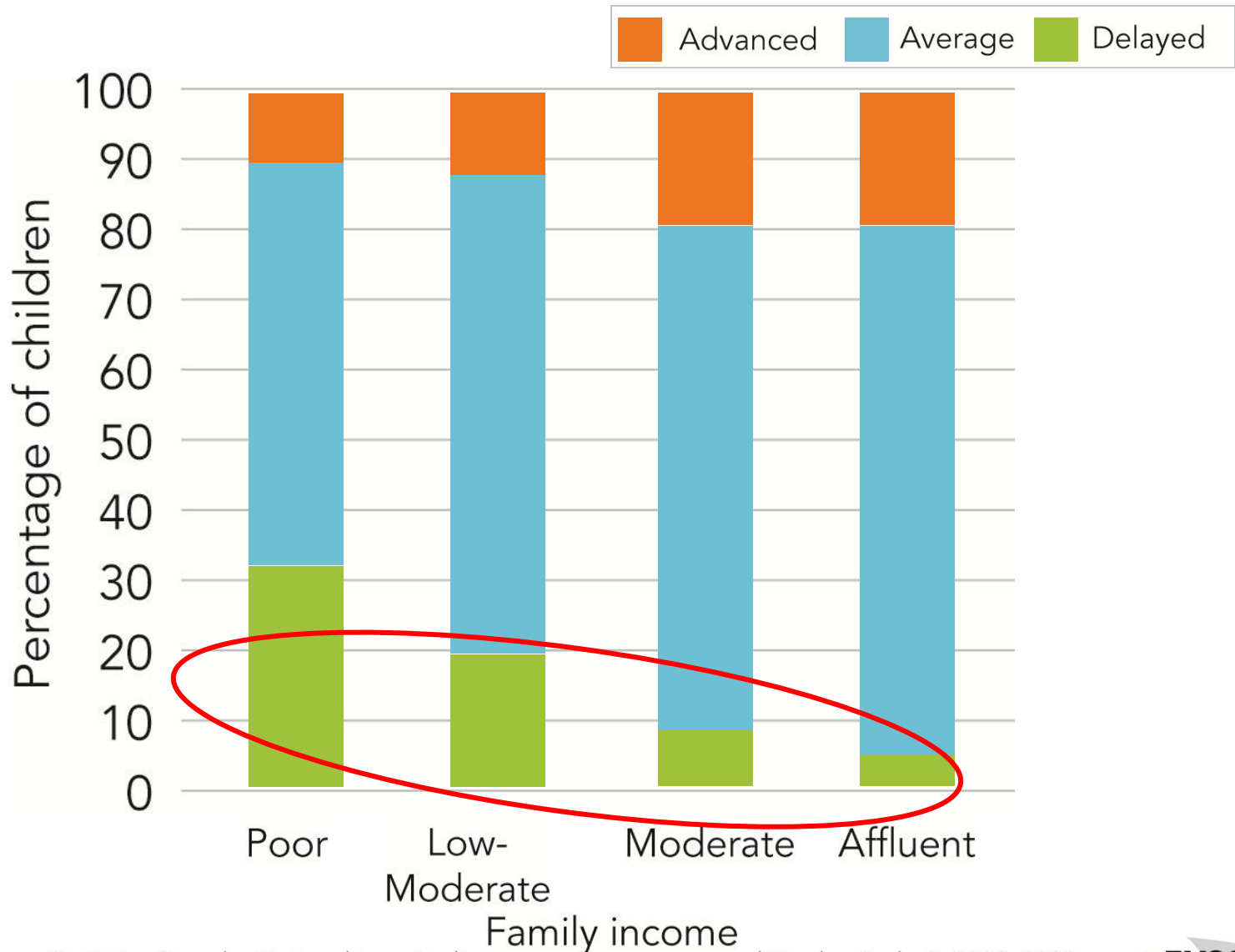
- **Quality of the adult-child verbal interaction**
- **Knowledge and understanding of curriculum**
- **Knowledge of how young children learn**
- **Adults skill in helping children resolve conflicts**
- **Helping parents to support children's learning at home**



Peer group effects

- Social mix in ECEC affects outcomes
 - disadvantaged children show greater benefits when in ECEC centres that are socially mixed rather than centres with only disadvantaged children

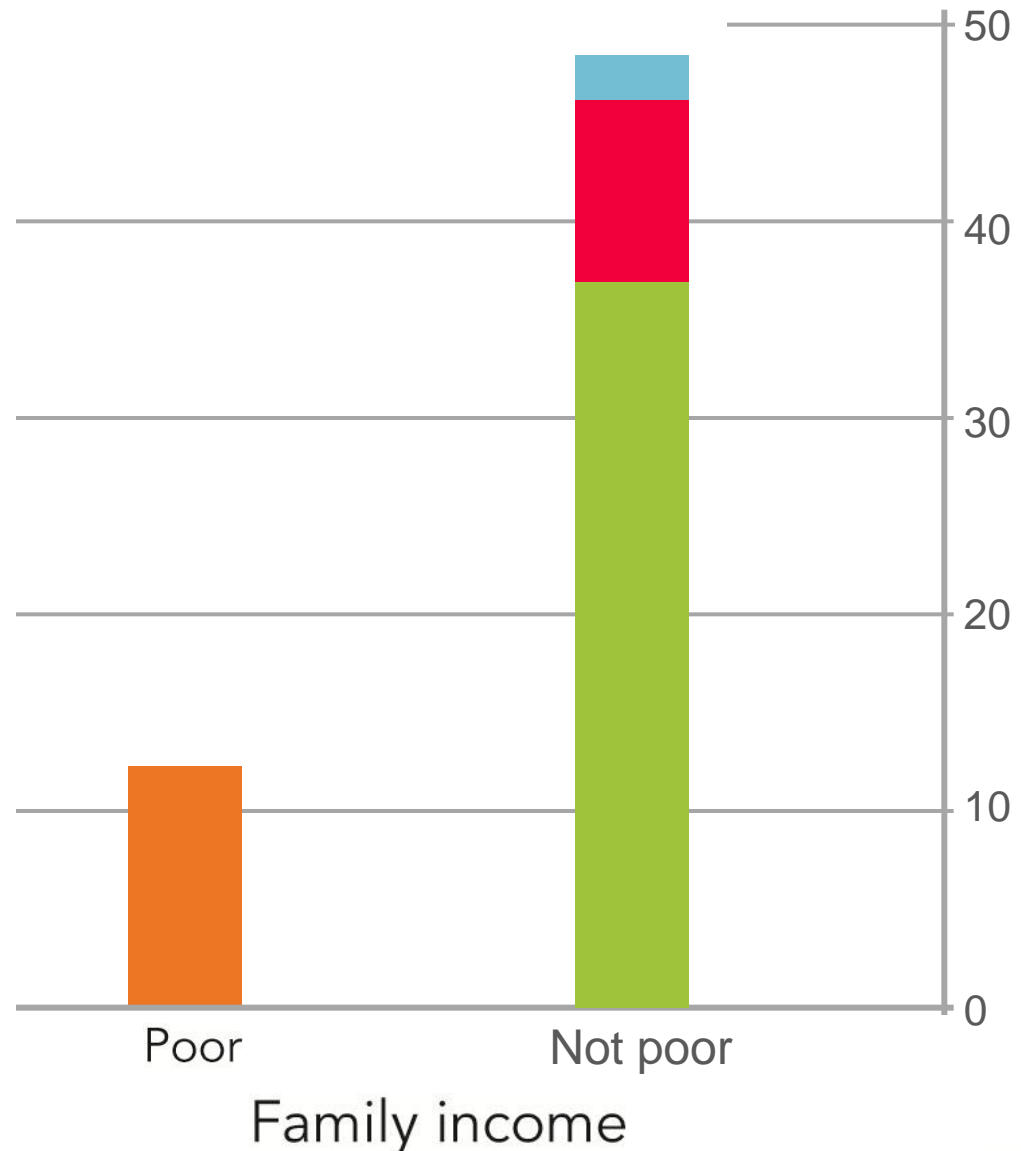
Universal access promotes equity - *Vocabulary skills in children ages 4 and 5 years by family income*



Source: Adapted from Statistics Canada. National Longitudinal Survey of Children and Youth. Cycle 8, 2008–2009. Special tabulation.

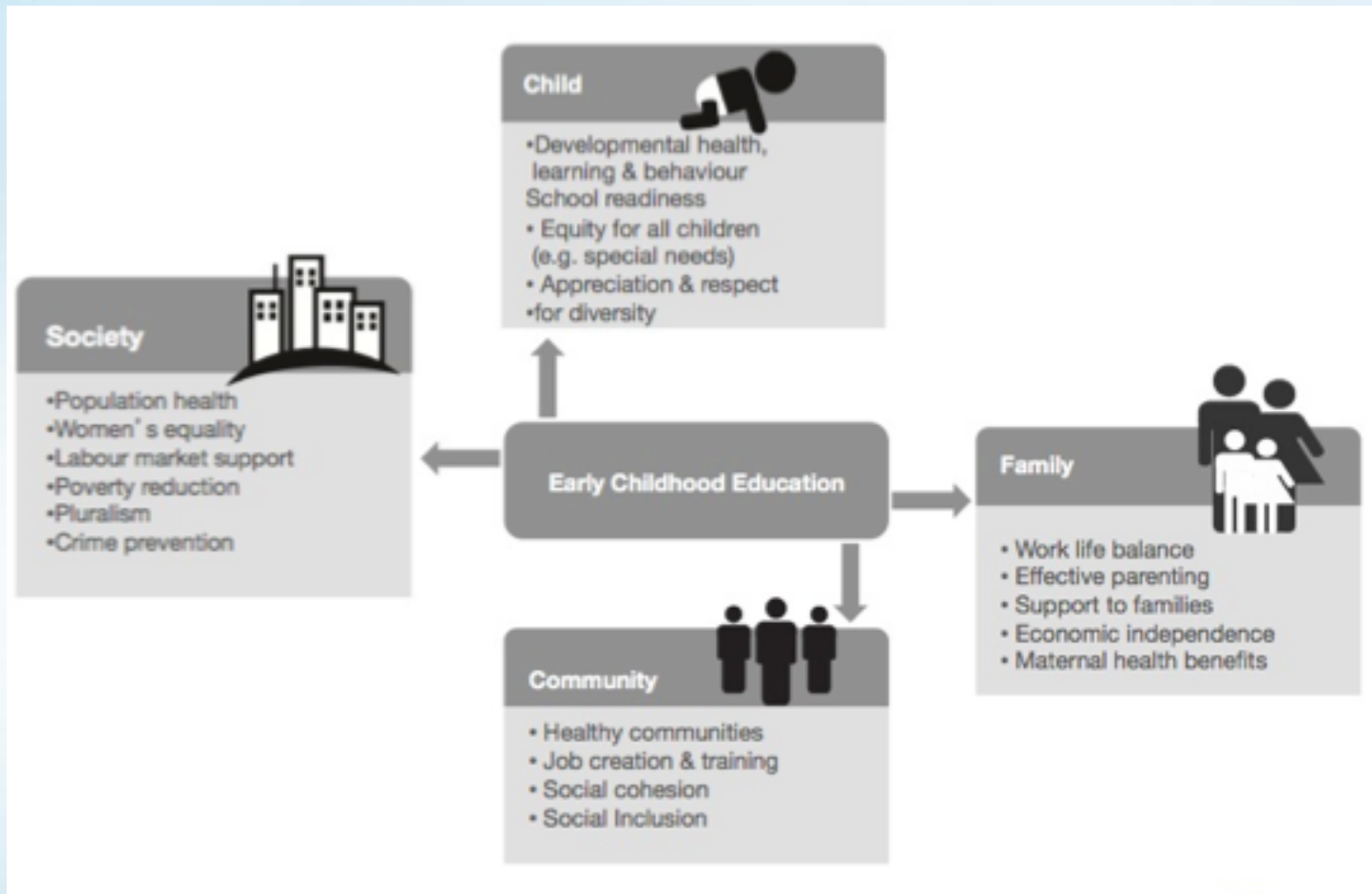
Vocabulary skills in children ages 4 and 5 years by family income

Number of children with 'delayed' vocabulary

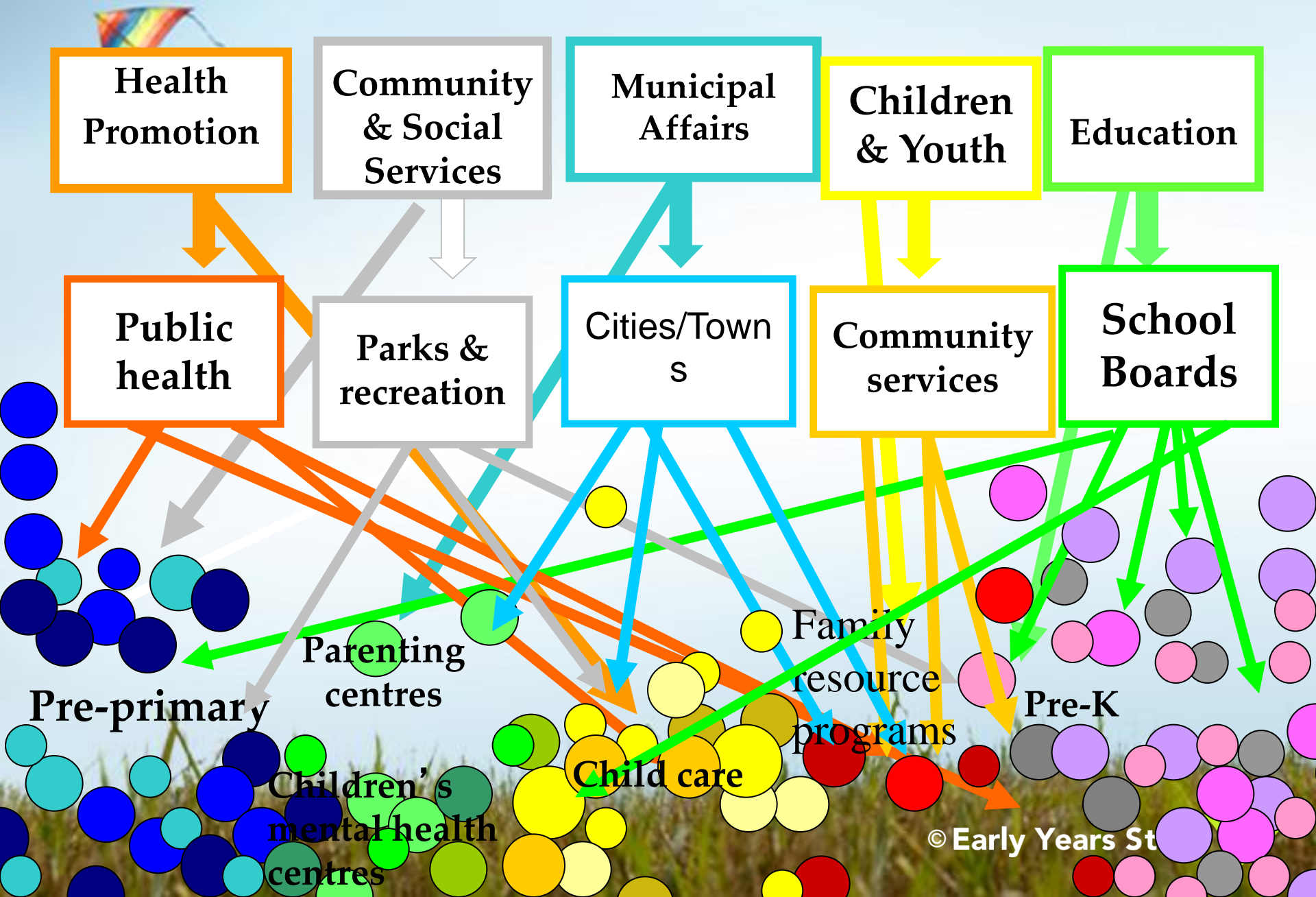


Source: Adapted from Statistics Canada. National Longitudinal Survey of Children and Youth. Cycle 8, 2008–2009. Special tabulation.

Long reach of ECEC



Chaos





The ECE challenge

- Split governance - legislation, funding, and delivery structures – makes it challenging to deliver effective programs to children and families
- Internationally, many jurisdictions have consolidated their child care, family support and education departments at the state and local level
- Research indicates integrated delivery of early childhood and family support programs from a stable platform serves more families, more cost-effectively and in ways that they want to be served



Policy trends in ECEC

Governance	Policy	EC Workforce	Curriculum	Parents
Lead ministry	Strategy for 0 to 8	EC trained	Have one	Free access
Merged functions	Quality agenda	Narrow qualification gap	Living documents	Lower school age
ECE units with experts	Research/evaluation	Ongoing professional development	Align with school to support transitions	Ceiling on fees & supports
Regional leadership	Reconcile goals	Enhance recognition	Expert & sector input	Democratic input
Dedicated funding	Reduce transitions			Open doors



ECEC provincial oversight

	NL	PE	NS	NB	QC	ON	MB	SK	AL	BC
ECEC under common department/ministry	<u>Under discussion</u>	Y	Y	Y	Y*	Y		Y		
Common ECEC supervisory unit		Y	Y	Y		Y		<u>Under discussion</u>		
Common ECEC policy framework		Y		Y	Y		Y			
Common local authority for ECEC management and administration				Y		<u>Under discussion</u>				

*Quebec schools are responsible for out of school programs for children 5–12 years old. [McCuaig, Bertrand & Shanker \(2012\)](#) Updated 2013



New approaches across Canada

- Full-day kindergarten in BC, PE, NS, NB, QC, ON, NT
- School delivered preK programs in NS, QC, MB, SK, AB, YK in selected school districts. Universal JK all 4-year olds in Ontario and Quebec.
- Ministries of education in ON & BC support school-based programs for parents and preschoolers.

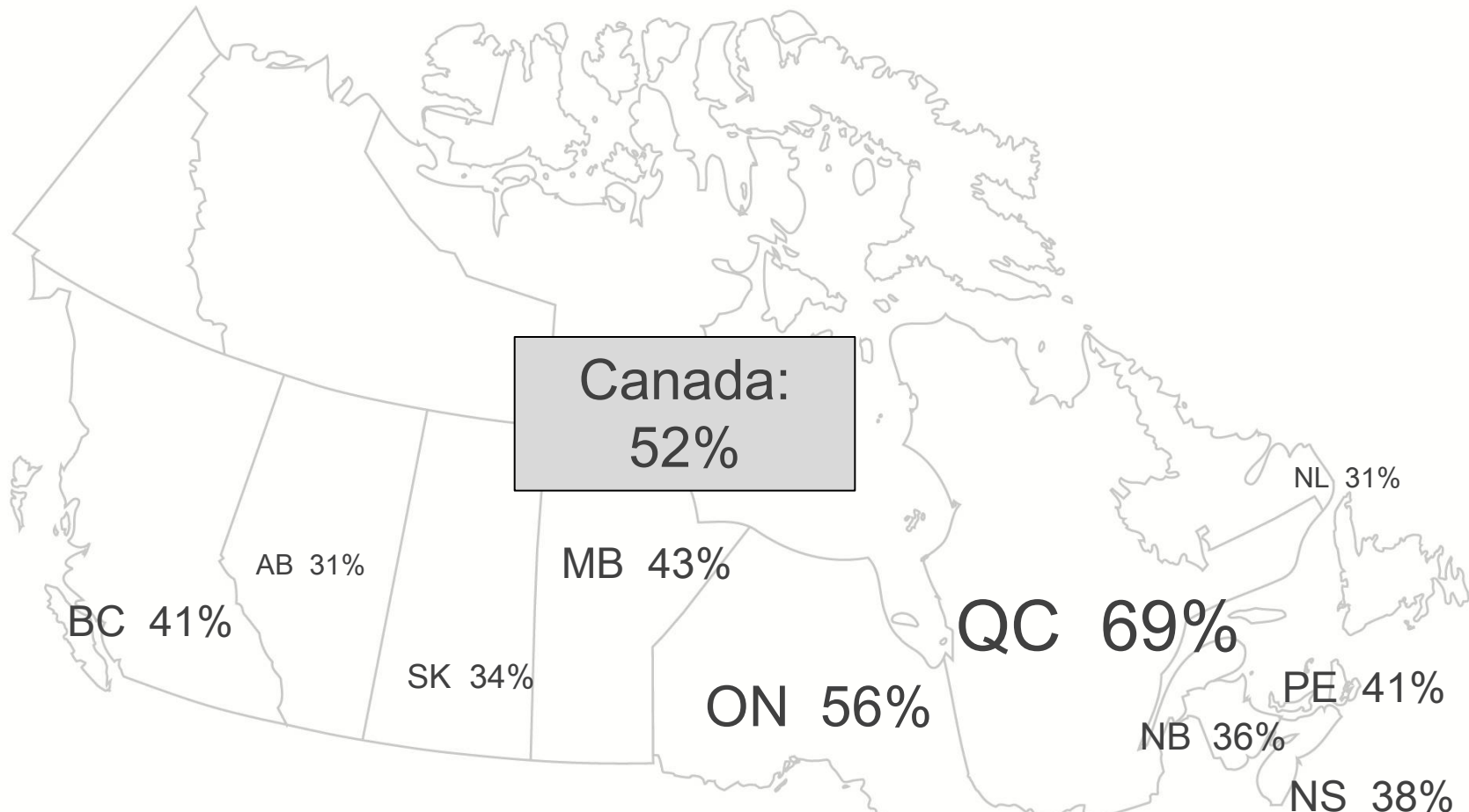


New approaches across Canada

- Almost all provinces have developed curriculum frameworks for early childhood programs based on guided play - watch for NT.
- Creating a learning continuum through to grade 3
- Taken steps to raise the qualifications, compensation and professional recognition of early childhood educators
- Introduced population based assessment – Early Development Instrument
- Maintaining public reporting on investments and outcomes

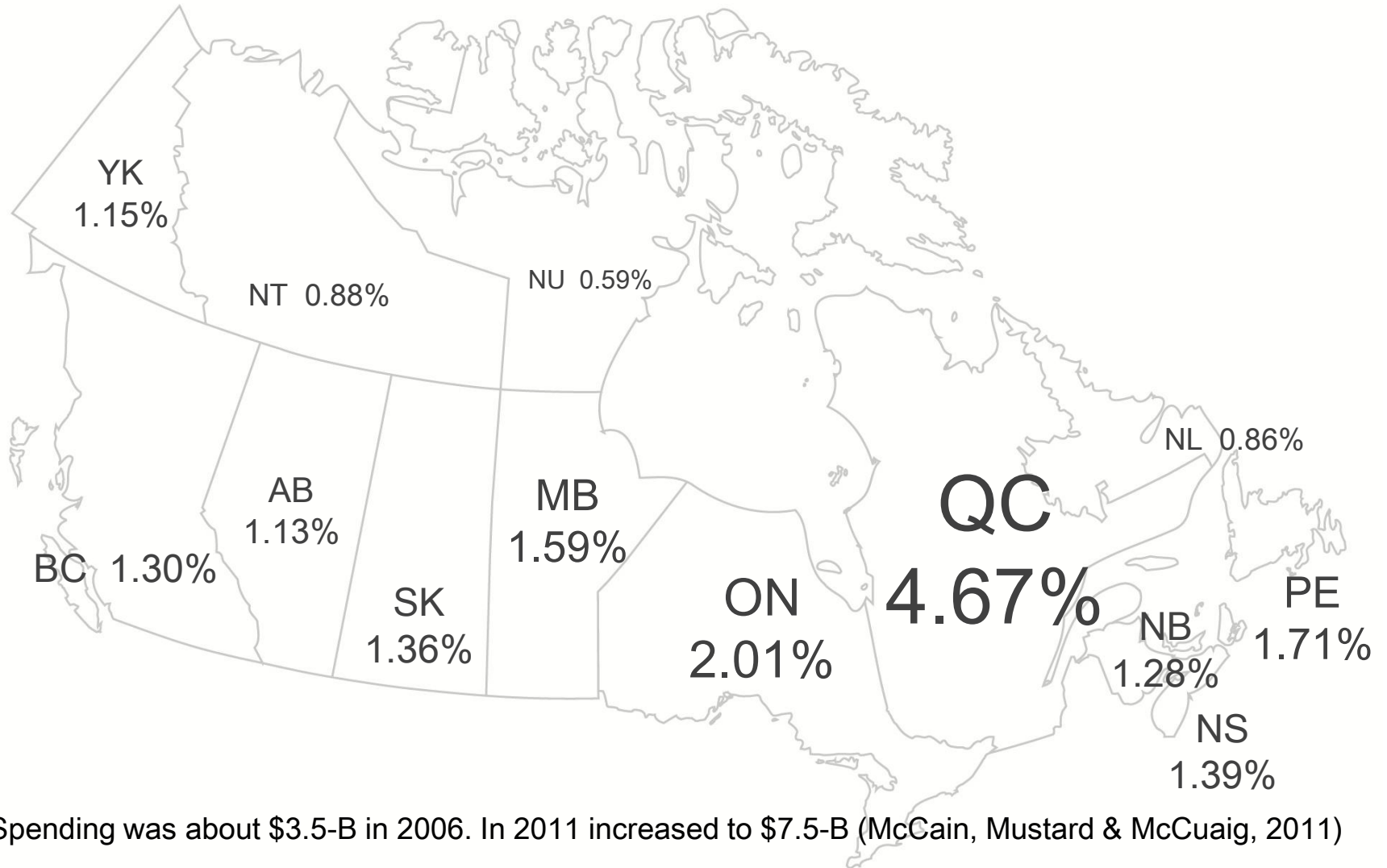
ECEC attendance across Canada 2010

Percentage of 2 – 4-year-olds regularly attending an ECE centre
by provinces and Canada



Across Canada, 50% of children between ages 2 and 4 years attend an early childhood education program - up from 35% in 2004 (McCain, Mustard & McCuaig, 2011)

ECEC budget as a percentage of P/T budgets 2011-12








More attention to monitoring

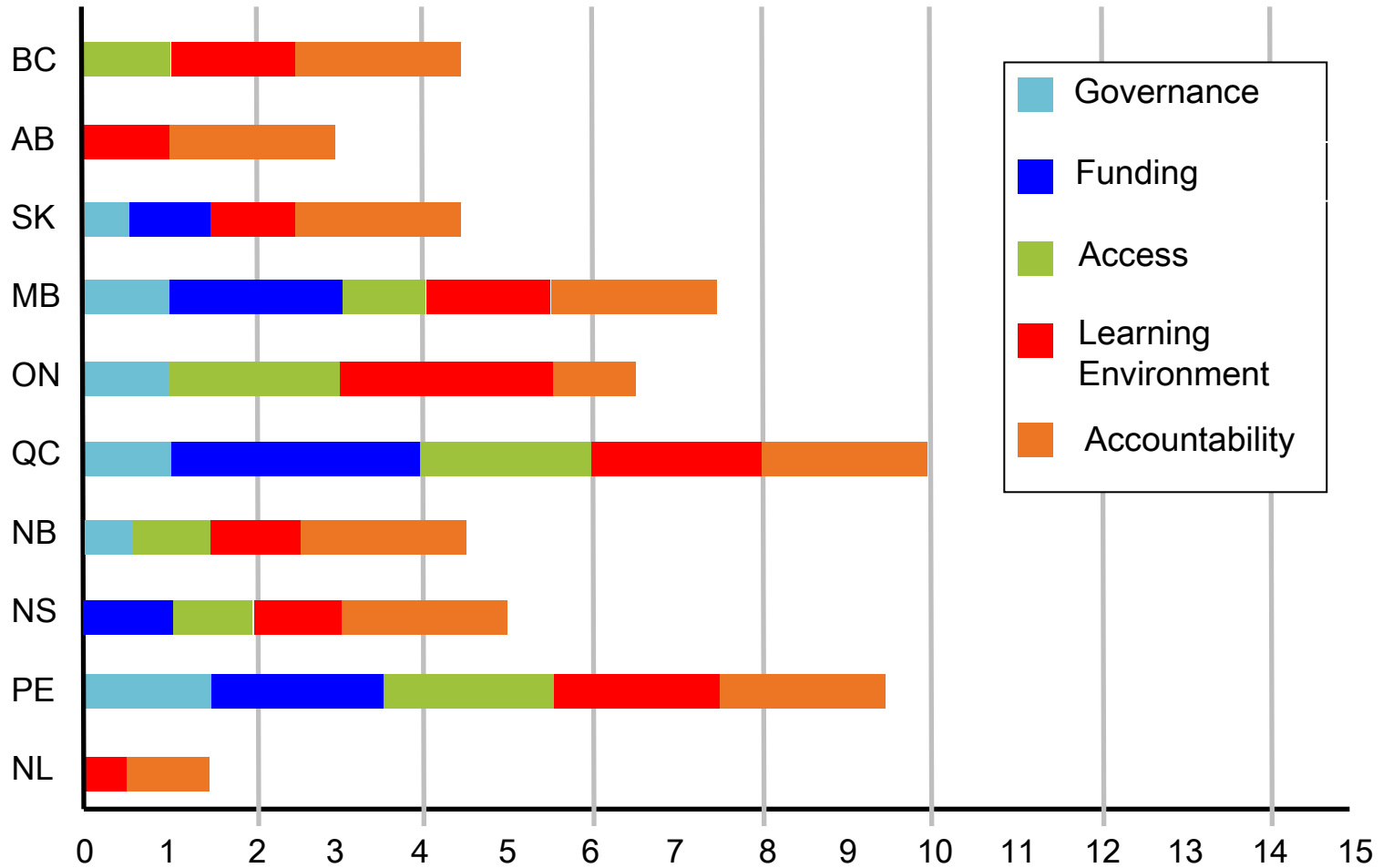
FIGURE 5.16 EDI use across Canada



-  **CATEGORY 1:** Provincial/territorial coverage (at least once by 2011)
-  **CATEGORY 2:** Working towards provincial/territorial coverage
-  **CATEGORY 3:** Ongoing commitment to implementing the EDI provincially/territorially

Source: Provincial/territorial profiles www.earlyyearsstudy.ca.

Early Childhood Education Report





Why the school as the platform?

- Public education enjoys public confidence. Highest percentage enrolment of all the Anglo-American countries – but it is showing cracks
- Viable education system will adapt to grow with the changing socio-economic needs– or they won't be viable
- Facilitates the building of strong relationships between children, families, the community and the school
- Transforms schools into community learning centres rather than a place separating children from the world of adults and the wider community



The community school

- Improves communications across sectors involved with children and families
- Provides viability to small schools, particularly in rural and remote areas, where the school may be the only community resource
- Schools are in every neighbourhood – not just some – and schools often have suitable space and a supportive infrastructure that are not readily available elsewhere in the community
- Provides opportunities to create efficiencies, reduce overlaps and gaps, expand service, improve quality and accountability

What has low cost early education and care done for Quebec?

- 70,000 more mothers are working
- \$1.5-billion annually in increased taxes and lower social transfers
- Boosting the GDP by \$5-billion

Source: Fortin, P., Godbout, L., & St-Cerny. (2012).

Quebec mothers have:

- Moved Quebec from the bottom to the top in female labour force participation in Canada
- Halved child poverty rates
- Halved social assistance rates for lone parents
- Boosted fertility
- Meanwhile, Quebec student test scores have moved from below to above the national average

Source: Fortin, P., Godbout, L., & St-Cerny. (2012).

Done right early education and care pays for itself

*For every dollar Quebec spends on ECE,
it collects \$1.05 in increased taxes and
reduced family payments, while the
federal government gets \$0.44*

Source: Fortin, P., Godbout, L., & St-Cerny. (2012).



Prevention is more effectively delivered from a universal platform

- Better Beginnings; Better Futures – began in 1991; 25-year longitudinal demonstration project to provide information on the effectiveness of prevention
- 5,000 children - eight sites – 4-8 yrs (3); 0-4 (5)
- By Grade 12, \$5,000 per child savings in special education alone 4-8 yr sites, less use of health, social & justice services
- No long term savings in the under 4s
- Why? Too few resources, too broad mandate, no universal platform to operate from



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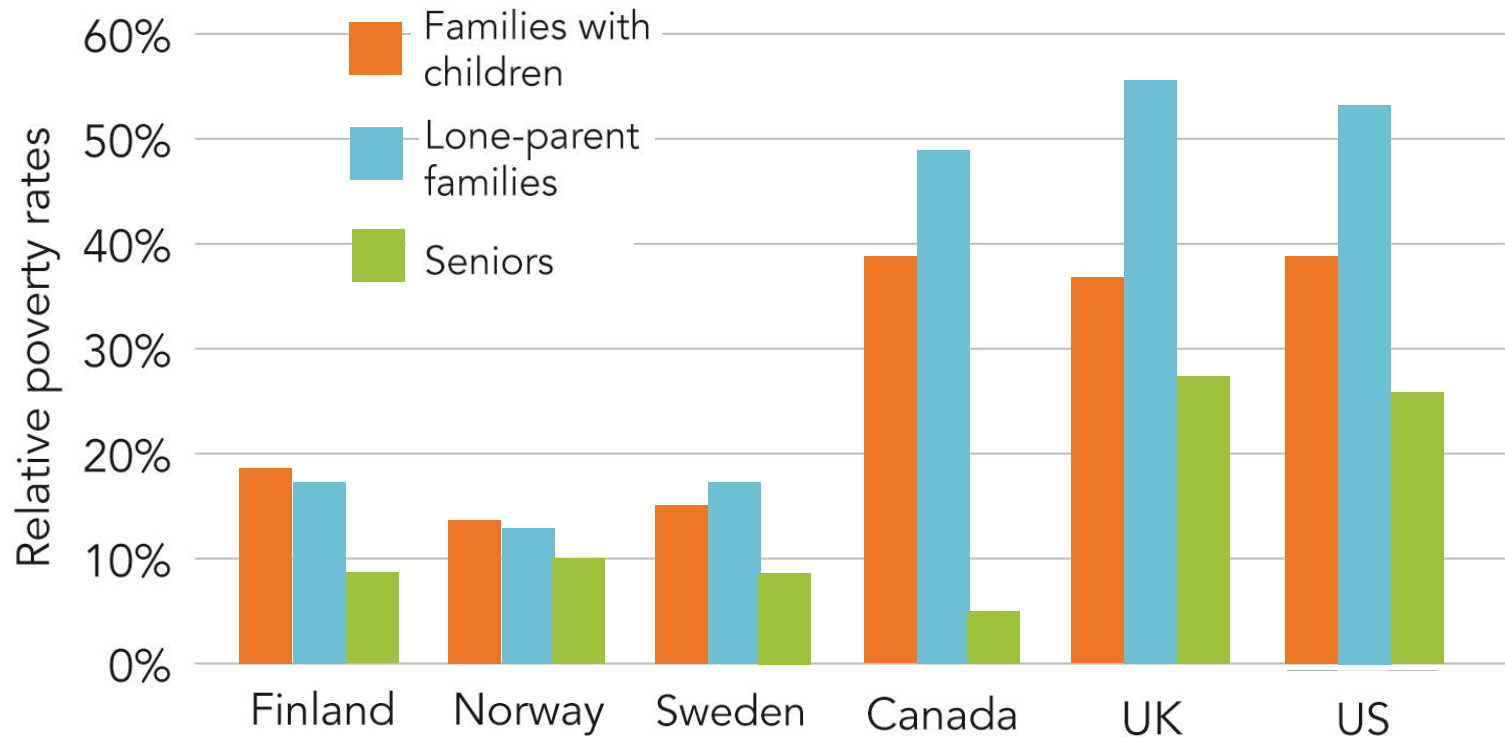


Head US Federal Reserve- Ben Bernanke, 2011

“Research increasingly has shown the benefits of early childhood education and efforts to promote the lifelong acquisition of skills for both individuals and the economy as a whole. The payoffs of early childhood programs can be especially high.”

Public policy makes a difference

Relative poverty rates for three social risk categories



Source: Commission on Social Determinants of Health. (2008). p. 85.



www.oise.utoronto.ca/atkinson

www.earlyyearsstudy.ca

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