A woman with a child on her back is seen from behind, standing in a field of tall grass. She is holding a string to a colorful kite flying in the sky. The scene is set against a clear blue sky.

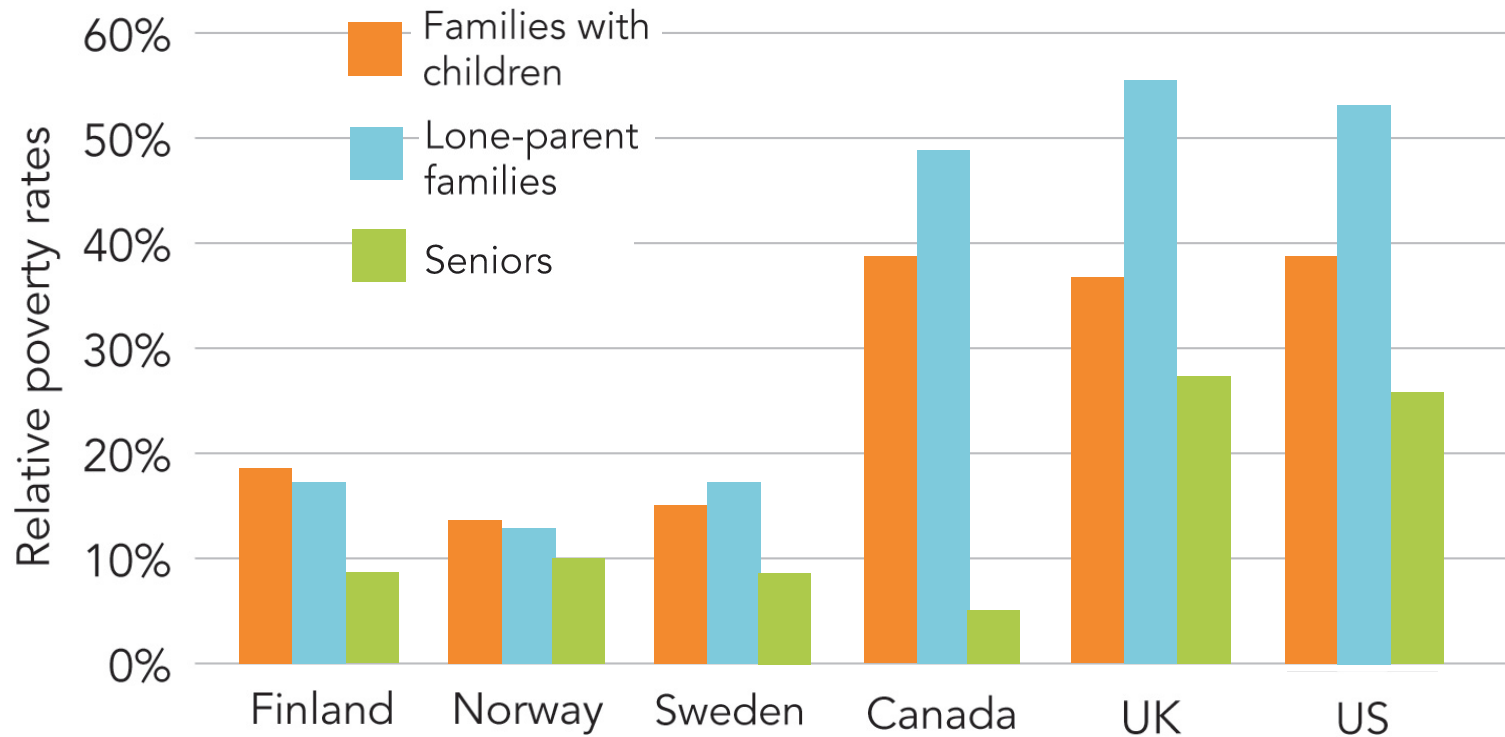
# *Early Years Study 3*

## *Trends in early education*

Yellowknife, NT  
February 14, 2013

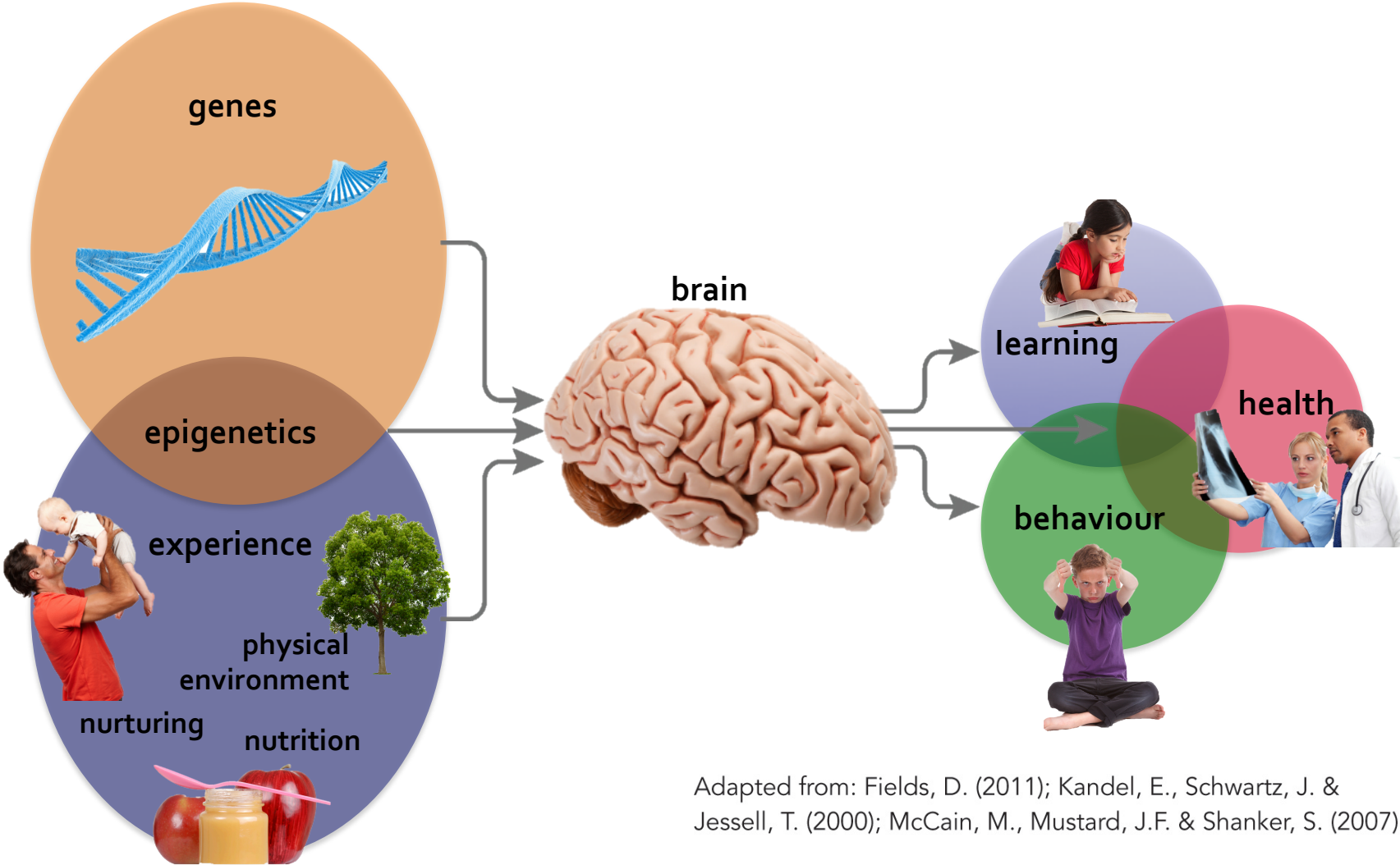
Kerry McCuaig  
Atkinson Centre, OISE, University of Toronto

## Relative poverty rates for three social risk categories



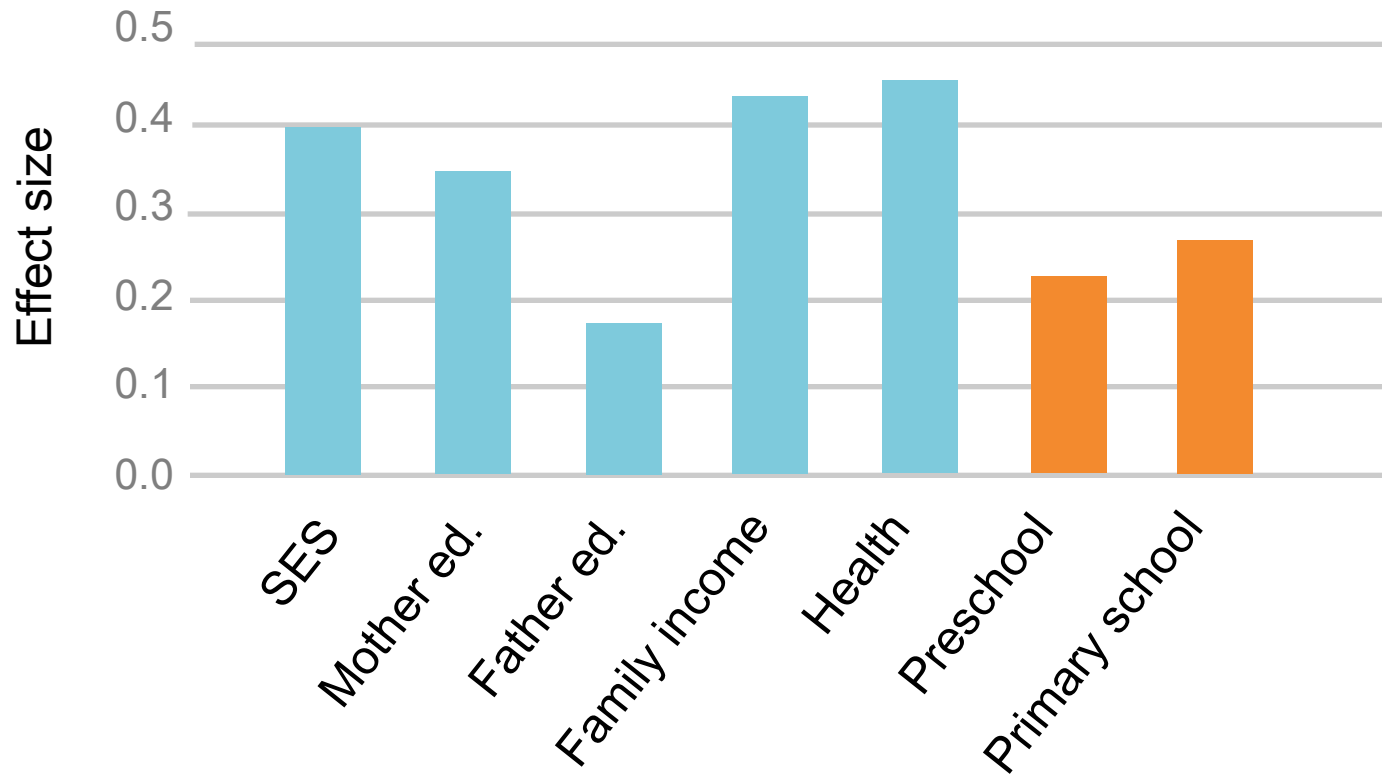
Source: Commission on Social Determinants of Health. (2008). p. 85.

# Experienced-based brain development



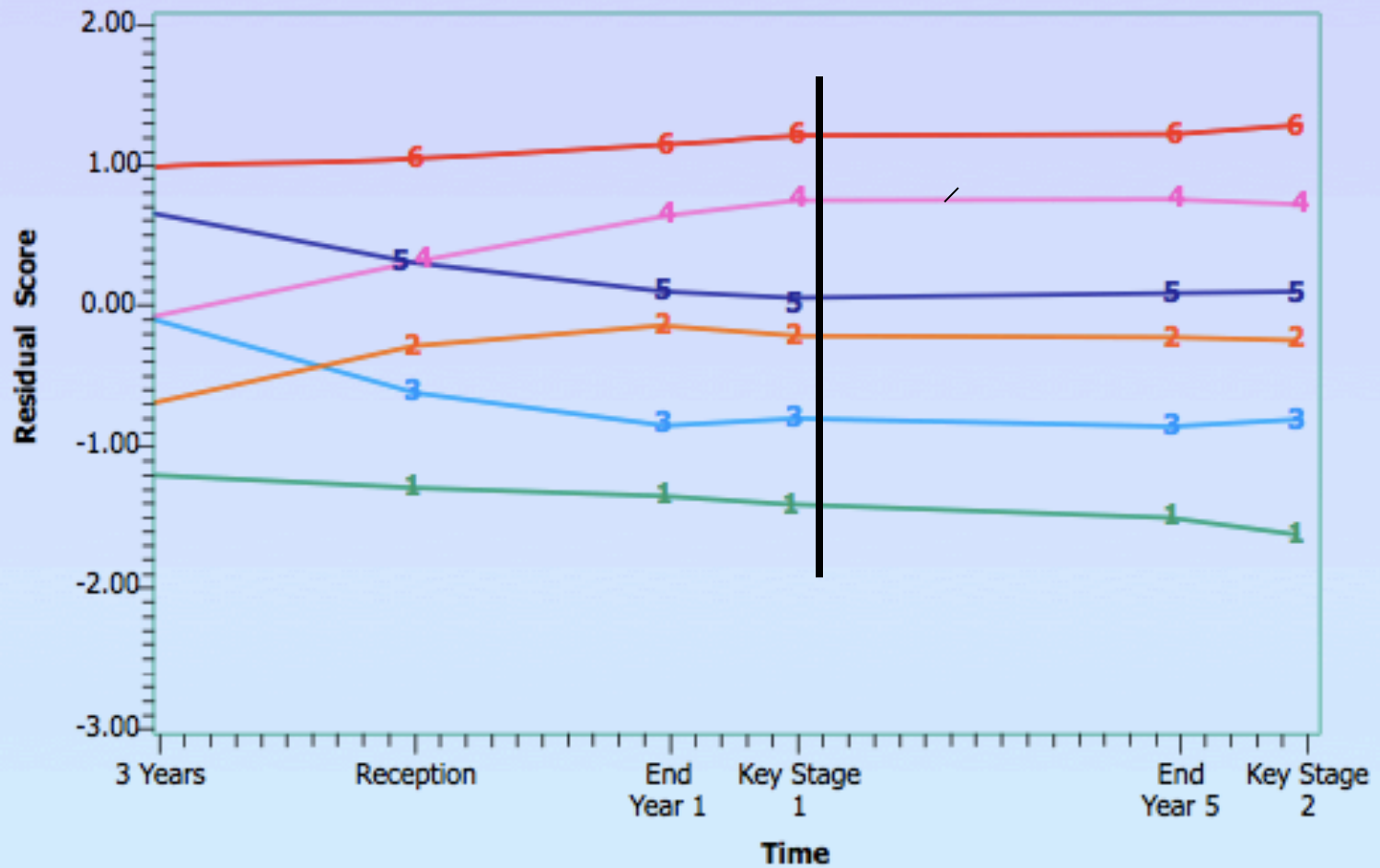
Adapted from: Fields, D. (2011); Kandel, E., Schwartz, J. & Jessell, T. (2000); McCain, M., Mustard, J.F. & Shanker, S. (2007).

## Factors affecting academic achievement – Age 11



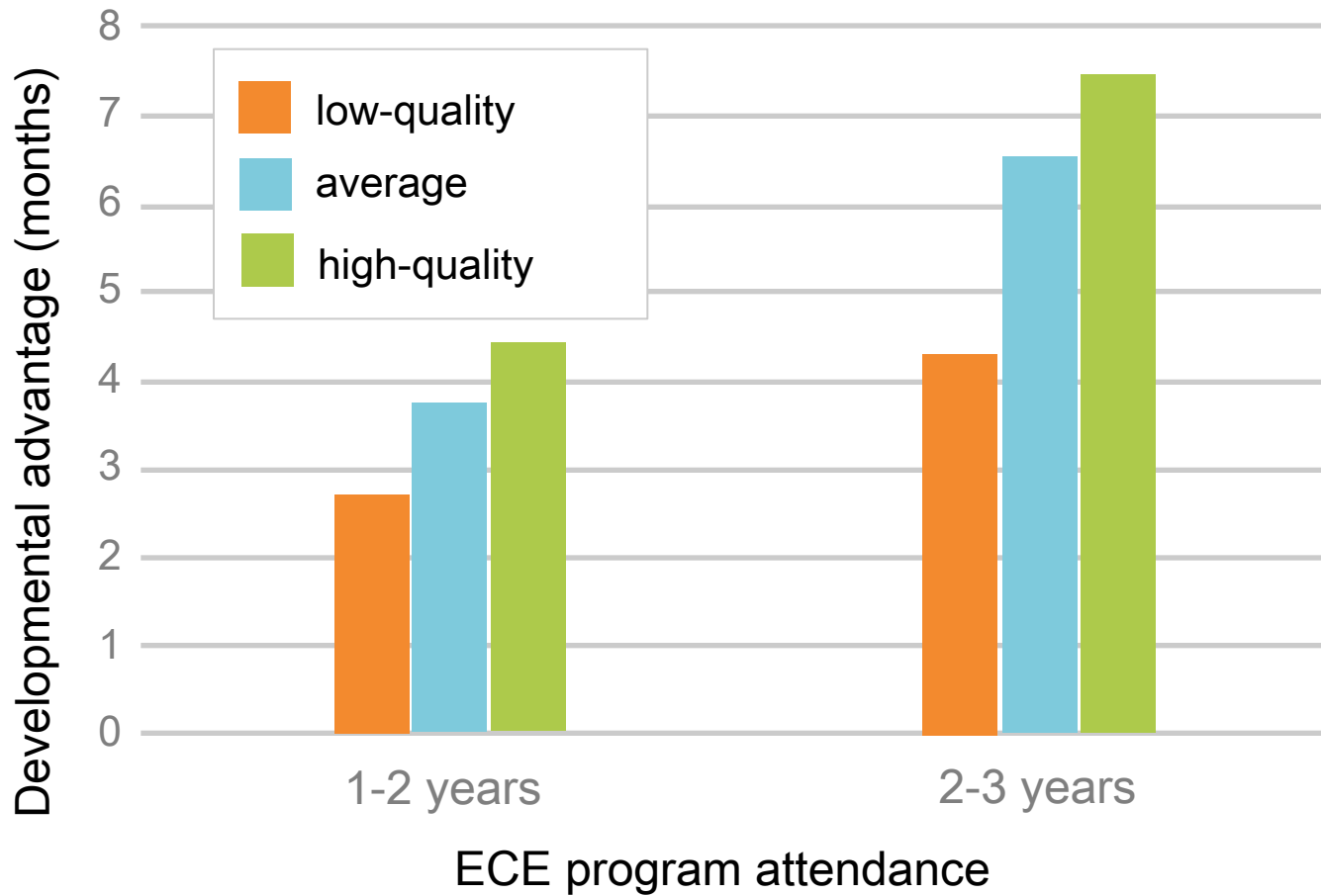
Source: Melhuish, E. in Roseveare, D. (2011).

# Trajectories for Numeracy



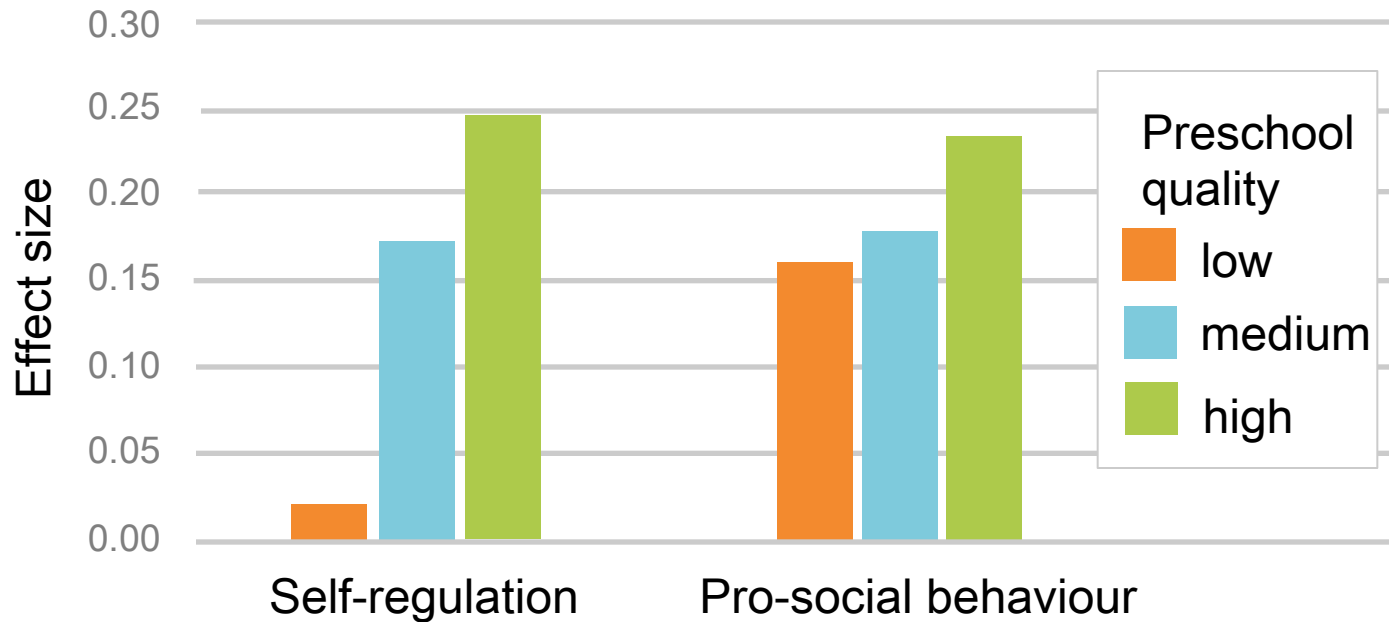
Group %      1-1-1 8.2%    2-2-2 19.6%    3-3-3 18.8%    4-4-4 17.3%    5-5-5 23.2%    6-6-6 12.9%

## Quality and duration matter (months of developmental age)



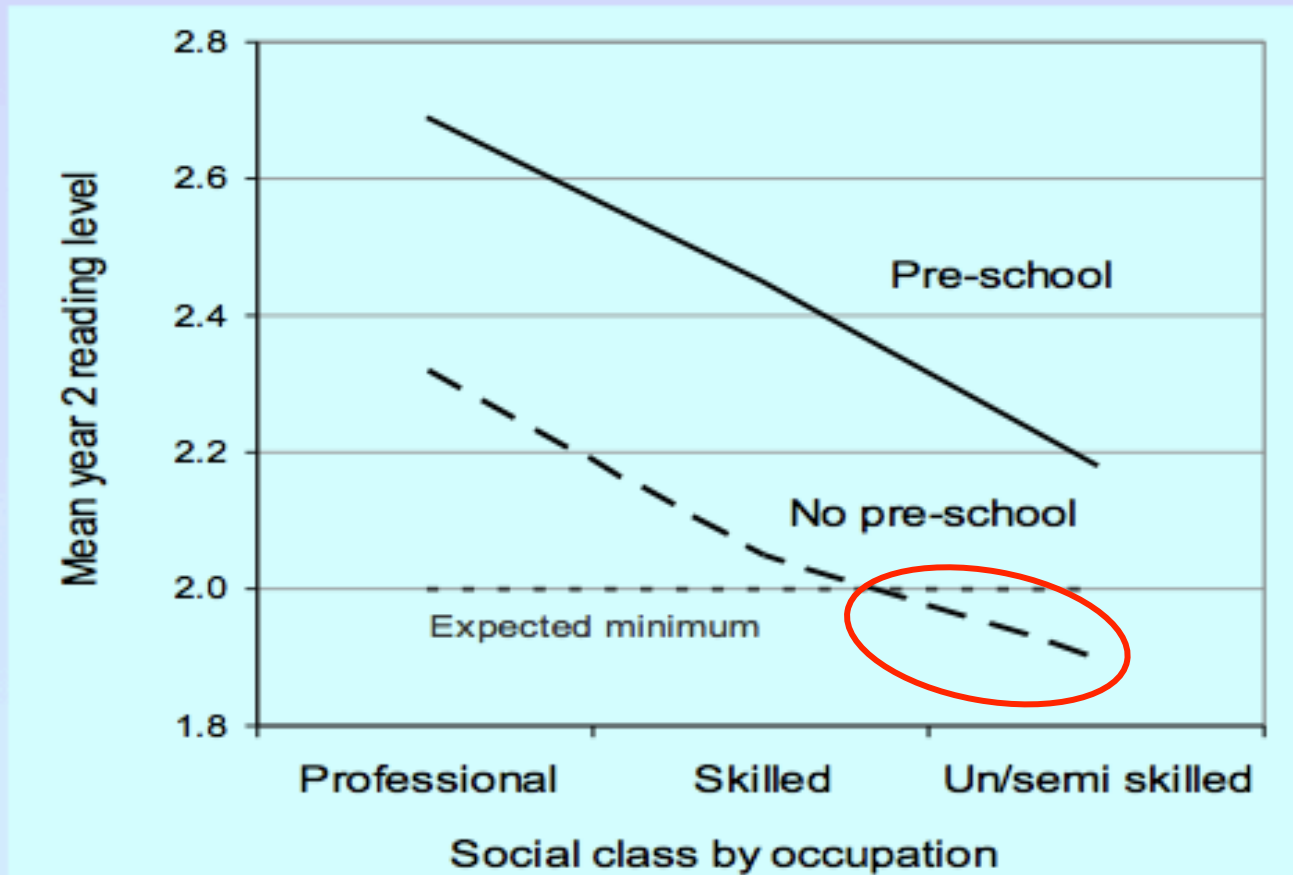
Source: Melhuish, E. in Roseveare, D. (2011).

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



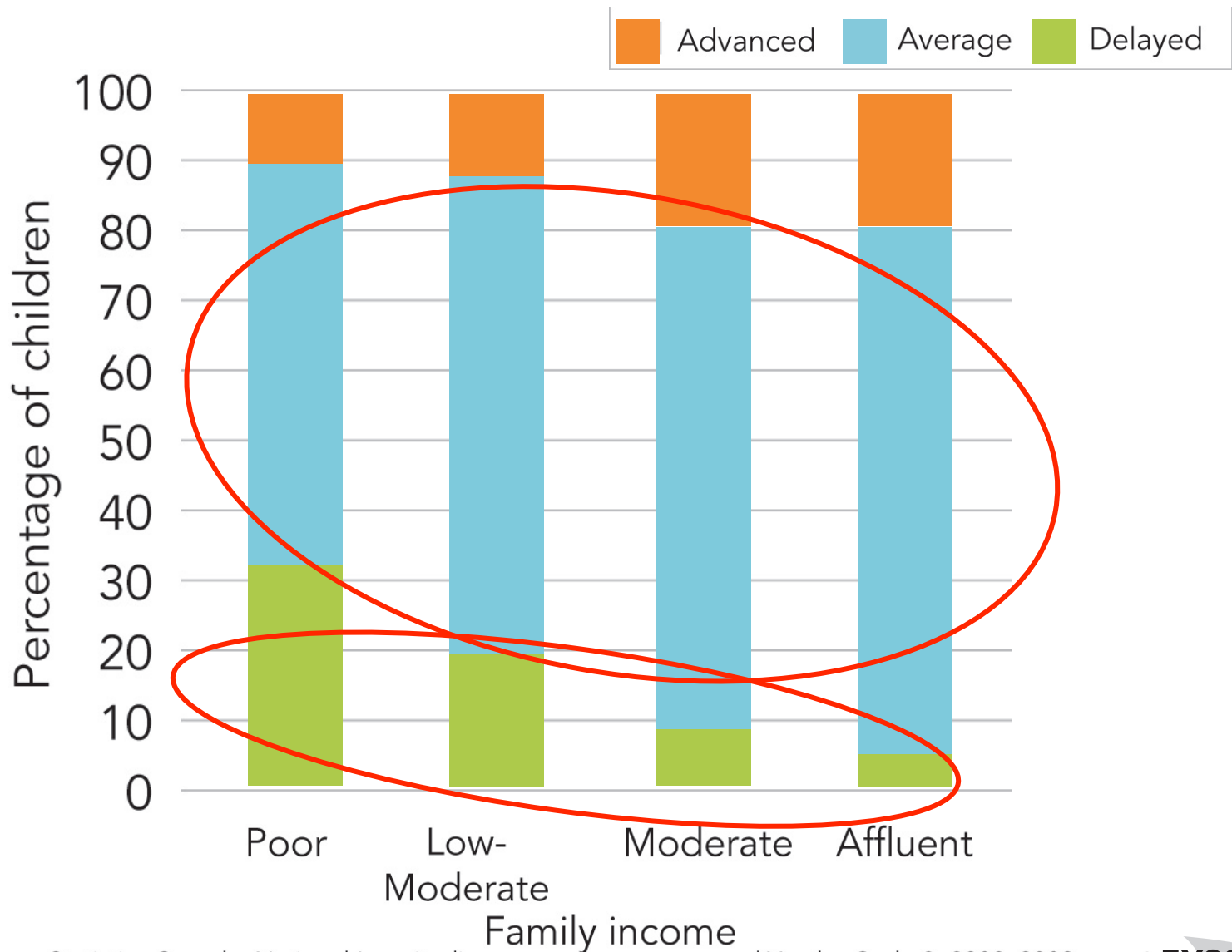
Source: Melhuish, E. in Roseveare, D. (2011).

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





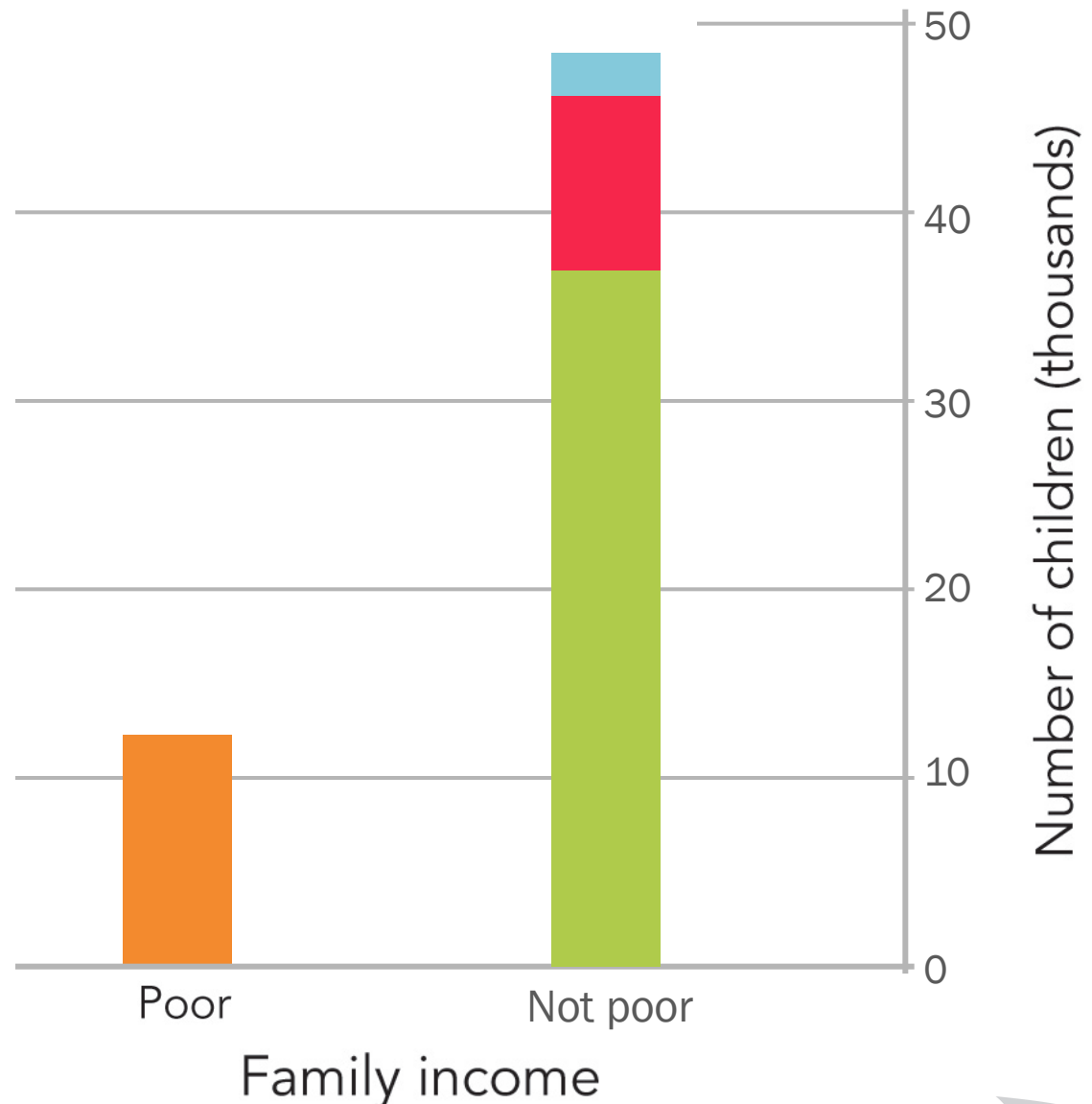
# Universal access promotes equity - *Vocabulary skills in children ages 4 and 5 years by family income*



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.



## 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	ECE 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



# 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/departments of education in NB, NT, NU, ON, QC, PE, SK are also responsible for child care and preschool programs.
- Ministries of education in ON & BC support school-based programs for parents and preschoolers.

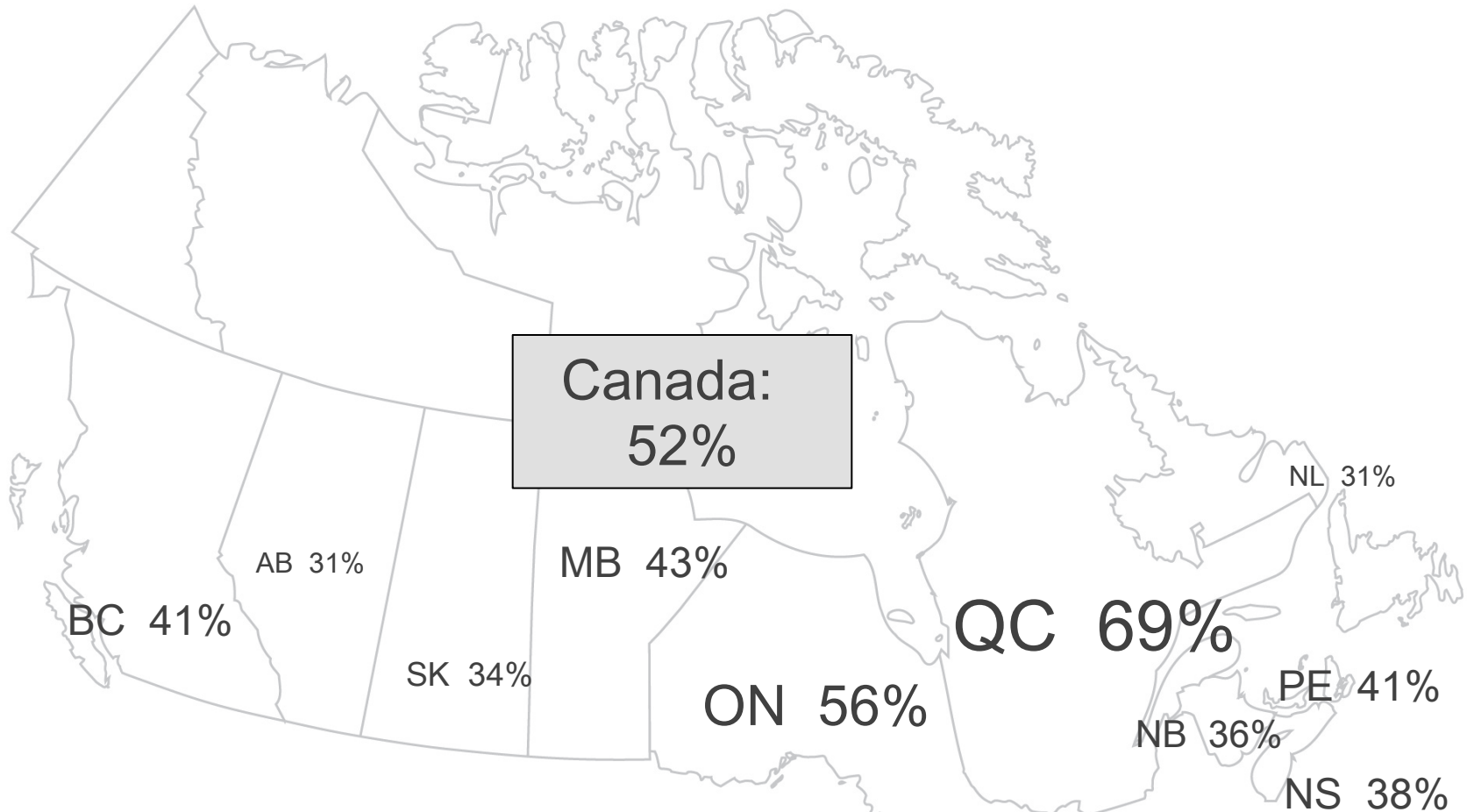


# New approaches across Canada

- Almost all provinces have developed curriculum frameworks for early childhood programs based on guided play
- 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

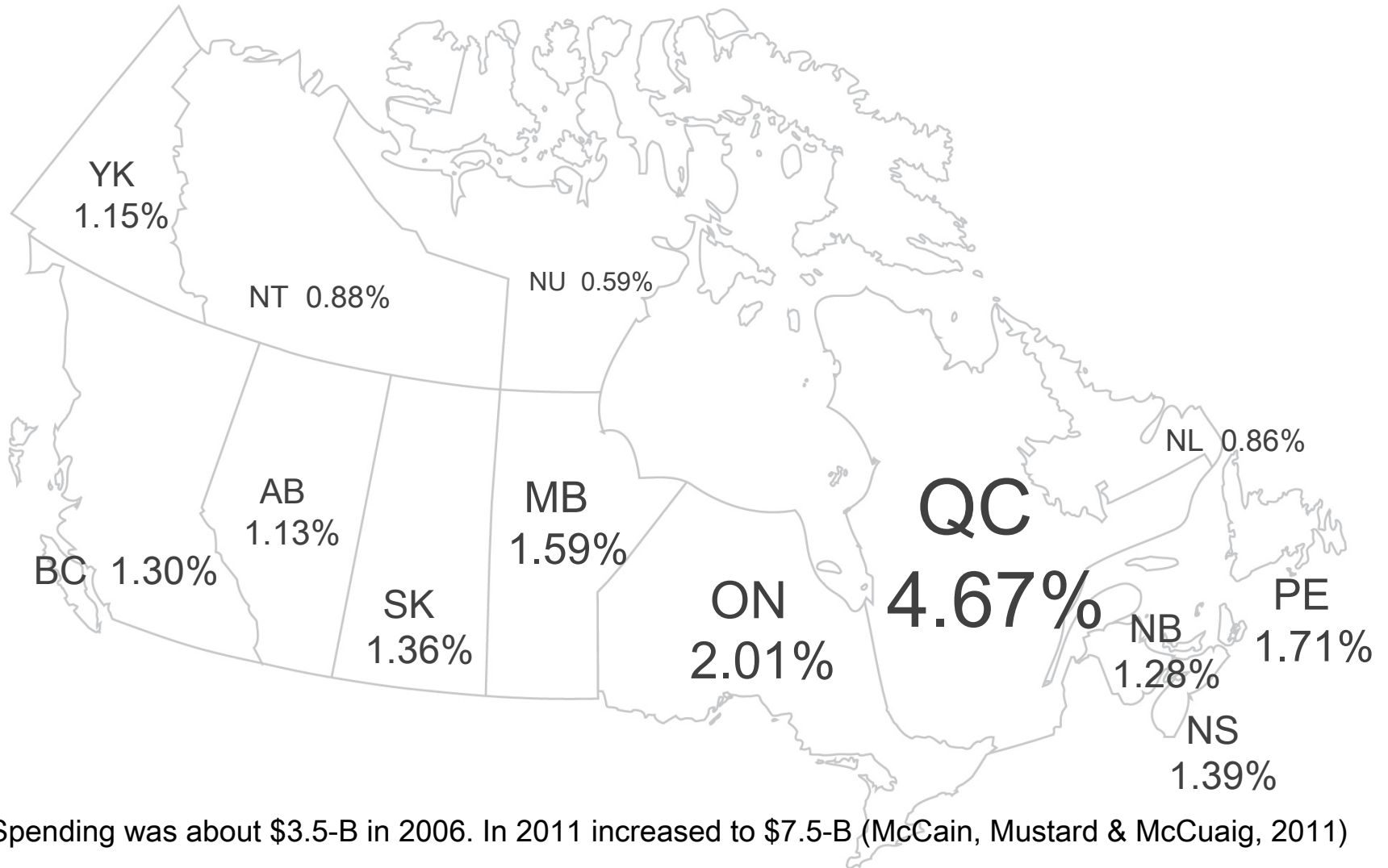
# ECEC attendance across Canada 2010

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



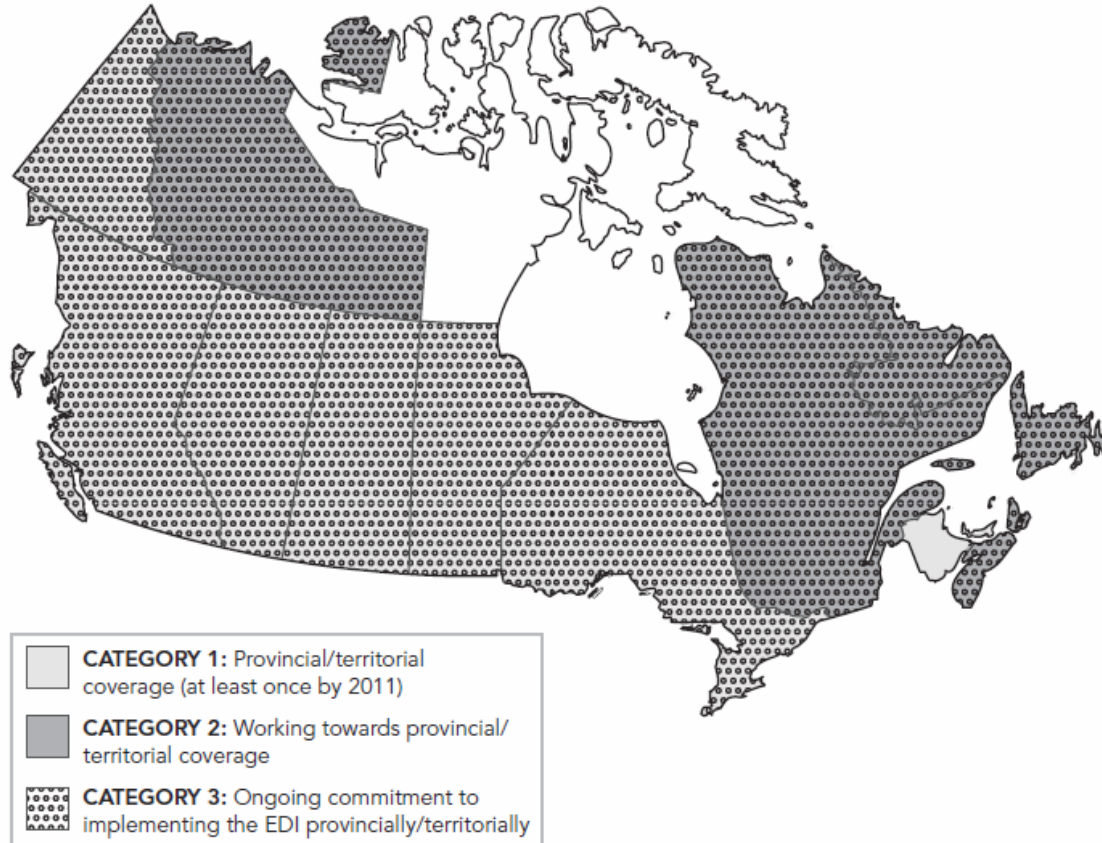
Spending was about \$3.5-B in 2006. In 2011 increased to \$7.5-B (McCain, Mustard & McCuaig, 2011)





# More attention to monitoring

FIGURE 5.16 EDI use across Canada



Source: Provincial/territorial profiles [www.earlyyearsstudy.ca](http://www.earlyyearsstudy.ca).





## 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 child and the changing needs of families – 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



## Rachel's story

*Last year my worker told me my children had to start going to a daycare to help them get ready for school. She sent us to [the Early Learning Centre] at St. John's school. I went to get my worker off my case. I thought I would hate it and I never planned on going back. I made sure the workers knew it too. I wasn't going to let them tell me how I should be raising my kids. I hated walking into that red brick building which brought back bad feelings*

....

*I didn't expect to be treated so kindly from the minute we arrived. ...The best part is we no longer have to take a bunch of buses for all of the kids' appointments. It felt like we were always running from place to place. A lot of times I just cancelled because I was too tired. Now our Early Interventionist, Speech Therapist, Occupational Therapist, Physiotherapist and Social Worker all come and meet us at the Centre. I don't miss our appointments anymore... My daughter started Grade 1 and is doing really well. I volunteer in the centre and was elected to the parent council.*

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

- 70,000 more mothers are working
- They pay \$1.5-billion annually in taxes
- And draw \$340-million less in 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





## Why haven't we made our case?

*Lack clear leadership to advocate vigorously for the consolidation of early childhood policies, to overcome the current fragmentation of public and private budgets between countless institutions, none of which take a sufficiently holistic view of children.*

Leonardo Yáñez. “Quality learning at scale: a new goal for the Bernard van Leer Foundation,” *Early Childhood Matters*, Bernard van Leer Foundation, November 2011. P.1.



[www.oise.utoronto.ca/atkinson](http://www.oise.utoronto.ca/atkinson)

[www.earlyyearsstudy.ca](http://www.earlyyearsstudy.ca)



Kerry McCuaig  
[Kmccuaig@rogers.com](mailto:Kmccuaig@rogers.com)