

A woman with a child on her shoulders is flying a kite in a field. The kite is colorful and is flying in the sky. The woman is wearing a white shirt and pink pants. The child is wearing a white shirt and pink pants. The field is filled with tall grass. The sky is blue.

Early Years Study 3:

Making decisions, Taking action

**Human Development and Applied Psychology
Colloquium**

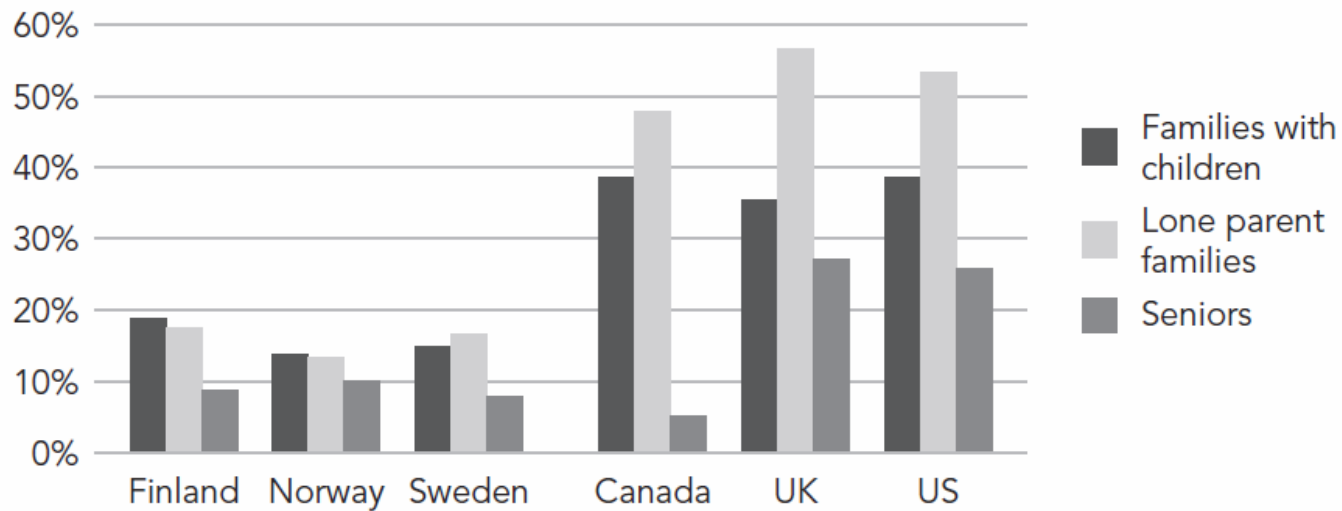
Kerry McCuaig,
Atkinson Fellow Early Childhood Policy
OISE/UofT, February 8, 2012

Changing families



Relative poverty rates for three social risk categories

Relative poverty rates



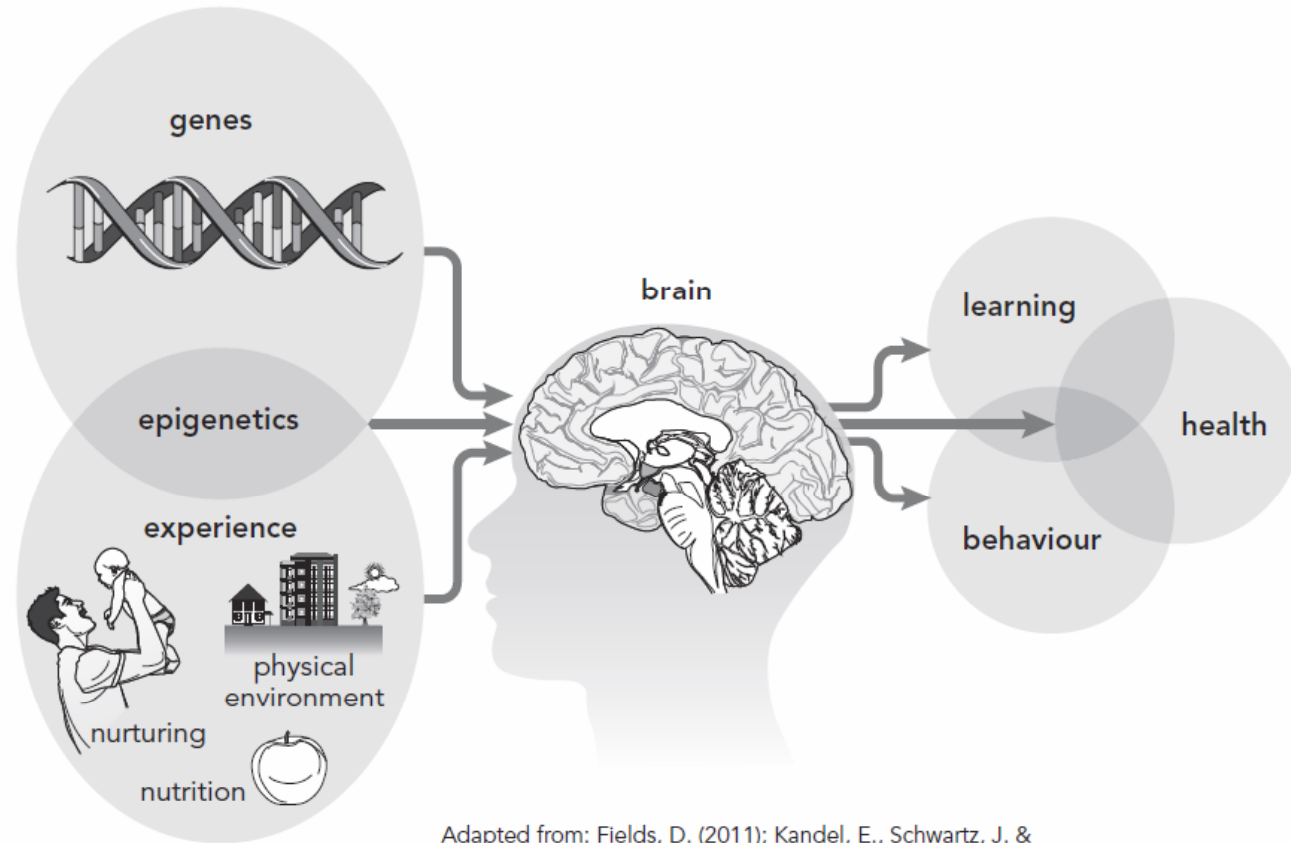
Poverty threshold = 60% of median equivalent disposable income.

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



Early childhood last a lifetime

FIGURE 2.8 Experienced-based brain development

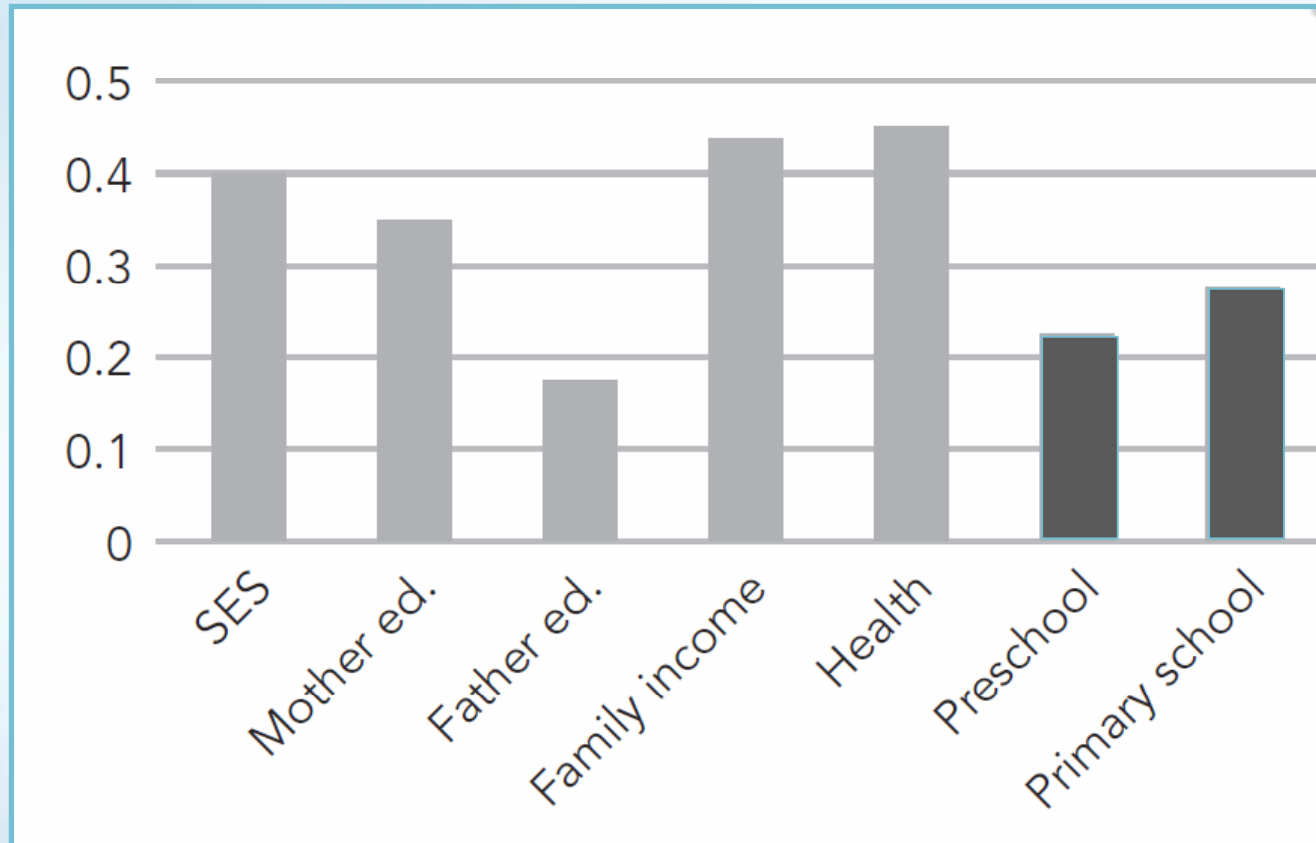


Adapted from: Fields, D. (2011); Kandel, E., Schwartz, J. & Jessell, T. (2000); McCain, M., Mustard, J.F. & Shanker, S. (2007).

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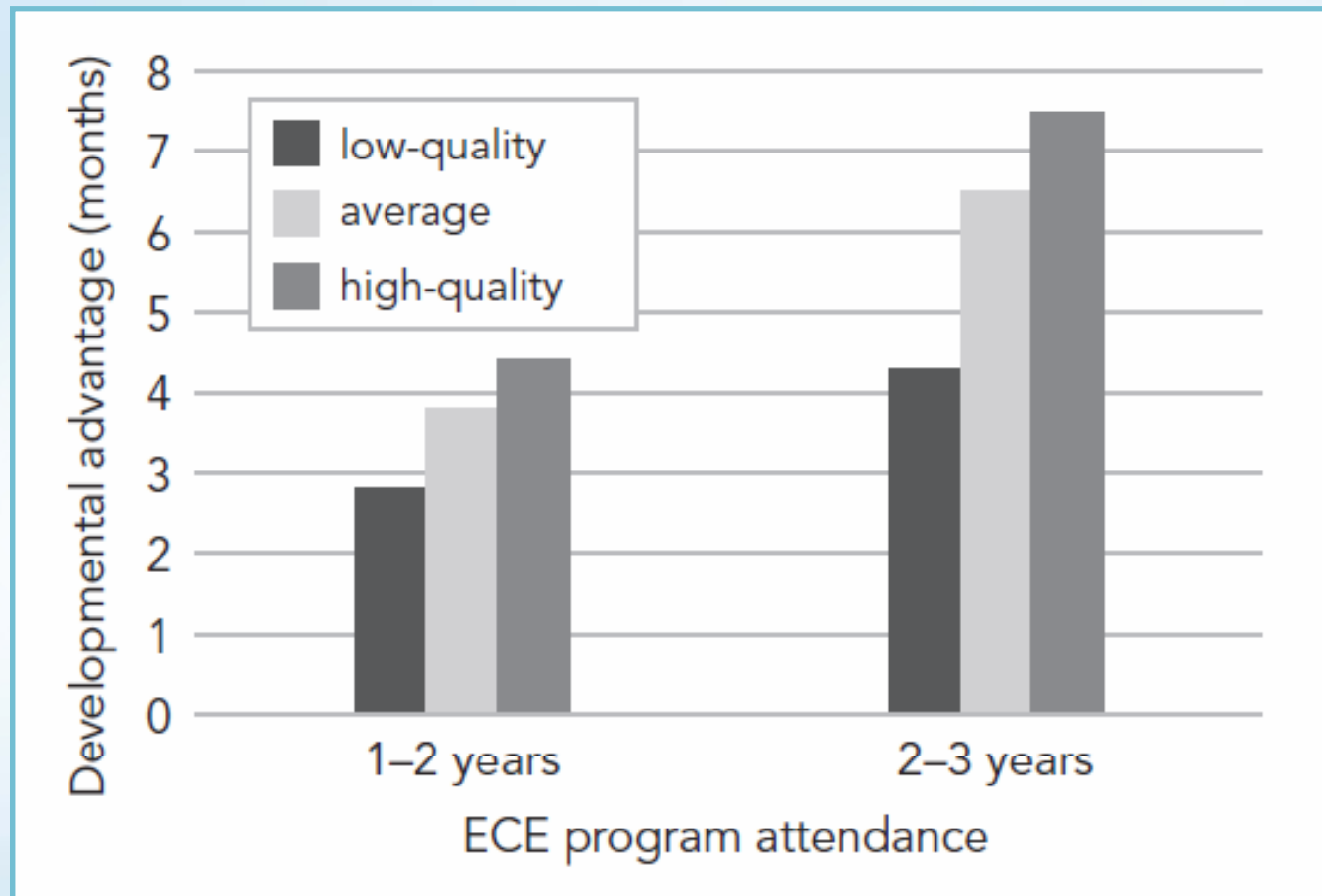


Factors affecting outcomes





ECE quality and duration matter

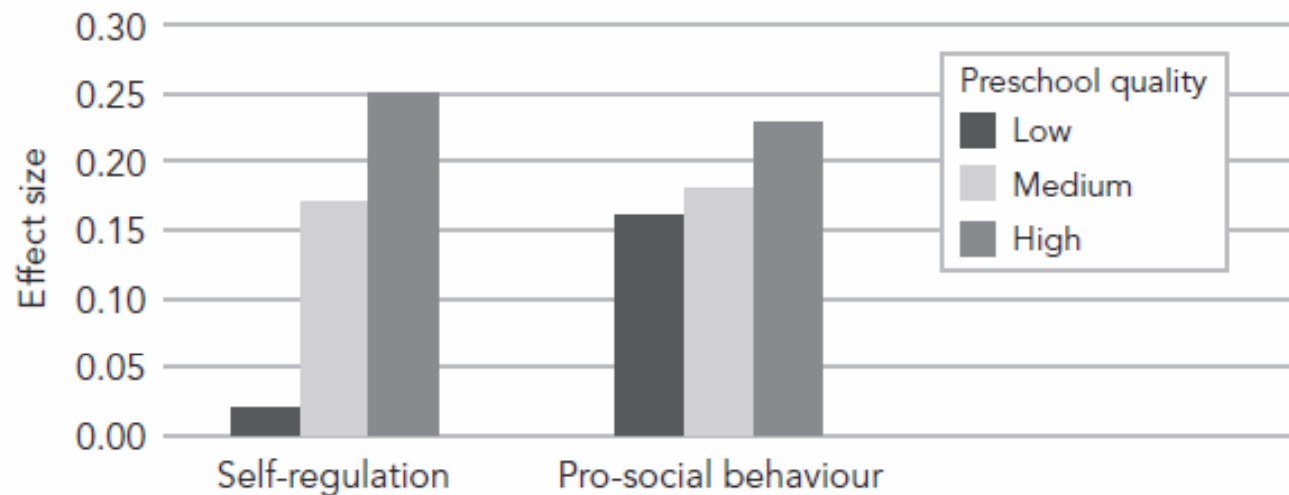




Quality linked to better outcomes

FIGURE 3.1

Preschool quality and self-regulation and pro-social behaviour (age 11)



Quality preschool promotes self-regulation in young children with enduring effects into elementary school.

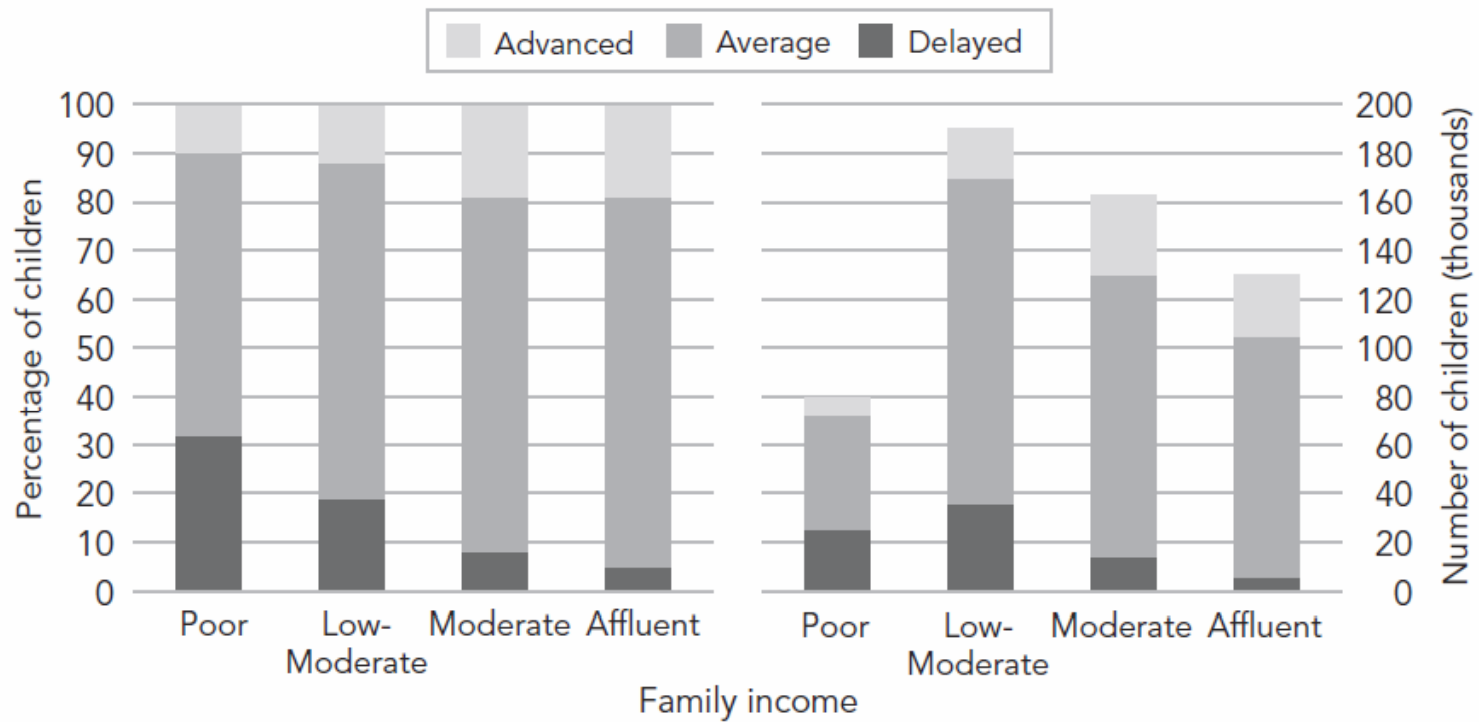
Source: Melhuish, E. in Roseveare, D. (2011).



Progressive universality promotes equity

FIGURE 2.9

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

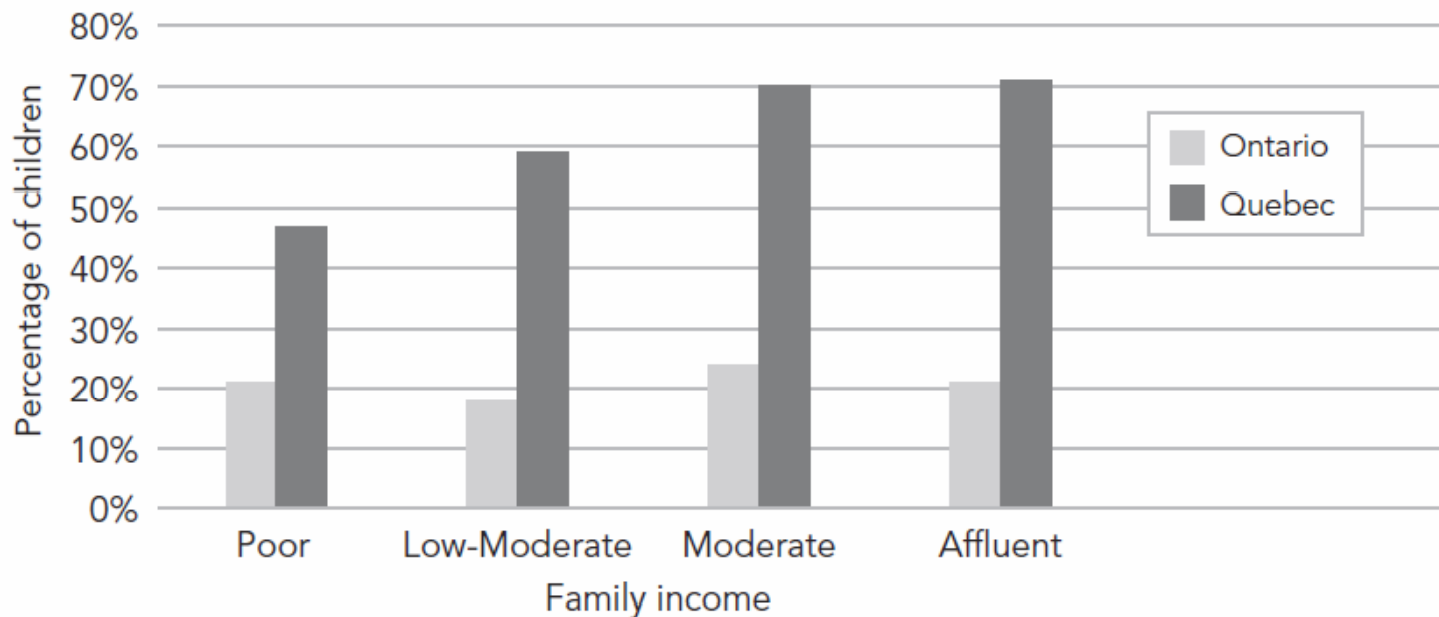




Universality is more equitable

FIGURE 4.6

Children 2 to 4 years attending ECE centre by income, Ontario and Quebec, 2008–2009



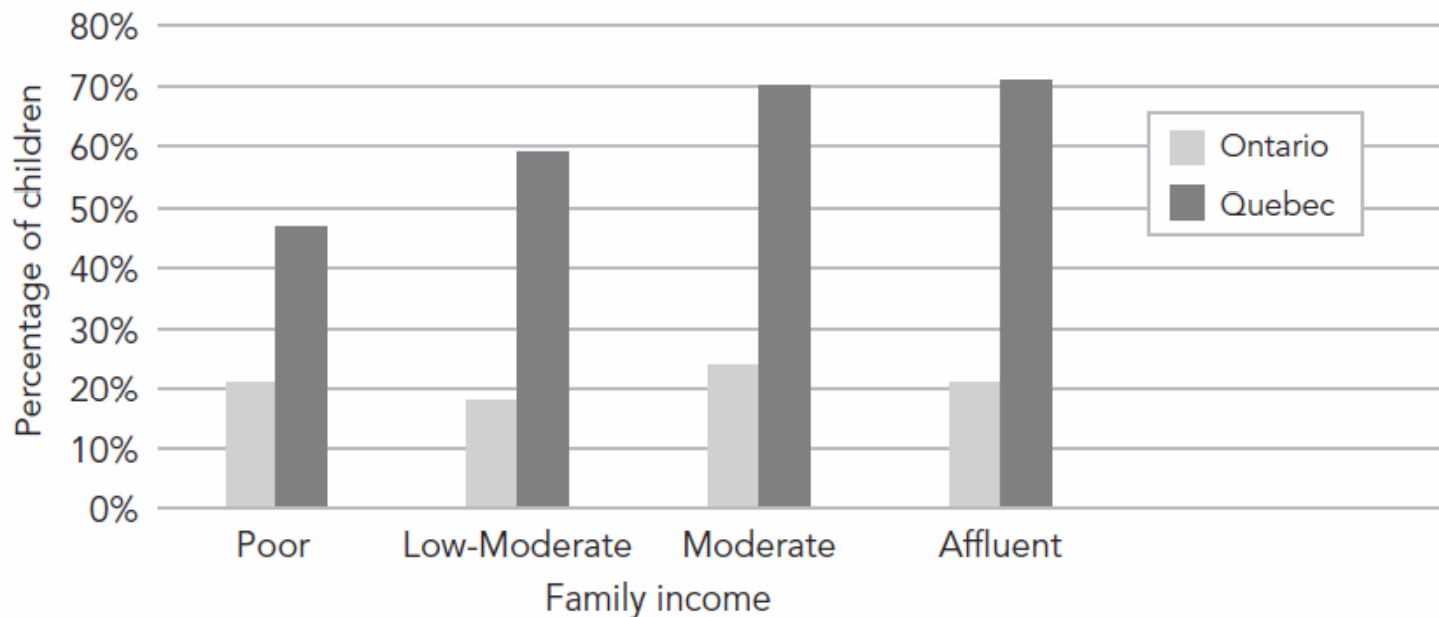
Source: Adapted from Statistics Canada. National Longitudinal Survey of Children and Youth. Cycle 8, 2008–2009. Special tabulation.



Universal access needed

FIGURE 4.6

Children 2 to 4 years attending ECE centre by income, Ontario and Quebec, 2008–2009



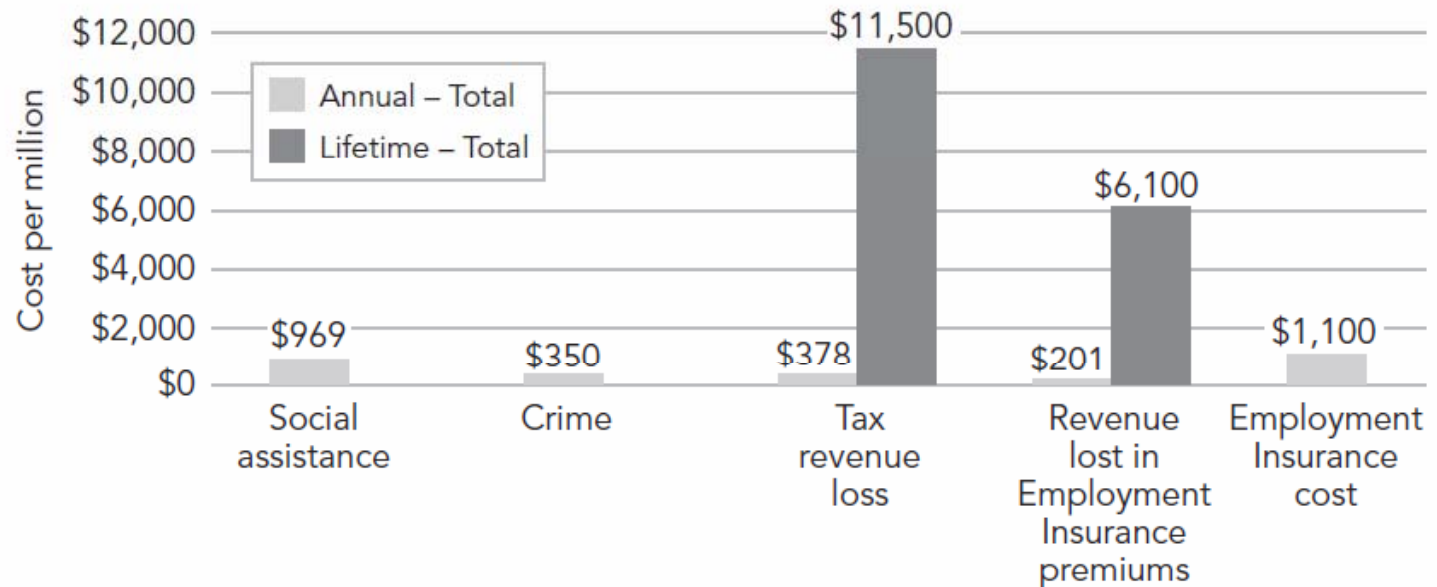
Source: Adapted from Statistics Canada. National Longitudinal Survey of Children and Youth. Cycle 8, 2008–2009. Special tabulation.



Cost of early school leavers

FIGURE 1.10

Public costs of high school non-completion in Canada by cohort (2008 dollars)



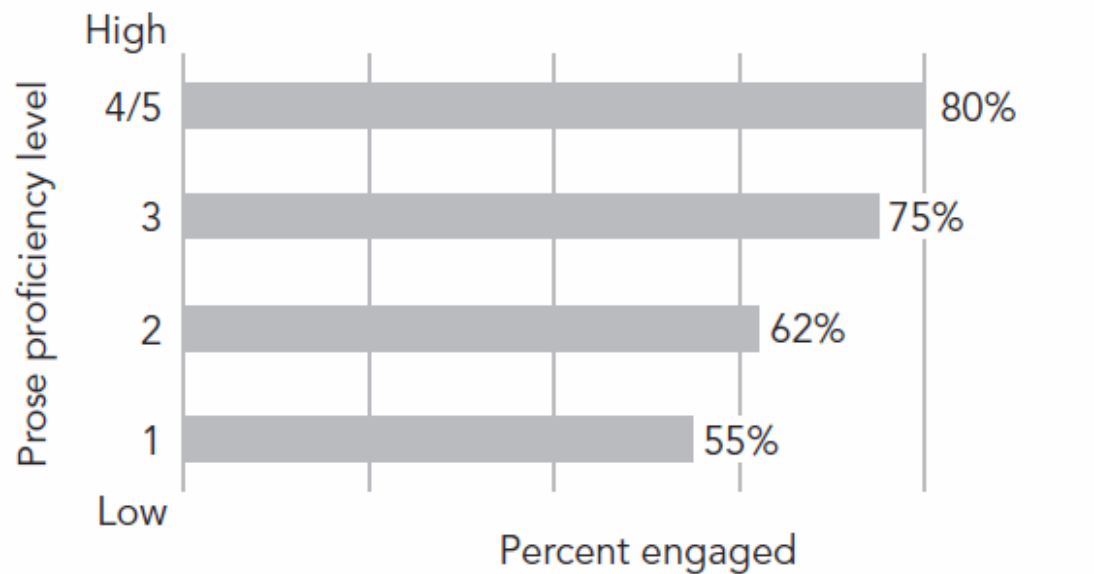
Source: Hankivsky, O. (2008).



Literacy and civic engagement

FIGURE 2.13

Civic engagement by literacy levels, Canada, population aged 16 and over, 2003



Higher literacy levels are associated with increased civic engagement.

Source: Barr-Telfard, L., Nault, F., & Pignal, J. (2005).



Done right early education pays for itself

Study	Year	Premise	Benefits	Ratio
<p>Economic Consequences of Quebec's Educational Childcare Policy</p> <p>Pierre Fortin Luc Godbout Suzie St-Cerny</p>	2011	<p>Increased women's employment by 70,000</p> <p>Enhanced maternal employment pays for the program</p>	<p>Quebec gains \$1.5 B in increased tax revenue</p> <p>Pays \$340 M less in tax and social benefits to families</p> <p>Increased GDP by \$5.2 B</p>	<p>For every \$1 spent on ECEC, Quebec receives \$1.05</p> <p>Federal government receives \$.44</p>
<p>Better Beginnings Better Future</p> <p>Queen's University</p>	2010	<p>\$580,000 per community site for 5 years</p> <p>3 sites involving children 4-8 years 5 sites involving children birth to 4 years</p> <p>Matched similar neighbourhoods</p>	<p>No difference for BBBF sites focused on birth to 4 years but reduced use of health, special education, child welfare in 4-8 years sites compared to matched neighbourhoods</p>	<p>For every \$1 spent in school-based programs, \$2 saved in reduced costs to public and community agencies</p>



The existing service system...

- High numbers of families with complex needs – often beyond the capability of any single service
- Demand for early intervention and special education is greater than services available
- Lack of service coordination results in families having difficulty accessing services they need
- Poor linkages between early years and schools resulting in services gaps and setbacks
- Child care services are fragmented and lack infrastructure support. Intervention and family support services are also in their own silos



The challenges

- Split governance - legislation, funding, and delivery structures – cannot deliver an effective early childhood system to children and families
- Internationally, many jurisdictions have consolidated their child care and education departments at the state and local level
- Research indicates a stable platform with a school base and core funding allows an integrated early childhood program that can serve more families, more effectively in ways that they want to be served



A mother's story

Last summer my worker told me that my children had to start going to a daycare to help them in school. I went to the Early Learning Centre daycare 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 Matthew and I should be raising our kids. I hated walking in the doors of that red brick building which brought back bad feelings of my own experiences at school....

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 anymore. 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...



New approaches across Canada

- Full-day kindergarten programs in British Columbia, Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Quebec, Ontario and Northwest Territories.
- Junior/prekindergarten programs in Nova Scotia, Quebec, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta and Yukon in selected communities /school districts. Junior kindergarten is being expanded for all 4-year olds in Ontario.
- Ministries/departments of education in New Brunswick, Northwest Territories, Nunavut, Ontario, Prince Edward Island, and Saskatchewan are also responsible for child care and preschool programs.
- Ministries of education in Ontario and British Columbia fund school-based early childhood education programs for babies, toddlers and preschoolers and their parents/caregivers.



New approaches across Canada

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



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 a community learning centre rather than a place separating children from the world of adults and the wider community



The community school

- Utilizes the school's public image as a centre of learning and care on which to build a comprehensive child and system from prenatal through adolescence
- Improves communications across sectors involved with children and families
- Provides viability to small schools, particularly in rural areas
- They are in every neighbourhood – not just some – as 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



The Early Childhood Education Index

Organized into five categories.

- **Governance:** Is the oversight of early education split between multiple departments, or does it have coherent direction backed by policies with goals, timelines and sound service delivery?
- **Funding:** Is it adequate to support program quality and provide reasonable access?
- **Access:** Are there enough programs to meet demand? Are barriers to participation addressed?



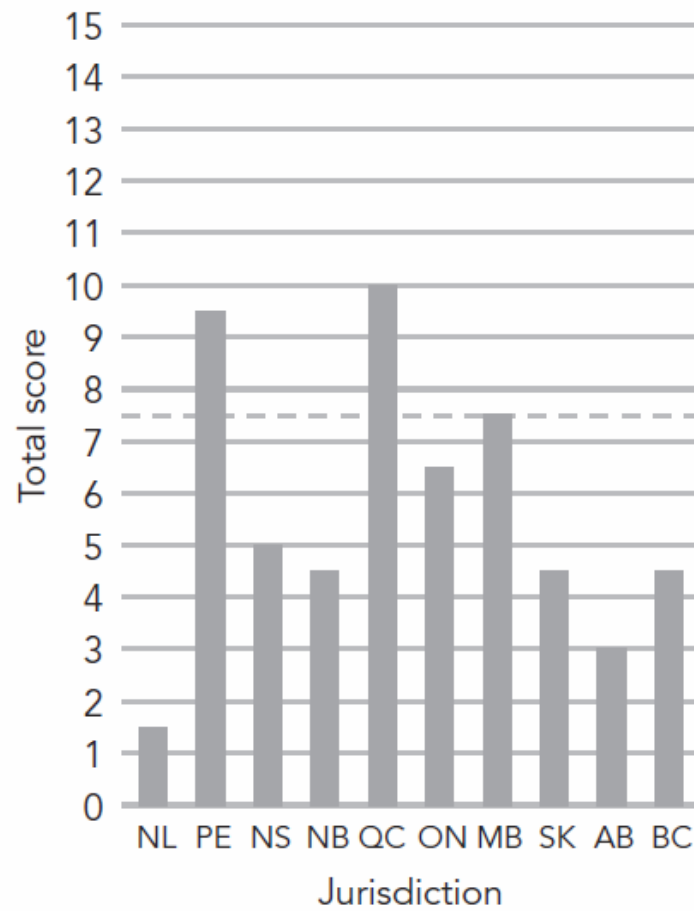
The Early Childhood Education Index

- **Learning environment:** Is quality supported by curricula, program standards and trained and adequate staffing?
- **Accountability:** Is there constant quality improvement supported by data collection and the monitoring and reporting of child outcomes? Is research supported and the findings incorporated into practice?



FIGURE 6.2

Early Childhood Education Index 2011: Total score





The big challenge is for systems like education to work out how to learn themselves. If the goal is equity as well as excellence, they must learn how to meet the needs of people they have never successfully served, as well as operate at the leading edge of pedagogical and organisation innovation...

www.earlyyearsstudy.ca