



Nova Scotia Early Years Centres

Summer Institute on Early Childhood Development

Toronto, Ontario

June 3, 2016



Early Years Branch

Vision

- Children are healthy, safe and nurtured in their families and communities.

Goals

- Improve outcomes for children from birth to school entry
- Improve supports for parents and families of young children
- Create and maintain an integrated early years system across Nova Scotia
- Support collaboration amongst partners at the government level and at the community level

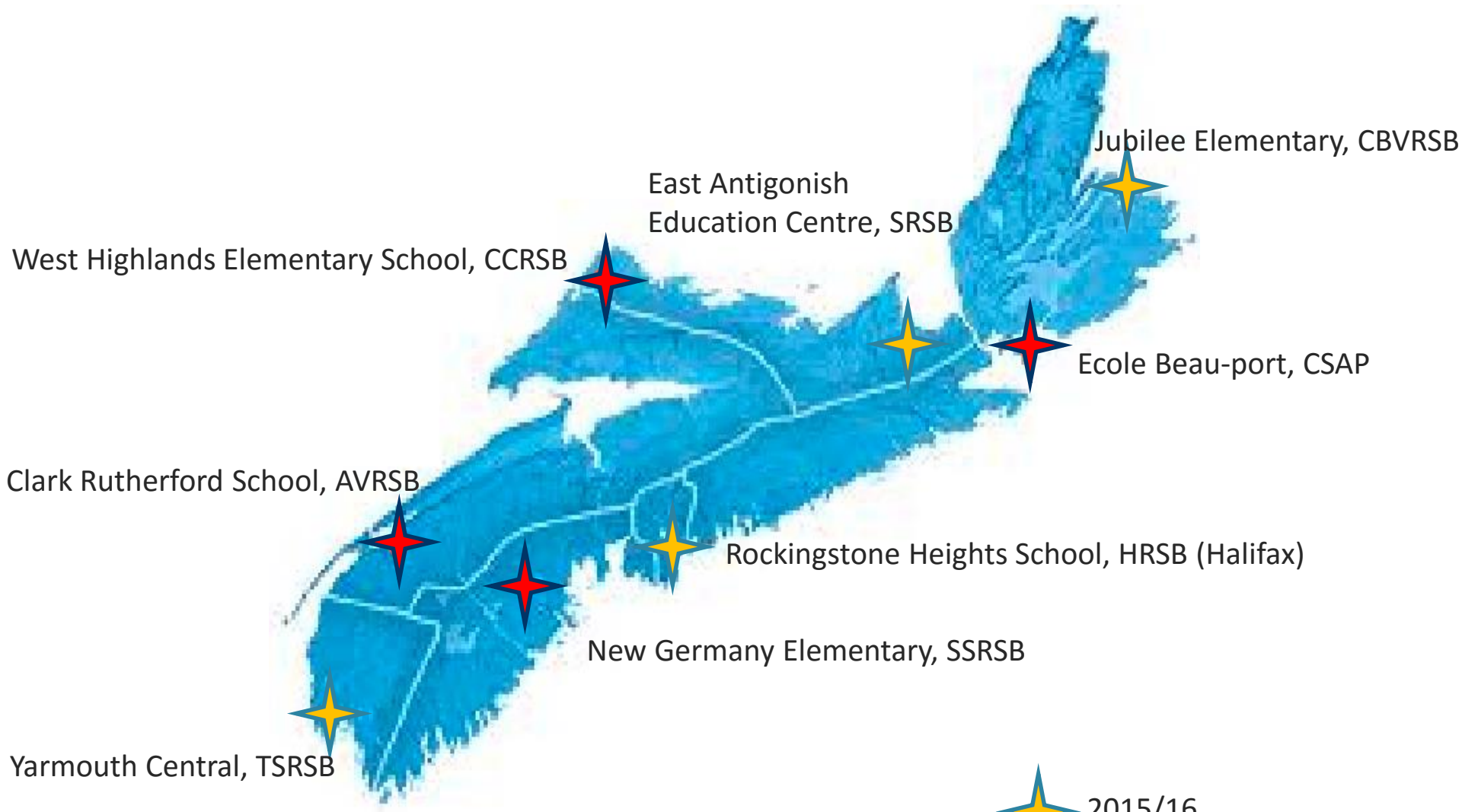
The logo for the Early Years Centre features the words "EARLY YEARS" on the top line and "CENTRE" on the bottom line. Each letter is a different color: E (blue), A (red), R (purple), L (yellow), Y (blue), E (orange), A (green), R (yellow), S (red), C (blue), E (green), N (red), T (purple), R (yellow), E (green).

EARLY YEARS CENTRE

- First centre opened in April 2014
- Located in schools and are for children age four and under and their families
- Schools provide a stable platform and core funding allows an integrated program that can serve more families more effectively
- Each is tailored to meet the needs of its community
- Each site has a Site Management Committee and a Community Advisory Committee

Early Years Centre Core Services

- A no fee, play based Early Learning Program for 4 year olds
- Family supports and resources
- Regulated child care responsive to the needs of families and communities



Learning as we go...

Evaluation

- Funded by the Margaret and Wallace McCain Family Foundation. Evaluation contract awarded to Dr. Sara Kirk of Dalhousie University.
- Participatory evaluation over four years involving all 8 sites.
- Guided by a program logic model and evaluation framework.

Conducting the Evaluation

- Process and outcome evaluation
- Data collection each year
- Levels/Sources:
 - Children
 - Parents/families
 - EYC staff and team
 - Partners
 - Provincial system

Process Evaluation

- Descriptive
- What is happening, what is working, what is not working, suggestions for improvement
- Document review
- EYC staff/management interviews
- Partner interviews

Outcome evaluation

- Focused on program impacts/ outcomes - What has been achieved as a result of the EYCs?
- Data sources:
 - Early Development Instrument (EDI)
 - Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale, third edition (ECERS-3)
 - Administrative data (attendance, participation)
 - Family survey and focus groups
 - EYC team survey and story sharing focus group
 - Interviews with partners

Indicators of Change

- Guides, tracks and assesses progress towards integration of programs and services
- Completed by site management teams
- Benchmarks
 - Community Co-location
 - Cooperation
 - Coordination
 - Collaboration
 - Integration

Example of Indicators of Change

Leadership & Accountability, 1.4 allocation of financial resources

Benchmark 1 Community Co- location	Benchmark 2 Cooperation	Benchmark 3 Coordination	Benchmark 4 Collaboration	Benchmark 5 Integration/ Seamless
Operate grade primary, early learning program, child care and family supports with separate budgets and financial resources.	Review budgets and discuss resource allocation.	Contribute partner program resources to joint activities. Jointly seek out additional resources to support expanded activities.	Expand contribution of partner program resources to joint activities.	Manage and administer a pooled funding envelop, space and program resources for the common program for children 0-8 years within a defined catchment area.

Example of Indicators of Change

Early Learning Environment, 5.3 Curriculum Framework

Benchmark 1 Community Co- location	Benchmark 2 Cooperation	Benchmark 3 Coordination	Benchmark 4 Collaboration	Benchmark 5 Integration/Seaml ess
Maintain separate curriculum philosophy, goals, and objectives that are consistent within each of the partner programs.	Review each other's program philosophy, goals, objectives, policies and guidelines. Identify commonalities and differences.	Develop & implement shared philosophy, goals, and objectives as part of joint activities that promote children's early development.	Expand influence of shared philosophy, goals, and objectives to change practices to promote children's early development in partner programs.	Consolidate and implement program philosophy, goals, and objectives that support children's early development as part of common 0-8 program.

Key accomplishments

- Building trust and relationships
- Strengthening partnerships and community linkages
- Building awareness and understanding, linking families

“... the tremendous positive response we’ve gotten from other service providers around sharing the space, being part of the program, promoting the program and the engagement to work at something together.”

Key enablers

- School and school board commitment
- History of collaboration, willingness, commitment and shared vision
- Flexibility

“I think as we meet and as we get to know each other better, and get to know what people are doing, it’s amazing to see what people want to do, and how much they want to give, and support and be there”

Key challenges

- Linking to regulated childcare
- Lack of clarity
- System barriers

“... people sort of hadn’t really clear information around what exactly was the role of the Early Years Centre. As soon as you hear the word centre, you start thinking about childcare.”

Supports required

- Continued engagement, coordination and collaboration
- Continue opportunities for professional development, networking and sharing
- Build awareness and understanding and advocacy
- Templates and guidance from provincial system
- Continued flexibility, shared leadership and time
- System level – policy, partnerships
- Explore the meaning of integration

Recommendations

1. Clarify EYC model description
2. Define more clearly expectations and roles of partners
3. Ensure policies are in place to support implementation
4. Support ECEs in school settings
5. Professional development opportunities

Building Research Capacity

- Opportunity to build research into the evaluation
- Research Advisory Committee has been struck, across institutions in NS
- Range of expertise, including: child and youth development, applied health research, nursing, education, etc
- Value collaboration and stakeholder input

Any
questions ?



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For copies of documents or more specific evaluation information:

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