

EARLY DEVELOPMENT INSTRUMENT (EDI)

Measuring children’s developmental health for the future:

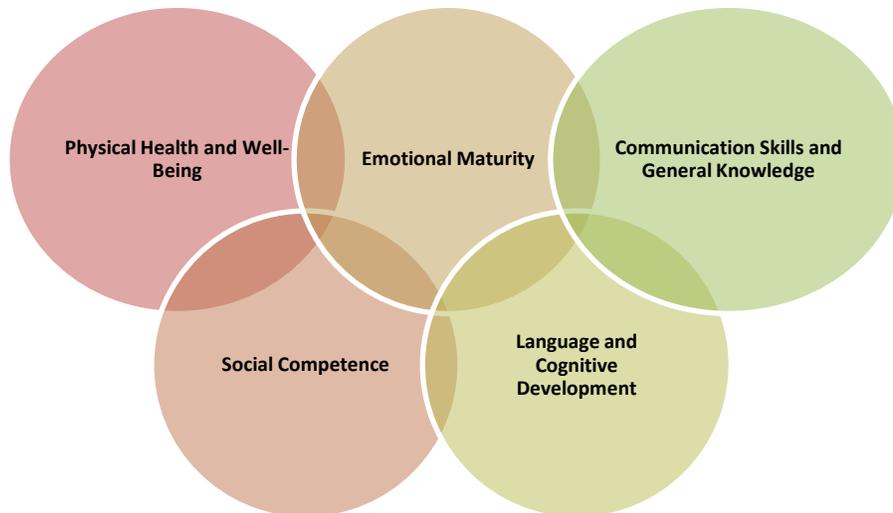
Children’s earliest experiences lay the foundation for lifelong learning, behaviour and health. Ensuring Nova Scotia’s children get the best start in life is one of the key reasons we use the Early Development Instrument (EDI). It has the capacity to influence change by helping to inform community partners how they can support young children and their families.

What is the EDI?

- The EDI is a teacher-completed questionnaire that assesses children’s developmental health at school entry and can predict how children will do in elementary school.
- The EDI reports on groups of children much like a census - it is never used to assess individual children, or measure a school’s or teacher’s performance.
- The EDI helps us understand, at a population level, the trends and variations in children development in regions and neighborhoods.
- The EDI results are organized by school community to report on the developmental health of children from that community.

What does it measure?

The EDI measures 5 core areas of development that are known to be predictors of later health, education and social outcomes:



- The EDI helps identify geographical groups of children who are vulnerable and who, without additional supports, may experience future challenges in school and society.
- Children, whose scores fall below a threshold on a domain, are deemed “vulnerable” in that domain.
- Overall vulnerability reflects children who are vulnerable on one or more domains

Over time, EDI reports will reveal trends in child development in communities across the province.

Why do we collect EDI data?

- Children's ability to learn and thrive when they enter school is strongly influenced by the brain development that takes place before school
- The EDI provides information on how well children's development is supported in their communities
- Understanding how well children are doing, in our communities, will support informed decisions about:
 - local investments in new or adapted programs by community organizations and coalitions
 - new program and policy initiatives that support children and families at the provincial, regional and local level
 - supporting schools to be ready for the arrival of children in their communities.

The EDI in Nova Scotia

- In 2013 the EDI was administered throughout Nova Scotia: every Primary teacher completed a questionnaire for every Primary student
- These results establish the baseline against which subsequent EDI results will be compared
- Privacy is maintained in accordance with the provinces' Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy laws: children's identities are never revealed in the results
- The next EDI implementation will be in February 2015

What did the results tell us?

Nova Scotia's EDI results (2013) reveal that approximately 1 in 4 children is likely to benefit from additional/enhanced experiences before school entry; Nova Scotia's results are consistent with Canadian normative data (Normative II):

- 27% of Nova Scotia's children were vulnerable on at least one EDI domain compared to 25% nationally
- 14% of NS's children were vulnerable on at least two domains compared to 12% nationally
- 4% of children in NS had multiple challenges consistent with 4% nationally (Figure 1).
- The percentage of children who were vulnerable in each domain was between 6% and 13%; the Normative II percentages ranged between 9% and 13% (figure 2).
- Nova Scotia's 2013 data indicates that on the whole, children enter school with a strong base of Language & Cognitive Development and less well-developed Physical Health & Well-Being skill sets (figure 2).

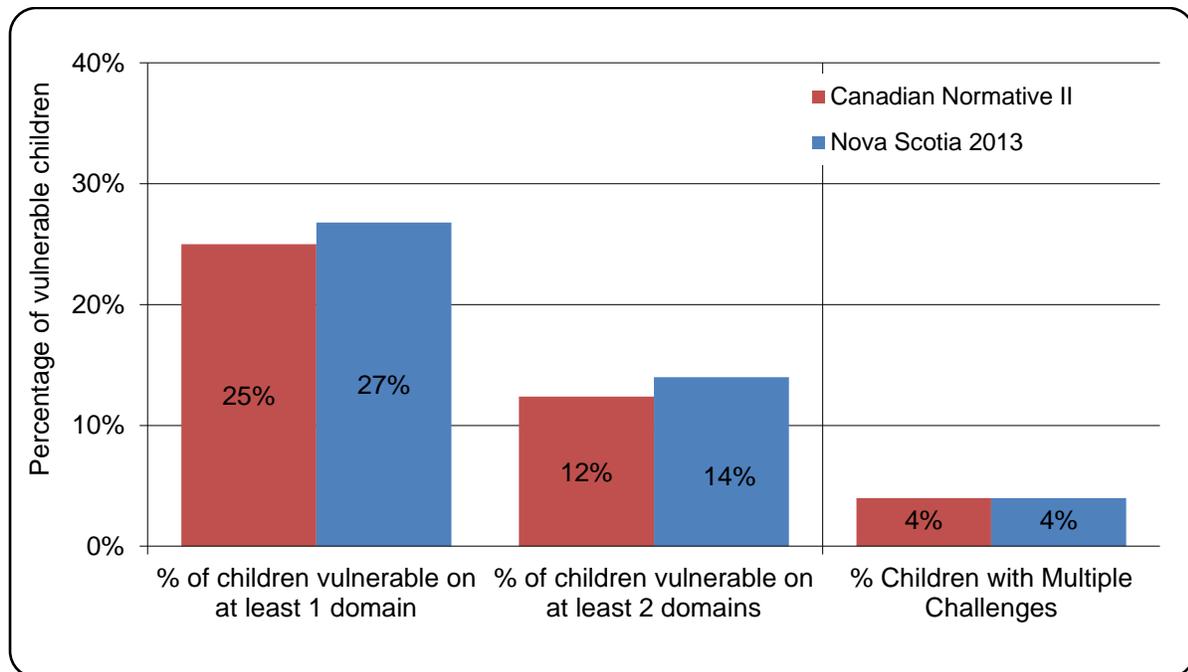
Moving Forward

The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development is committed to:

- Engaging with other government departments to disseminate EDI results and work together to find ways to better support our youngest children
- Within the Early Years Centres, continue to work with local partners from school boards, district health authorities, family resource centres, Early Intervention and others to find ways for the community to better support young children

Figure 1: Percentages of vulnerable children (2013)

2013—Percentage of NS children exhibiting vulnerability in at least 1 domain; at least 2 domains; those with multiple challenges



Vulnerable children are most likely to find school challenging, require additional supports and find it difficult to catch up to their peers. Reducing vulnerabilities is our goal.

Figure 2: NS compared to (national) Normative II data

Within each developmental domain

