FINAL REPORT

Child and Youth Strategy

Evaluation of the SchoolsPlus Model

Year 3 Evaluation

September 24, 2012

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Terms and Abbreviations

There are many organizations, programs and acronyms in the realm of SP. The main abbreviations and terms used in this report are listed.

AVRSB	Annapolis Valley Regional School Board
CBVRSB	Cape Breton-Victoria Regional School Board
CYS	Child and Youth Strategy
CYSC	Child and Youth Strategy Committee
CCRSB	Chignecto Central Regional School Board
CSAP	Conseil scolaire acadien provincial
DCS	Department of Community Services
DoE	Department of Education
HPS	Health Promoting Schools
HRSB	Halifax Regional School Board
IWK	Izaak Walton Killam Health Centre
RAC	Regional Advisory Committee
SP	SchoolsPlus
SRSB	Strait Regional School Board
SSRSB	South Shore Regional School Board
TCRSB	Tri County Regional School Board

Note: The term SchoolsPlus Facilitator is used throughout the report to refer to the facilitators in each of the sites and includes the SP Leader in Halifax.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

SchoolsPlus (SP) promotes the collaborative delivery of services and supports within schools including Community Services, Justice, Mental Health, Addiction Services, Health and other community organizations. SP is characterized by a comprehensive, collaborative, seamless delivery of services, sharing of information and resources between agencies, timely and effective services and service beyond the school day. The unique needs of each community is respected and addressed by the services provided.

For SP in Nova Scotia, the announced expansion (April 2011) marked a milestone for the model. SP has expanded from four sites to eight and is now in every school board in the province. In addition, $2.5 million has been slated for continuation and expansion of SchoolsPlus over the next few years, beginning with the addition of four new sites in 2012-2013.

This report concludes a three-year evaluation of the SP model. The evaluation team has undertaken a process (formative) and outcome (summative) evaluation of the SP model including the development and implementation of a system for data collection and analysis. Evaluation reports for years one and two were produced in June 2010 and June 2011 respectively.

Findings at the site level

The expansion of SchoolsPlus
SP is designed to balance the unique needs of each community in the implementation of the model while adhering to the overall guiding principles of SP. Overall, the growing positive reputation of SchoolsPlus has eased the way for new sites, specifically in establishing Regional Advisory Committees (RACs) and in building relationships with services. Most of the new Facilitators report that news of SchoolsPlus spread to their region before the program even arrived in schools. In particular, service providers have been quite enthusiastic having heard that SP facilitates access to schools and families—a barrier that has been a challenge for service providers in the past.

New Facilitators and Community Outreach Workers have relied heavily on the insights and guidance of Tara Moore, the (SP Provincial Coordinator), the established Facilitators (who were quick to return phone calls or host visits at their sites), and information generated at the monthly Provincial Steering Committee meetings in the Halifax.

Social change is complex and non-linear
While significant groundwork has been made in establishing SchoolsPlus at the provincial level and in the original sites, each new site has nevertheless needed to work with its own strengths and challenges in initiating this collaborative service delivery model in their area. The progress made so far ebbs and flows within and between each of the new sites—something to be expected in any non-linear social change process—and all of the Facilitators have put in overtime hours during this intensive time period.

The importance of relationships
The importance of building relationships cannot be underestimated and it is a process that takes time. There are no short cuts to building strong relationships for collaboration however it can feel slow and patchy at the beginning, especially when it takes time to produce tangible results.

The importance of active support from the school boards
Active support from each school board in the establishment of SchoolsPlus is essential. In areas where school board involvement has been proactive and engaged, SchoolsPlus has eased into the family of schools, and school staff have been prepared for upcoming changes. In areas where the approach of the school board has been more hands off, confusion has arisen around the roles and responsibilities of various positions within the schools.

Systemic challenges
Early on all of the new sites have bumped up against the systemic challenges identified in previous years by the established sites (see section 4.2 and 4.3)—such as gaps between mandates and therefore in service provision—once again confirming their provincial scope.

It's about changing the culture
After three years of evaluation it is clear that SP is not a program or a project; rather, it is about making a cultural shift among service providers, school staff, and families. This kind of fundamental revision of "business as usual" can be challenging for everyone involved as it requires behavioural changes from the family kitchen to the classroom, from frontline service provision to regional offices all the way up the Better Health structure at the provincial level. However, the benefits are obvious, and there are indications that the culture change is happening.

Key Findings

- Access to services and programs has increased and more **youth** are being reached
- **Families** feel better supported—SP provides a bridge between schools and families
- Increased emphasis on **preventative and supportive programming** is changing school cultures
- **Schools** welcome improved links with services and increased supports for students
- **Service-providers**, especially those who have been involved with SP for at least one year, state that SP has helped them a lot in their ability to serve the needs of children, youth and families (71% of those with at least one year of SP involvement; 53% of those with less than one year).
- **Service-providers** find that SP helps to provide access to schools and youth, provides support for youth and families "falling through the cracks", and increases preventative interventions. The collaboration facilitated by SP prevents service duplication, and increases the effectiveness of services. SP also facilitates inter-professional training, and increases the capacity of program providers through collaboration.

Improving collaboration

S**chool administrators and staff** see great benefits from SP, and most of them do not feel that SP has made their work harder or less effective (indeed 41% chose to write specifically in

answer to this survey question that SP has not made their work harder). SP has created additional work on the front end (e.g. referrals, keeping up with relationships, outcome data-collection) and this can be a challenge however they consider the up front work "worth it".

Over the past two years, school administrators have noted some challenges in working with SP. Examples of these include:

- Confidentiality issues are barriers to collaboration between agencies and schools
- Sometimes school staff are not made aware of issues external to school surrounding a youth that may impact the classroom/school environment
- SP is being stretched too thin between all of the schools and youth the SP staff work with
- Not having or being able to provide a SP designated space in the school
- SP's scope of practice and responsibility is not always clear and misunderstandings can be avoided through information sharing and awareness raising
- Staff turnover can mean a loss of knowledge within the school about SP

Service providers who responded to the evaluation survey offered the following suggestions for SP: clarify roles, even on a case-by-case basis; recognize the limits of service providers; clearly communicate case information to those who need to know.

The vast majority of **service providers** feel that SchoolsPlus helps them in their ability to meet the needs of families, children and youth. Some service providers state that they will increase their collaboration when SP is more widespread and covers more of their clients.

Findings at the system level

Commitment from the top
After the apparently slow pace of change at the system level in years one and two, in year three a considerable amount of behind-the-scenes planning and decision-making bore fruit and a major shift in commitment to the model took place. This sent a clear message from top leadership, and the impact of this is beginning to ripple through the system.

The expansion of SP and commitment to province-wide coverage in future has signalled a strong commitment to the SchoolsPlus model of collaborative service delivery. This has accelerated the response of many departments and programs: there is confidence that this model is continuing, is no longer in a pilot phase, and that it will expand across the province and will not be restricted to a few specific sites. Service-providers, schools and school boards can now plan to work with this model across the province. In this way, SP is good example of the move in government towards horizontal and vertical governance practices, and much can be learned from the implementation of the model.

Progress is being made
A number of strategies and reports have been released during the past year that mention or incorporate SchoolsPlus. One of the key actions announced in the Mental Health and Addictions Strategy is to put mental health clinicians in SchoolsPlus families of schools in all school boards to identify and treat mental health problems of children and youth earlier. This is a major

commitment of resources from the Department of Health and Wellness to work with the SchoolsPlus collaborative model.

In the winter of 2012 the Department of Community Services (DCS) undertook an analysis of its alignment with SchoolsPlus and explored the potential for greater alignment. Leadership is sending a clear message of the direction in which to move, and internal discussions and consultations of the analysis are taking place. As a result, an implementation action plan is being developed for December 30, 2012.

The approval and adoption of a common consent form for SchoolsPlus and the development of information sharing guidelines are major milestones achieved after long and patient work by the SchoolsPlus Coordinator and an interdepartmental committee.

Demand and expectations are very high
As a result of the positive impact achieved by SchoolsPlus in years one and two, and the strong commitment to its expansion province-wide, there are now very high expectations and an increasing trend to connect many services to SchoolsPlus and involve SchoolsPlus personnel in many consultation, planning and implementation activities. The expansion of SchoolsPlus brings into sharper relief the question of how collaboration in general and the SchoolsPlus model in particular are resourced.

Developing a culture of collaboration
SchoolsPlus is widely seen among senior officials and those at site level as a practical example of a much larger shift in culture within government, and as a learning opportunity for this shift. It is recognized that there have been previous collaborative activities that laid some excellent groundwork, but also that there is still quite a way to go.

Leadership and the sense of a lack of empowerment
With the strong message of commitment to the SchoolsPlus model being communicated by its expansion there is clearly a higher level of confidence within the system to make changes in the direction of collaborative service delivery. However there are still contradictory views as to the amount of authority or influence regional level management has to implement changes or influence change at the top.

Variable department mandates and structures
The varied departmental mandates and structures noted as an obstacle in previous years remain (regionalized-centralized; preventative-reactive), and are not likely to change. Varied regional boundaries among the different services compound the obstacles to change. Strong leadership at the top and consistent policy messages backed up by mandates and budget priorities for collaborative approaches help, and the expansion of the SchoolsPlus model across the province will also make it easier to accomplish greater consistency among varied services in supporting collaborative approaches.

Accountability for the success of SchoolsPlus
Accountability remains one of the biggest challenges of integrated or collaborative service-provision. At one end of the spectrum of collaboration there is the danger that no single entity

may feel responsible and accountable because everyone is, while at the other end of the spectrum accountability is owned clearly by one specific entity, and there may be little or no true collaboration. The debate continues with respect to SchoolsPlus, but there has been clear progress. Education is accountable for the SchoolsPlus budget, and with clear leadership and consistent messages from the Better Health Deputy Ministers and Ministers, those departments are taking SchoolsPlus (and collaborative models in general) more seriously, either in mandates or strategies. Accountability for tackling interdepartmental policies and protocols is still somewhat vague, but the CYSC is more engaged and the Better Health committee structure provides a vehicle.

Outcomes – is SchoolsPlus achieving results for children and youth?

Outcomes are difficult to define and measure, especially for children and youth who are dealing with complex, multiple challenges. Positive outcomes may be measured in small steps, such as keeping a youth from dropping out of school, or helping a child develop improved social skills so that he or she can stay in the classroom and focus on learning. Outcomes may be achieved slowly, and progress may not be linear. With many factors influencing a child's development and behaviour, it is also difficult to attribute an improvement or deterioration to a specific cause.

Outcome measures used were:

- Ratings by school administrators of students receiving SP direct service or participating in SP programs, covering children's academic performance, disciplinary issues and school attachment;
- Self-perceptions by a sample of all students of how they were doing on the same factors.

Approximately 90% of school administrators rated the impact of SP on the academic performance, disciplinary issues and school attachment of students participating in SP programs and services as positive. When rating the performance of just students receiving direct service (in general these students face multiple, complex issues), administrators noted improvements in around 40% and no change among a further 20%, on all factors except parental involvement in the school.

In the student survey, SP clients' responses were contrasted with those of the rest of the students. Students were asked to rate how they were doing a year ago and today on five measures. The clearest trends were in relation to the importance of school in their lives, and discipline. SP clients rated school now as more important in their lives than the rest of the students did, and in most cases they noted a larger increase in its importance compared to a year ago than did the rest of the students. On discipline the SP clients also reported improvement, where most of them caught up with the ratings of the rest of the students. On the other measures the ratings varied according to age group or whether it was an established or a new SP site.

Overall, SP is clearly contributing to increased positive outcomes for children and youth.

Recommendations

1. At the system level

1.1 Accountability for Success

There has been considerable progress at the system level in year three. To continue the momentum towards effective, broadly collaborative models of operation as exemplified by SchoolsPlus, concrete and practical ways of building accountability for success need to be built into the system at all levels. Recommendations 1-2 address this.

Recommendation 1

Maintain a balance between the benefits and limitations of having one department clearly accountable (Education) for the success of SchoolsPlus, and the necessary sense of interdepartmental ownership through the Better Health structure. Ensure that SchoolsPlus has a formal, direct link to the Better Health structure, whether it be through the CYSC or some other mechanism. This is especially important since SchoolsPlus is widely regarded as having government-wide significance as a useful, practical model of horizontal government.

Recommendation 2

Build accountability for the success of SchoolsPlus into each of the Departments engaged with SchoolsPlus through top-to-bottom mechanisms, for example:

- Statements of Mandate, mandate letters, job descriptions and the definition of performance indicators, evidence and markers of success at appropriate levels.
- Templates, frameworks and tools to support decision-making.
- Where appropriate, create accountability frameworks (for example in relation to funding for third party organizations such as school boards, health authorities and service-delivery agencies).
- Clearly articulate accountability for effectively addressing the needs of children, youth and families in mechanisms such as these.

Address horizontal accountability through mechanisms such as:

- Having staff accountable to supervisors for meeting their horizontal peers' expectations for collaboration.
- Undertaking SchoolsPlus alignment studies like the one undertaken by Community Services.
- Signing partnership agreements between regional agencies such as District Health Authorities and School Boards to undertake specific joint actions.
- Taking as a model the Halifax SchoolsPlus RAC's response to defined priorities of needs (building actions into the work plans of partner organizations) and exploring ways of undertaking a similar process at the province-wide level.

1.2 Create a Culture of Collaboration

The SchoolsPlus model requires making a cultural shift from vertical accountability towards a truly collaborative and integrated approach to service-delivery and priority-setting. This fundamental revision of the way of working can be challenging for everyone involved, and support for new ways of thinking and working, and for the development of new skills needs to be provided. Recommendations 3-5 address this need.

Recommendation 3

The Better Health Deputy Ministers should bring together the leadership of the CYS departments, the School Board Superintendents and DHA CEOs for a seminar that focuses on innovative ways in which the SchoolsPlus collaborative model can be developed.

Recommendation 4

Support individuals to develop inter-departmental working skills and inter-professional service-provision on an ongoing and regularly renewed basis to keep up with pace of change. Suggestions include:

- Provide targeted funding for inter-professional training in collaborative service-provision to support SchoolsPlus.
- Create a learning community through training and modeling collaborative working methods.
- Provide recognition and reward for working creatively to find ways to collaborate.
- Celebrate and share stories of success widely.

Recommendation 5

Learn from what makes SP successful at the site level: champions, facilitation, relationship-building and communication, and apply these lessons at the senior, systemic levels. Start by identifying and empowering champions, especially at the top.

1.3 Identify more specific actions to address gaps in services

While province-wide gaps in services and programs have been identified and discussed, in order for more specific actions and responsibilities for tackling them to be identified, it is necessary to undertake more detailed analysis to define more finely-grained actions to address gaps and improve effectiveness. Recommendation 6 addresses this.

Recommendation 6

Addressing many of the gaps will not clearly fall within the mandate of just one department or agency, but will require changes among two or more providers. Undertake focussed analyses

such that each CYS department can clearly understand the causes of the service gaps, and identify specific actions they should take towards addressing them, and the benefits to be gained by addressing them. The School Boards and DHAs could also participate in this kind of analysis. Suggestions include:

- The other service-providing departments should undertake a SchoolsPlus alignment study similar to the one conducted by Community Services.
- Take a number of complex SchoolsPlus cases and analyze each department's role, looking at the cases through the lens of each department.
- Take one or more of the identified gaps or issues (such as early intervention or youth housing issues) and examine them in a similar way, examining each department's role in a number of cases.
- Have the Better Health departments assess themselves along a continuum, for example, from early intervention to crisis response. Map the departments, then the non-governmental service-providers and undertake a comparative analysis against the types of issues and gaps SchoolsPlus is dealing with.

2. At the SchoolsPlus provincial level

2.1 Support the model as it expands

Recognize that collaboration requires adequate facilitation and coordination, and that investing in support for the model as it expands will be repaid in effectiveness and efficiency and better results for children, youth and families. Dilution is a false economy. Recommendations 7-9 address this.

Recommendation 7

Consider the level of support required at the provincial layer of SP to sustain the integrity of the model as it expands. A modest investment in additional administrative support is recommended. At a minimum, define some specific deliverables to address administrative and communication needs that can be achieved via a contract.

Recommendation 8

The collaborative model exemplified by SchoolsPlus is new and relatively unfamiliar, and requires a culture change for many organizations. With the expansion of SchoolsPlus, orientation needs to be made available to a widening number of staff in a sustainable way: there will be very little capacity to brief new personnel informally or one-on-one. Flexible and responsive ongoing orientation and support is provided through the extremely valuable monthly Steering Committee meetings for all SP Facilitators, and this needs to continue. While a lot has already been done to develop materials and provide orientation, with several years' of operation it is now possible to formalize some key principles and practices. Create a plan for orientation that builds upon, formalizes and extends previous actions and materials, and have well-organized, easily-delivered and easy-to-understand orientation, training and communication materials developed for the following groups:

- New SchoolsPlus staff (Facilitators and Community Outreach Workers)
- School board supervisors of SchoolsPlus staff and other relevant personnel such as guidance counsellors and psychologists
- School administrators
- Regional Advisory Committee members and other service providers who will be working with SchoolsPlus

Recommendation 9

Ensure that realistic expectations are in place around the appropriate ratio of SP staff to schools and youth, and avoid dilution of staff ratios as SchoolsPlus expands. In general no more than 20-30 active cases can be handled at any one time by a Facilitator or Outreach Worker in addition to their coordination and programming activities.

2.2 Knowledge transfer and capacity building

The monthly SchoolsPlus Steering Committee meetings provide an invaluable and effective knowledge-transfer conduit for SchoolsPlus Facilitators, and RACs provide within-site communication among service-providers. However currently most of the other knowledge transfer happening between the wider group of SP actors (school principals, SP Community Outreach Workers, service-providers) at the provincial level, new sites, established sites and the school boards is occurring informally.

Recommendation 10

In addition to the orientation sessions and materials outlined above, ensure that knowledge transfer and capacity-building opportunities continue to be developed, balancing the need to keep SP organic in its development while providing structure and support, and capturing and communicating the lessons learned.

Suggestions on how to approach this include:

- An opportunity for school administrators to gather from around the province to discuss SP best practices.
- SchoolsPlus Facilitators should encourage and facilitate networking between sites among Community Outreach Workers; attendance at one or two Provincial Steering Committee meetings per year would be extremely helpful for the Community Outreach Workers
- Continue to build SchoolsPlus staff capacity to enhance collaboration (e.g. facilitation skills)

3. School Boards

Recommendation 11

School Boards have a crucial role in ensuring the smooth and successful introduction and operation of SP. Recommended actions include:

- Prepare the way before SP starts—provide school administrators and staff with an orientation to SP, including clarity around roles and responsibilities, where SP fits in the schools' "ecosystem" etc.
- Provide a private space for SchoolsPlus to use in each of the SP schools (as well as the hub site).
- Ensure that realistic expectations are in place around appropriate ratios of SP staff to schools and youth.
- Post job openings widely to ensure that a good selection of appropriately skilled and experienced candidates may apply.
- Hire new SP Facilitators early in the summer so that they can establish themselves in the hub school, attend orientation in August and prepare for the school year.

4. Making RACs more effective

These comments from the year two evaluation report still apply and bear repeating as SchoolsPlus expands. The RACs naturally progress from primarily relationship-building and information-sharing bodies to committees that take collective action, collaboratively problem-solve and engage in strategic planning.

It is a testament to the work of the members and Facilitators that the RACs are evolving towards "Regional Action Committees". Taking steps to formalize this process will further support RACs at all stages of their development.

i. New RACs should focus primarily on relationship building and information-sharing.

ii. Once an RAC is established, implement an annual planning cycle.

iii. RACs should take responsibility in communicating and following up on barriers and gaps that cannot be addressed at the regional level.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

For SchoolsPlus (SP) in Nova Scotia, the announced expansion to every school board in the Province (April 2011) marked a milestone for the model. SP has expanded from four sites to eight and is now in every school board in the province. In addition, $2.5 million has been slated for continuation and expansion of SchoolsPlus over the next few years, beginning with the addition of four new sites in 2012-2013.

When SchoolsPlus was announced in December 2007, three school boards were to set up SchoolsPlus model sites: Halifax Regional School Board (currently includes 7 schools), South Shore Regional School Board (currently includes 6 schools), and Chignecto-Central Regional School Board (currently includes 6 schools). Subsequently a fourth site was added within the original budget: Strait Regional School Board (currently includes 6 schools). In September 2011, SchoolsPlus was expanded to the following sites: Annapolis Valley Regional School Board (4 schools), Cape Breton-Victoria Regional School Board (7 schools), Conseil Scolaire Acadien Provincial (6 schools in two geographically separate sites: south-west and north-east), and Tri County Regional School Board (4 schools). In September 2012 the four original school boards will expand SchoolsPlus to new schools bringing the total number of schools to 95.

The lessons learned in the early days of SP are serving to strengthen the initiative and many of the recommendations in the year one evaluation report have been implemented as part of the application process for the new SchoolsPlus sites. These include:

- Giving preference to those who need it most
- Developing an application process
- Conducting community consultations
- Providing adequate levels of resources and appropriate staff
- Seeking to ensure that space for SP exists within new schools

Each new school board has been provided with the resources to hire a Facilitator who acts as the liaison and link between the school and the community. In addition, SP Community Outreach Workers have been hired in most school boards and have the role of advocating, coordinating, and expanding services for students and families.

Each of the new school boards has established a Regional SP Advisory Committee with representation from government departments (Health and Wellness, Education, Community Services and Justice), the Child and Youth Strategy, and non-government and community organizations. The purpose of the committee is to identify opportunities to enhance and expand the array of services and programs for children, youth, and their families.

1.1 SchoolsPlus background and evolution

The Nunn Commission made a number of recommendations specific to education and the development of a strategy for children and youth. *Our Kids are Worth It – Strategy for Children and Youth* sets out a comprehensive vision to ensure that children and youth are healthy, safe,

nurtured and responsible and are given the right opportunities to be the best they can be. SP began as one of several initiatives in the province under the Child and Youth Strategy (CYS) and is a response to the Nunn Commission's recommendation for improved coordination and collaboration in the delivery of programs and services for children, youth and families. It is an inter-agency approach where schools become centres of service delivery. This enables enhanced collaboration and brings professionals and programs together to help children, youth and families in a welcoming, accessible place. (Our Kids Are Worth It, 2007, p. 36). It is predicated on the belief that all families benefit from some level of support, and that activities and resources need to be coordinated to avoid duplication and waste.

SP promotes the collaborative delivery of services and supports within schools including Community Services, Justice, Mental Health, Addiction Services, Health and Wellness and other community organizations. SP is characterized by a comprehensive, collaborative, seamless delivery of services, sharing of information and resources between agencies, timely and effective services and service beyond the school day. The unique needs of each community are respected and addressed by the services provided.

The objectives of SP are as follows:

1. To reduce or eliminate gaps and duplication of services among professionals and programs.
2. To identify and respond to children, youth and families in need of additional supports and services in a timely manner
3. To develop an array of programming and services offered at school sites
4. To provide services via a team approach across a family of schools
5. To enhance the use of school facilities by students, families and communities
6. To improve student engagement and school success
7. To increase information sharing, networking and communication between government and non-government service-providers
8. To increase communication between parents and schools

For more details please see the Appendices which include the following:

- The Nunn Commission's full list of recommendations (Appendix A)
- The SP Model (Appendix A)
- The SP Logic Model (Appendix B)

1.2 SchoolsPlus in the context of the community schools movement

Across Canada, the US, and other parts of the world, the movement towards integrated/ collaborative service delivery continues to grow, underscoring the importance of this initiative in Nova Scotia. This growing community schools movement is based on the need for a more cohesive and integrated approach to meeting the non-academic needs of children and families as a way to over come obstacles to learning. It is also supported by plenty of research: When we

immerse children in an environment attuned to their overall needs, attendance rates improve, grades go up and class engagement increases.[1]

Here in Canada and the US, some notable developments over the past few years include:

- The Province of Quebec released an evaluation on its Community Learning Centres (CLCs) in June 2010. The evaluation shares early findings that CLC programs have had beneficial effects on outcomes like student literacy, motivation in school, self-confidence, social skills and academic competencies. The purpose of the 37 CLCs across the province is to deliver educational and support services that are conducted in a seamless and integrated fashion and bring various agencies to pool resources and share the responsibility of service delivery.
- New Brunswick identified two regional demonstration sites for integrated service delivery that were functioning by the spring of 2011 as the first phase of a province-wide implementation plan.
- 16 schools in Toronto were selected to pilot the first phase of the Full Service Schools Initiative starting in September 2010.
- The Province of Alberta has developed an approach to collaborative practices and full service schools based on wraparound principles, announced in 2011.
- The national five-year evaluation of US Communities in Schools (CIS) was published in October 2010. Begun in 1977, CIS is a national federation organization with about 200 affiliates currently in 25 states and the District of Columbia. It annually serves nearly 1.3 million students in 3,400 schools. At the heart of the organization is a mission to surround students with a community of support, empowering them to stay in school and achieve in life. The evaluation concluded that the CIS model of integrated services, when implemented with fidelity, yields substantive improvements in school and student level outcomes. Compared to non-CIS schools and students, the CIS model and case-managed services have a mix of significant impacts and substantively important positive effects on credit completion, academics and attendance, and is unique among other dropout prevention programs in both reducing dropout and increasing on-time graduation rates for high schools.[2]

A jurisdictional/literature review was included in the year one evaluation report (see Appendix C).

[1] Communities in Schools National Evaluation Five Year Executive Summary, ICF International, October 2010 www.icfi.com
[2] Ibid.

2.0 APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY

Evaluation was identified as a key component in *Our Kids are Worth It – Strategy for Children and Youth* and in the 2008 report *Our Kids are Worth It – Our First Year Strategy for Children and Youth*.

The variety of approaches undertaken across the SP sites provides rich information for the evaluation but also requires some tailoring of the evaluation to each site to capture the subtlety of the different approaches being employed. The combination of qualitative and quantitative measures that have been used ensure that both unique elements and standard, comparative data are meaningfully captured in the evaluation.

This is a three-year evaluation and this report is the third and final evaluation report. The evaluation team has undertaken a process (formative) and outcome (summative) evaluation of the SP Project including the development and implementation of a system for data collection and analysis. Evaluation reports for years one and two were produced in June 2010 and June 2011 respectively.

Over the three-year period the evaluation plan has focused on the intermediate (12-24 months) outcomes in the logic model (see Appendix B). While the evaluation is shedding light on some of the long-term outcomes, it will not extend for a long enough period to address most of them.

With the expansion of SchoolsPlus to four new sites, the evaluation activities in the established sites have been reduced while still monitoring progress, and evaluation activities in the new sites were initiated. The evaluation objectives for the new sites this year have been 1. Building capacity for evaluation, and 2. Capturing early indications of progress. We added a bilingual colleague, Sharon LeBlanc, to the evaluation team and she has conducted the evaluation activities in the two Conseil Scolaire Acadien provincial sites in French.

We have observed that the regional advisory committees (RACs) are using Outcome Mapping (OM) and Progress Markers in priority setting and action planning and we continued to work with each RAC (both new and established) around this process. Continuing to support the development and use of this evaluation tool is serving the dual purposes of moving collaboration forward while capturing progress made and/or illuminating where barriers to collaboration continue to exist.

Regarding student outcomes, we have continued to monitor the baseline data forms and gathered informed judgements about student outcomes in the survey of school administrators and guidance teachers. We have made recommendations to the Student Information System (SIS) implementation team with regard to TIENET so that, once it is in place, outcomes data and reports can be generated from the system.

To monitor continued efforts between the four Child and Youth Strategy (CYS) departments towards a collaborative service delivery model as SchoolsPlus expands into new regions, we have continued to evaluate the systems level. With a new set of service providers beginning to navigate collaborative approaches to delivery as SchoolsPlus expands, monitoring the progress

made around the existing challenges of collaboration and information flow horizontally and vertically remains crucial.

This year we focused on the new sites by establishing baseline measures, building evaluation capacity and tracking progress in the process of setting up the sites, including establishing the RACs, communicating and building relationships with schools, families, community stakeholders and service providers, as well as gathering information about available programs, services and activities. With the established sites developing nicely, we continued to monitor their progress with reliable and cost-effective information gathering methods such as surveys, interviews with facilitators and focus groups with the RACs.

2.1 Information gathered and actions taken

The evaluation actions taken since September 2011 are as follows:

Reporting and project management

- Completed Evaluation Plan - Year Two (November 2011)
- Participated quarterly in monthly Provincial Steering Committee meetings
- Met quarterly with the Evaluation Steering Committee

Presentation of year two findings

- Presented the Year Two Evaluation Report to the Senior Officials Committee of the Better Health Structure (October 2011)
- Presented the Year Two Evaluation Report to the Better Health Deputy Ministers (November 2011)
- Presented the Year Two Evaluation Report to the Better Health Ministers (December 2011)

Introducing the new sites to evaluation and lessons learned

We began by visiting the new sites to work with each of the Facilitators and RACs to accomplish the following (November 2011-January 2012):

- Introduce and provide an update on the SchoolsPlus evaluation
- Present the lessons learned so far and how they can be applied
- Introduce Outcome Mapping and facilitate the creation of regional Progress Markers
- Work with Facilitators to assist them up the learning curve of evaluation

Process evaluation data collection - systems level

- Interviewed ten senior level individuals in the four CYS departments and one other department, a school board and two senior individuals closely associated with SchoolsPlus.

- Interviewed SP Coordinator twice
- Conducted a focus group with the CYS Regional Specialists

Process evaluation data collection – site level

- Surveyed 63 school administrators and staff in all eight sites
- Interviewed 5 school administrators across the four new sites
- Surveyed 83 service providers across the eight sites
- Conducted nine focus groups with members of the advisory committees and community partners around outcome mapping progress markers
- Interviewed 10 parents/ caregivers across the fours sites and one student
- Reviewed a sample of Comprehensive Service Plans (CSPs) in each region
- Reviewed monthly reports from the Coordinator, the Facilitators and the Community Outreach Workers
- Reviewed minutes of the Provincial Steering Committee meetings and all RAC meetings
- Reviewed the Core Component Analysis for each SP site
- Reviewed the progress markers with each of the RACs and provided an evaluation update
- Interviewed each SP Facilitator twice
- Conducted focus group discussions with 3 student groups across the sites

Outcomes evaluation data collection

Three categories of information were collected:

- Baseline Data Forms were completed for every student receiving direct services through SP on referral and in May 2012. 172 students' forms from the eight sites were analyzed.
- Survey of school administrators and staff: the online survey of 65 school administrators and staff contained questions about their perception of the impact of SP on students' academic performance, attendance, discipline and attachment.
- Student surveys: surveys of a representative sample of students from grades 6-12 (including both SP participants and non-participants) were conducted in six of the eight sites (3 new and 3 established): A total of 1,213 student survey responses were analyzed.

2.2 Process (formative) evaluation methodology

The following table summarizes the quantitative and qualitative data that was collected in year three to evaluate the process-related evaluation questions.

Process-related Evaluation Questions		*Data Source*	*Frequency of data collection*	*Sites*
Referral/Intake	How many students are being referred to the program?	• Monthly reports	Monthly	All
Referral/Intake	Is how SchoolsPlus is deciding which students to work with? Is this changing over time?	• Interviews with SP facilitators	Annual	New sites
Comprehensive Service Plans	How are the youth's family and other key stakeholders (such as school, social workers, community organizations) included in the development of the youth's action plan? Is this changing over time?	• Interviews with SP facilitators • Interviews with families • Survey of service providers	Annual	All New sites All
Interagency Collaboration	What new collaborations and linkages are occurring as a result of SchoolsPlus?	• Core Component Analysis forms • Interviews with SP facilitators and coordinator	Annual	All
Interagency Collaboration	What progress has been made regarding Pre-Primary programming?	• Interview SP coordinator	Annual	n/a
Interagency Collaboration	What progress has been made to address barriers to collaboration? Have any new barriers been identified?	• Interviews with SP facilitators & coordinator • Interviews senior officials • Monthly reports • Survey of service providers	Annual	All
Interagency Collaboration	What is the impact of interagency collaboration on students, families, and service providers?	• Survey Students • Interviews school administrators • Surveys of school staff and service-providers	Annual	All
Improved access to services	Are previously-identified gaps in services/programs being addressed?	• Interviews with SP facilitators • Interviews school administrators • Surveys of school staff and service providers	Annual	All

Process-related Evaluation Questions		*Data Source*	*Frequency of data collection*	*Sites*
Improved access to services	Have any new gaps in services been identified? What is being done to address them?	• Interviews with SP facilitators • Interviews school administrators • Surveys of school staff and service-providers	Annual	All
Improved access to services	Are youth receiving quicker access to services through SchoolsPlus?	• Interviews school administrators • Interviews with SP facilitators • Monthly reports	Twice a year	All
Extension of services	What additional services and links have become established as a result of SchoolsPlus?	• Core Component Analysis forms • Interviews with SP facilitators • Monthly reports	Annual	All
Extension of services	How much have schools (and/or other organizations) extended their hours? What activities are occurring as a result of extended hours?	• Monthly reports • Interviews with SP facilitators & coordinator • Interviews school administrators	Annual	All New sites
Extension of services	With what frequency are students and their caregivers participating in activities available through extended hours?	• Monthly reports • Interviews with SP facilitators • Interviews with families • Surveys of students	Annual	All All New sites All
Extension of services	What is the impact on students and their caregivers of participating in the activities that are available through extended hours?	• Interviews with families • Surveys of students • Interviews with SP facilitators	Annual	New sites All All
Differences and similarities between sites	What similarities and differences exist between the activities that are occurring in the school boards with SchoolsPlus sites?	• Monthly reports • Site visits • Interviews with SP facilitators & coordinator	Twice a year	All
Knowledge Transfer	Are opportunities for knowledge transfer within and between the SP sites occurring?	• Interviews with SP facilitators & coordinator	Twice a year	All

Process-related Evaluation Questions		*Data Source*	*Frequency of data collection*	*Sites*
Knowledge Transfer	Are the new sites overcoming start-up obstacles more easily?	• Interviews with SP facilitators & coordinator	Annual	New sites
Lessons learned & recommend-ations for new SP sites	If a new SP site were being set up, what recommendations would you make?	• Interviews with SP facilitators & coordinator • Surveys of service providers • Interviews school administrators	Annual	New sites
Systems Level – Barriers	What progress is being made to address systemic barriers previously identified?	• Interview with SP coordinator • Interviews with senior officials • Surveys with senior officials	Annual	n/a
Systems Level – Information Sharing	What progress has been around an information sharing guideline/ agreement?	• Interview with SP coordinator • Interviews with senior officials • Surveys with senior officials	Annual	n/a
Systems Level – Advisory Committees	In what ways are Advisory Committee members communicating SP objectives and information to their respective departments or organizations? Vice versa?	• Interviews with SP • facilitators & coordinator • Surveys with senior officials	Twice a year	n/a
Systems Level – Business Plans & Budgets	Is SchoolsPlus being included in the Statements of Mandates of the four departments?	• Interviews with SP coordinator • Interviews with senior officials • Surveys with senior officials	Twice a year	n/a
Systems Level – Departmental Action Plans	What progress is being made around each department developing and implementing action plans related to SchoolsPlus?	• Interviews with SP coordinator • Interviews with senior officials • Surveys with senior officials	Annual	n/a
Systems Level – Inter-departmental SP group	What progress has been made in establishing an interdepartmental group for SchoolsPlus?	• Interviews with SP coordinator • Interviews with senior officials • Surveys with senior officials	Annual	n/a

Process-related Evaluation Questions		*Data Source*	*Frequency of data collection*	*Sites*
Systems Level – Youth/families mechanism	Are efforts being made to create an interdepartmental mechanism to vet youth/family related decisions programs and services?	• Interviews with SP coordinator • Interviews with senior officials • Surveys with senior officials	Annual	n/a
Systems Level - Communication	Is the reporting of progress (as outlined in the Project Charter) to the CAYS Deputy Ministers and to the Better Health Deputy Ministers taking place?	• Interview with SP coordinator • Interviews with senior officials • Surveys with senior officials	Annual	n/a
Systems Level – Co-location of Services	What progress is being made to incorporate designs based on the needs of an integrated service delivery model into the planning of new schools?	• Interview with SP coordinator	Twice a year	n/a
Systems Level – Co-location of Services	Are the 4 Departments making it a priority to extend service delivery to school sites and communicate this to regional staff?	• Interview with SP coordinator • Monthly reports • Regional Advisory Committee minutes/ focus groups • Interviews with senior officials • Surveys with senior officials	Annual	n/a
Systems level – Outcome Mapping	What advancements have been made regarding the Outcome Mapping progress markers?	• SP Steering Committee • Regional Advisory Committees • Interviews with senior officials Interview with SP facilitators & coordinator • Surveys with senior officials	Annual	n/a
Impact of Evaluation	Has evaluation impacted the development of SchoolsPlus, and if so, how?	• Interviews with senior officials Interview with SP facilitators & coordinator	Annual	Establish-ed sites & system level

2.3 Outcome (summative) evaluation methodology

2.3.1 New Sites

The focus for evaluation in the new sites in their first year was upon process outcomes and establishing baseline data for future tracking of outcomes. Progress markers were identified as part of the Outcome Mapping approach.

Baseline Data Forms were used to track progress of students receiving direct service. The survey of school staff gathered informed judgements about the academic, disciplinary and attendance outcomes of those students participating in programs or services facilitated by SP.

To capture student perceptions of how they are doing and obtain a measure of school attachment, simple surveys were conducted of a sample of students in one or two schools per site.

2.3.2 Established Sites

In essence, the same approach was used as for the new sites (described in 2.3.1 above), except that the use of Outcome Mapping was expected to be more sophisticated, and progress on the progress markers was expected to be more advanced.

3.0 FINDINGS: THE PROCESS (FORMATIVE) EVALUATION – SITE LEVEL

3.1 Introduction

Facilitators and Community Outreach Workers were hired for the four new sites beginning in August 2011 with the final addition occurring in January 2012:

- Annapolis Valley Regional School Board has one Facilitator and one Community Outreach Worker for four schools
- Cape Breton-Victoria Regional School Board has one Facilitator and one Community Outreach Worker for seven schools
- Conseil Scolaire Acadien Provincial has one full-time Facilitator and two part-time Facilitators for six schools in two geographically separate sites: south-west and north-east
- Tri County Regional School Board has one Facilitator and one Community Outreach Worker for four schools

Overall, the growing positive reputation of SchoolsPlus has eased the way for new sites, specifically in establishing RACs and in building relationships with services. Most of the new Facilitators report that news of SchoolsPlus spread to their region before the program even arrived in schools. In particular, service providers have been quite enthusiastic having heard that

SP facilitates access to schools and families—a barrier that has been a challenge for service providers in the past.

New Facilitators and Community Outreach Workers have relied heavily on the insights and guidance of Tara Moore (SP Provincial Coordinator), the established Facilitators (who were quick to return phone calls or host visits at their sites), and information generated at the monthly Provincial Steering Committee meetings in the Halifax. A number of documents were also helpful supports including a *SchoolsPlus Binder* (developed in the summer of 2011 by Tara Moore) and a *Lessons Learned* document that the evaluators compiled from the year one and year two evaluation reports.

All of the Facilitators remarked on the usefulness of the first evaluation visit which provided an overview of SchoolsPlus to the RACs—its successes and challenges—in the early stages of their development. Outcome Mapping was also presented during this first evaluation site visit and Facilitators noted the value of the Outcome Mapping progress markers in outlining possible next steps along the continuum of collaboration.

While significant groundwork has been made in establishing SchoolsPlus at the provincial level and in the original sites, each new site has nevertheless needed to work with its own strengths and challenges in initiating this collaborative service delivery model in their area. The progress made so far ebbs and flows within and between each of the new sites—something to be expected in any non-linear social change process—and all of the Facilitators have put in overtime hours during this intensive time period. The importance of building relationships cannot be underestimated and it is a process that takes time. There are no short cuts to building strong relationships for collaboration however it can feel slow and patchy at the beginning, especially when it takes time to produce tangible results.

Notable this year has been the importance of active support from each school board in the establishment of SchoolsPlus. In areas where school board involvement has been proactive and engaged, SchoolsPlus has eased into the family of schools and school staff have been prepared for upcoming changes. In areas where the approach of the school board has been more hands off, confusion has arisen around the roles and responsibilities of various positions within the schools (in some cases due to staff illness or staff turnover). When insufficient orientation is provided to school staff before the arrival of SP, it can prove challenging for Facilitators and Community Outreach Workers to do this leg work while attempting to establish themselves.

Early on all of the new sites have bumped up against the systemic challenges identified in previous years by the established sites (see section 4.2)—such as gaps between mandates and therefore in service provision—once again confirming their provincial scope.

After three years of evaluation and tracking the progress of the four new sites, it is clear that SP is not a program or a project; rather, is about making a cultural shift among service providers, school staff, and families. This kind of fundamental revision of "business as usual" can be difficult for everyone involved as it requires behavioural changes from the family kitchen to the classroom, from frontline service provision to regional offices all the way up the Better Health

structure at the provincial level. In the case of SchoolsPlus however, there is plenty of evidence that progress is being made.

3.2 Summer months (established sites)

It is clear that the summer months provide a crucial opportunity for the SP Facilitators to review, reflect, and plan for the upcoming year. Even though school is out, SP is increasing its support and programming for families in each region.

Over the summer months Facilitators:

- Review case files, follow up with families where needed, close inactive files, and open appropriate cases referred.
- Provide support to families and youth as needed. In the region where SP staff are off during the summer, advanced planning ensures that youth are enrolled in summer camps and activities and provided with contacts and resources for assistance if needed.
- Coordinate summer camps and activities for youth. In three regions, the amount of summer programming has more than doubled between 2010 and 2012. This is possible through the significant contributions made by partner organizations.
- Attend and/or provide inter-professional training opportunities to build programming capacity within SP and/or partner organizations.
- Coordinate with service providers in preparation for programming beginning in September.
- Continue to build relationships with service providers and community partners
- Enable access to the schools to be used for summer programs

Facilitators report that the beginning of the school year runs much more smoothly due to the following factors:

- Clarity has continued to develop around the role and responsibilities of Facilitators
- Awareness of SP continues to develop among the schools, service providers and community partners
- Relationships with service providers and community partners are for the most part well-established
- The slower pace of the summer months enables the Facilitators to review and prepare for the upcoming school year

3.3 Direct service

3.3.1 Referrals and cases

- The combined **number of cases where ongoing service has been provided is estimated at 824** (this number includes cases from 2008 to June 2012, both new and established sites).
- After summer file reviews, a total of **61** case files remained open at the beginning of September 2011 (established sites only).

- Between September 1st 2011 and June 1st, 2012, **326** new referrals were made to SP across the eight sites with **254** of those referrals opened as ongoing cases (**173** cases were opened in the established sites and **81** in the new sites)
- By the end of June 2012, **172** of the 254 cases were closed.

In previous years the evaluation report included tables that broke down these numbers across the sites. This year however, many factors are contributing to a fluctuation of numbers across the sites including: the number of SP staff (and respective caseload capacities); whether the site emphasizes programming or direct service; the age of the youth being provided services; and the month(s) that the new SP staff were hired. All of these factors make comparing statistics across sites difficult. In addition, it is important to note that the types of cases that are characterized as 'open' vary across the sites and may be influenced by the following factors:

1. Open cases can range from one time interventions or referrals to ongoing, challenging cases that require regular attention; (this however should become more consistent with the increased use of TIENET for SP forms and documents, which clarifies and standardizes the decision-points regarding the degree of intervention in cases referred to SP).
2. The age of the youth involved e.g. in some sites SP provides direct service primarily to elementary students whereas other sites include primary to grade 12 youth.
3. More staff means more capacity to take on cases.
4. Cases are closed due to a variety of reasons ranging from a youth leaving the SP family of schools (and service can no longer be provided) to cases that require simple interventions and are closed soon afterwards (e.g. elementary age students). The most common reason for cases to be closed is student improvement.

"When I was in grade 8 I stopped going to school. My mother wanted me to but I hated it. I had missed a lot of school in grade 7 too. I had no friends there and I felt anxious whenever I went. When I wasn't in school some older friends would come over when my mom was at work and we would smoke dope. Sometimes we got in trouble with the cops, like when we broke open my mother's safe and stole the rent money and dope. My younger sister started not going to school as well. Then Rose* from SchoolsPlus started coming to my house and making me and my sister go to school. She would sometimes get us out of bed. Rose helped me and my family get along better with the teachers and principal at school. I went to a group called "Options to Anger". It was actually fun and I am going back to a group called "Voices" soon. Now I am in grade 10 in a program called the Career Exploration Program at school. It is going to help me get jobs and I really like it. Now, I like my teachers, I have friends, and I am not on probation anymore. My mom and I get along better and if we need help we call Rose still sometimes."

(*This is an example narrative of a youth who is involved with SchoolsPlus. Pseudonyms are used for SP staff.)

3.3.2 Action plans for youth

The process by which Comprehensive Service Plans (CSPs) or action plans are created and implemented continues to change and develop over time. Now that stronger relationships exist

within the established SP sites, service providers are more likely to collaborate and a handful of case conferences have occurred that include the families, school staff, SP staff and service providers. Overall however, Facilitators report that they are still building the CSPs one piece and one meeting at a time (in person and by phone). All Facilitators expressed that when case conferencing does occur, it ensures that services are not being duplicated and the cases progress more quickly.

One facilitator remarked on how the case conferencing is developing in her site, capturing a tension across the province: "Over time. I'm seeing more willingness and team spirit but service providers are overworked and so it is difficult for everyone to find the time to come together around a youth."

Each new site is establishing a process for the creation and implementation of action plans/CSPs. The way referrals are made varies across the sites. In some sites, school administrators and or the school program planning team vet all referrals to SP. In other sites, teachers, guidance counsellors, service providers, youth and parents can all make direct referrals to SP.

All new Facilitators are engaging families in the development of action plans. During these initial meetings, Facilitators share the reason(s) for the referral, inquire as to what supports are already in place, assess current needs, and get family and youth consent (as necessary). The Facilitators continue to stay in close communication with families to provide updates and to ensure decisions are made collectively around how to best move forward. As in the established sites, new SP Facilitators are becoming more diligent in applying the SP criteria (see Appendix D) in order to ensure they are providing services and support for the intended population. The Facilitators refer youth and families who fall outside of the criteria to other resources and ensure that supports already provided by the school boards are utilized (e.g. core team meetings, guidance, school board social workers). All new Facilitators find the SP criteria helpful in making decisions around which youth to support while also recognizing the need for flexibility in responding to unique circumstances.

Thoughts from the new SP facilitators

What makes your work easy?

- "Appreciative families"
- "The flexibility we have around responding to situations"
- "Having a great community outreach worker"
- "The SP Coordinator, Tara Moore, is a great resource"
- "Attending the monthly provincial steering committee meetings"
- "Support from the evaluators—they introduced the purpose of SP to my regional advisory committee and the presentation on outcome mapping has been incredibly valuable."
- "Supportive staff in the schools and school board."
- "The positive reputation of SP that preceded the program being established here"
- "In spite of lack of resources, services who are willing to stretch their responsibilities as much as possible"
- "Building relationships with schools, families and service providers"

What makes your work harder?

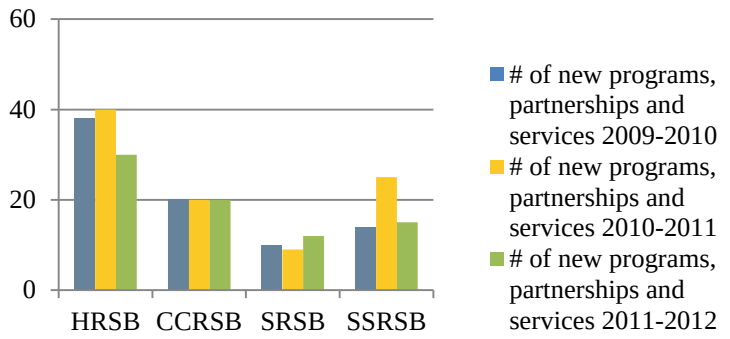
- "Role confusion—support from the school board is important in this area. For example, what is the role of SP in relation to the role of guidance? How can we best support one another? Principals need to know what we're about too."
- "Lack of services offered in French"
- "Not enough time to attend to everything"
- "Service providers who are not responsive"
- "Lack of summer programming for youth"
- "Not having a SP space in the schools beyond our hub site"
- "Only being able to run programs during school hours because of transportation issues—this "competes" with instructional time and lunch hours are short"

3.4 Programming, partnerships and other services

The types of programming offered (in both new and established sites) include:

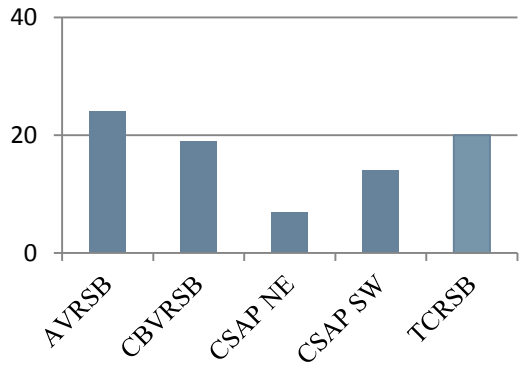
- Small and large group youth programs (e.g. Voices, Options to Anger)
- Programs for parents (e.g. Incredible Years, Parent Alert)
- Preventative programming intended to positively impact the whole school culture (e.g. Restorative Approaches)
- Opportunities for professional development, capacity building and training for school staff, SP staff and service providers (e.g. Restorative Approaches, Incredible Years, Options to Anger, Mentoring Boys and Male Youth)

Figure 1: Number of new programs, services and partnerships in the established sites (coordinated or supported by SchoolsPlus)*



***** These programs and services vary from one-time events and programs to ongoing, long-term initiatives.

Figure 2: Number of new programs, services and partnerships in the new sites (Coordinated or supported by SchoolsPlus)*



***** These programs and services vary from one-time events and programs to ongoing, long-term initiatives.

Table 1: Examples of New or Expanded Partnerships, Co-Location, Programming, Services and Training
Established Sites 2009-2012**
(Dates refer to when the program began; most programs are ongoing while trainings are one-time events.)

HRSB	CCRSB	SRSB	SSRSB
Examples of new or expanded partnerships & programming: • Voices (2010) • Northwood Intergeneration Project (2010) • YWCA Girls Changing the World (2011) • Dove Self-esteem (2011) • Friends for Life (2011) • Peer Mediation (2011) • First Nations Cultural Competency (2011) • Teen Health Centre (2011) • Global Tour with the South Eastern Community Health Board (2012) • Trauma Intervention Services (2012) • Northend After School Committee (2012) • Halifax Youth Attendance Centre (2012) • Dental Sealant (with Public Health) (2012) • Frontier College (2011) • HRM Community Rec Leadership (2012) **Examples of After-School Programming:** • SchoolsPlus Tutoring (2011) • Homework Club (2011) • Parent Alert (2011) • February Break & Summer Camp (2011) • Incredible Years Parenting Program (2012) • Summer—Big School Here I Am (2012) • Ross Road Guitar Club (2012) **Examples of Staff Training:** • Wraparound Service (2011) • Incredible Years Bas. & Adv. (2011) • Mental Health First Aid (2011) • Restorative Approaches (2011) • Friends for Life (2011) • Understanding MH & Addictions (2011) • Child Abuse Protocol (DCS) (2012)	**Examples of new or expanded partnerships & programming:** • PARTY Training (Public Health, Education, Police) (2011) • Incredible Years (2010) • Options to Anger (2010) • Cyber-Bullying (2011) • E.B. Chandler Student Success Pilot (Education) (2011) • Concrete Roots (2011) • Camp Pagweak (2010) • Tough Case play (2011) • IWK Psychologist (2012) • Parent Alert (2010) • Voices (2012) **Examples of After-School programming:** • The "Art of…" Series (collaboration between service providers) (2011) • SP Recreation Evening • Silly Fit (YMCA, Education) (2011) • After School Recreation Group (2011) • SchoolsPlus Community Room (2012) **Example of Staff Training:** • Restorative Approaches (CCAS) (2010, ongoing) • Options To Anger Training (2010) • Anger Management Group Facilitator Refresher Training (2011) • Incredible Years (2012)	**Examples of new or expanded partnerships & programming:** • Anti-Bully Day (2011) • Roots of Empathy (2011) • Family Day (2011) • Grade 8 Boys Group (2010) • Youth Engagement Workshop (all service providers) (2011) • Girls Group (2011) • Voices (2011) • St Patrick's Day Family Events (2011) • Restorative Justice programs (2012) • Grandparent support group (2011) **Examples of After-School Programming:** • Summer Science Camp (Family Services, StFX) (2010) • After School Homework Club (2011) • Holiday Concert (Food Bank) (2011) • After school program in Guysborough (2012) • Summer Knowledge Seekers Program (2012) **Examples of Staff Training:** • Restorative Approaches Training for Chedabucto Place (2011) • Voices (2011) • Friends for Life (2011) • Incredible Years (2011) • Roots of Empathy (2011) • Restorative Approaches Training for Canso (2012)	**Examples of new or expanded partnerships & programming:** • Adult Education (2010) • Incredible Years (2010) • Name the Shame (RCMP; DoJ) (2011 & 2012) • Halifax Girls Conference (2011) • FHCS Wellness Centre (2010) • Lunch Bunch (2011) • Kids and Drugs (Addictions Services) (2011) • Options to Anger (2010) • Parent Alert (2010) • Dalhousie student internship (2010-2012 **Examples of After-School Programming:** • Gold River After School Program (2010) • BEA After School Program (2011) • New Ross After School Program (Recreation) (2011) • Girls Power and Strength Weekend **Examples of Staff Training:** • Voices Training (Mental Health, Justice, School Staff) (2011) • Healthy Sexuality Conference (2011) • Restorative Approaches training (2010) • Mentoring Boys and Male Youth (2012) • Incredible years training (2011) • Friends for life (2012)

** Note: Table 1 **only gives examples** of the kinds of diverse partnerships, co-location, programming and services that are developing in SP Sites and is by no means an exhaustive list. For a comprehensive list, please see each site's Core Component Analysis.

Table 2: Examples of New or Expanded Partnerships, Co-Location, Programming, Services and Training **New Sites 2011-2012****			
AVRSB	CBVRSB	CSAP	TCRSB
Examples of new or expanded partnerships & programming: • Dreams Take Flight • Incredible Years (with DCS and Family Resource Centre) • RJ and Kids and Cops • Annapolis County Children's Foundation • Nicodemus Project **Examples of After-School programming:** • Big Brothers, Big Sisters Summer Day Camp "Go Girls" • Tumblebugs **Example of Staff Training:** • Friends for Life Training • Introduction of Restorative Approaches	**Examples of new or expanded partnerships & programming:** • The Catch Program (with Island Community Justice) • Free to Be You (with Addictions Services) • Parenting Journey (with Family Place Resource Centre) • Incredible Years (with Child Welfare) • Options to Anger **Examples of After-School programming:** • Healthy March Break (in partnership with the DHA/HEAL) • Drama Summer Camp • Family Fun Night	**Examples of new or expanded partnerships & programming:** • Mental Health yoga sessions (CSAP SW) • Addictions services (CSAP SW and NE) • Healthy Relations (with Juniper House) (CSAP SW) • RCMP Bullying Session (CSAP SW) • Options to Anger (CSAP SW) • Restorative Approaches (CSAP SW) • Mental Health in schools (CSAP NE) • Early Years (with Family Resource Centre) • Dance program with Recreation and School (CSAP NE)	**Examples of new or expanded partnerships & programming:** • SP student advisory committee • Health fair (with multiple partners) • Multicultural Festival • Quest for Knowledge • Sam's Project **Examples of After-School programming:** • Leadership Training with Heartwood

** Note: Table 2 **only gives examples** of the kinds of diverse partnerships, co-location, programming and services that are developing in SP Sites and is by no means an exhaustive list. For a comprehensive list, please see each site's Core Component Analysis.

3.4.1 Co-location of services

Increasing co-location of services and service provision within schools continues to remain a challenge in the established sites and is also something that the new sites are beginning to grapple with. While an increase of services delivered within schools occurred during the 2011-2012 year in the established sites, these occurrences remain crucially dependent on the individual relationships the Facilitators have built with particular service providers. When asked what it would take for co-location to be more widely successful and sustainable, Facilitators and service providers responded that:

- The mandates of the departments that provide services must explicitly state co-location or service provision within schools as a priority and provide corresponding resources.
- Appropriate space, with privacy in mind, must be designated within schools so that service providers, youth and families feel welcome and comfortable.

An exciting exception to this situation will occur as a result of the Mental Health and Addictions Strategy announced in 2012: mental health clinicians will be hired and located in SchoolsPlus schools.

3.4.2 Access to services

Facilitators are reporting that youth are receiving quicker access to some services due to the strong relationships SP has built with corresponding service providers in their area. In other cases, Facilitators remain frustrated with services that remain absent, inflexible or are unable to contribute due to the mandate within which they operate.

Overall, it is clear that with more case conferencing occurring and greater collaboration between SP and the schools, youth are benefitting. When youth are on waiting lists for services, SP is providing them with support and interim programming.

"I wasn't going to school and hated it when Lydia* (the SP facilitator), tried to make me. I was in grade 3 and 12 years old. When I did go to school other kids would look at me funny. I didn't have any friends. I couldn't do the work and I was always in trouble. Lydia used to come to my house and get me out of bed and drive me to school. Lydia said she would get me help at school and that things would get better but I didn't believe her. Things at home sucked. I didn't listen to my mom or care what she said. I was doing whatever I wanted. I would stay out late at night and hang around down town. When I got in trouble the cops would bring me home. Now, I am 13 years old and in grade 7. I am learning new things and have tutors who help me. I'm playing basketball and have fun at school. I live with my aunt and uncle and cousins and we do lots of family things like go to the school fair. Sometimes the Community Outreach Worker, and I do stuff together. This summer, I went to camp and met new friends, and girls who I talk to on Facebook. I could not wait to go to school this year!"

(*This is an example narrative of a youth who is involved with SchoolsPlus. Pseudonyms are used for SP staff.)

3.4.3 Extended school hours

Whether new sites or established sites, the barriers to extended school hours are common and include:

- School facilities–some are old, some are new and some designed specially for community use
- Transportation barriers in rural areas
- Other available community facilities make better sense to use either due to location or the amenities of the space being better suited to needs
- Programming tends to remain scheduled during the day in communities where night safety is a concern
- Sites with fewer staff have less time to devote to after-hours programming
- Human resource issues
- In some cases, services have difficulty accessing affordable space in schools to provide afterhours programming
- Janitorial schedules that conflict with potential programming times
- Restrictions within some P3 schools

3.5 Identified gaps

3.5.1 Site specific gaps

Table 3 outlines the following:

- The gaps that have been identified by the established SP sites between 2010 and 2012 (most gaps were identified early on in the implementation of SP)
- Efforts made in each site to address the gaps within their purview (gaps outside of their purview or too systemic to take on are denoted with an *)

Table 3: Gaps and Programs and Services Implemented to Address Gaps in Established SP Sites			
HRSB Gaps	**CCRSB Gaps**	**SRSB Gaps**	**SSRSB Gaps**
• Elementary boys programming (2011) • Interim services for children on waitlists (2010) • Accessible, outside tutoring (2010)* • Post screening services for oral healthcare in 2 of 3 schools (2010)* • Parent support (2010) • Sexual health workshops for junior high girls (2010) • Lunch time safety concerns (2012) • Financial support for families who move (2012)* • No discussion with private sector daycares about transitions to schools (2012)	• Mentoring program (2010)* • Respite services (2010)* • Anger management (2010) • Youth Centre (2010)* • After school programs in all the schools (2010) • School-readiness needs for parents and teachers (2011) • Disengaged students who were failing (2011) • Female mentor (2012)	• Grade 8 boys programming (2010) • Need for services Canso* (2010) • Transportation (2010)* • Sustaining the pre-primary program (STEP) (2011) • Individual and family counselling (2012)* • Programming to address domestic violence (2011)	• All services are in Bridgewater (2010)* • Transportation challenges (2010)* • Youth Health Centres in schools (2010)* • Appropriate resources for Youth Health Centre (2011)* • Services provided for parents in schools (2011)* • Interim support for Mental Health Services (2011)* • Housing for Youth 16-18 (2010)* • Early Years Programming (2012)*
HRSB Addressing the Gaps	**CCRSB Addressing the Gaps**	**SRSB Addressing the Gaps**	**SSRSB Addressing the Gaps**
• SP expansion to four new schools (2011) • Increased after-school programming organized by SP (2011, 2012) • Parent support groups (2011, 2012) • Sexual Health workshops (2011, 2012) • Tutors hired (2011) • Identified boys programming to implement (2011, 2012) • Discovery Centre lunch time sessions (2012) • Trauma intervention services staff training (2012)	• Trained 60 people in anger management programming (2010); numerous programs being offered (2011, 2012) • Community Outreach Worker continues to provide mentoring support (2010, 2011, 2012) • Community Outreach Worker organizes programming and co-facilitates (2011, 2012) • Restorative Approaches training provided for schools (2011, 2012) • Increased after-school programming organized by SP (2011, 2012) • Pre-primary screening and resource bags given to parents (2011) • Student Success credit recovery (2011, 2012)	• Continue to run grade 8 Boys programming (2010, expanded in 2011 and 2012) • Annual Summer StFX Science Camp (2010, expanded in 2011, 2012) • Restorative Approaches Training (2011) • More programs being offered for youth (2011, 2012) • Addition of community outreach worker (2012) • SP expansion to three new schools (2011) • Increased after-school programming organized by SP (2011, 2012) • STEP Sub-Committee formed; McCains Foundation funding provided (2010-11) • Family Services offering individual and family counselling (2012)	• Addition of community outreach worker (2011) • Creation of a Wellness Centre in Forrest Heights (2011) • Visit YHC for appropriate resources (2012) • Increased after-school programming organized by SP (2011, 2012) • Recreation, RCMP, Mental Health, Addictions Services, Probation, Community Justice offering service in schools (2011, 2012) • Involved with South Shore Housing Action Committee (2012)

Table 4: Gaps Identified in New SP Sites			
AVRSB Gaps	**CBVRSB Gaps**	**CSAP Gaps**	**TCRSB Gaps**
• Programs for children and youth anxiety and stress • Recreation services (camps and summer activities) • Transportation to services	• Mental health services* • Unengaged family supports	Nord-est: • Programs and services offered in French* • Early Years programming* • Body and Mind Homework Program • Transportation Sud-ouest: • Mental health services* • Supports for youth with chronic health conditions • Programs on healthy • eating and disordered eating • Services for elementary age children* • Transportation	• Lack of programming for youth • Nurse practitioner* • Mentoring for boys and men* • Young women's programs on health, safety and sexual health • Programs for teen mothers • Transportation

3.5.2 Province-wide gaps

All province-wide gaps were identified between 2009 and 2010. Progress has been made in addressing some of them: the addition of mental health clinicians to SchoolsPlus hub schools; some action related to addressing homelessness and housing issues among 16-19-year-olds is being undertaken by DCS and at some SchoolsPlus sites.

Table 5: General Gaps
• Supports for 16-19 year olds (specifically in relation to homelessness & housing issues, accessing Income Assistance) • "Out of control" youth approaching the age of 15-16 • Transportation/accessibility of services (challenge for rural/remote schools and communities* • Accessible counseling services for couples, families, youth where Mental Health Services are not required** • Long waiting lists for mental health services • Complex cases that do not "fit" into mandates of specific services* • Youth who are suspended (especially for lengthy periods of time) get lost* • Programming during holidays (in some cases)* • After school programming (in some cases)* • Access to low or no cost outside educational supports* • Vacant school staff positions (in rural/remote areas) • Preventative programming and services*

* SP has made some progress in helping to address these gaps.
** Except in the Strait where Family Services of Eastern NS is providing service

3.6 Interagency collaboration

> *"No one really knew how much time it would take to build relationships and a shared understanding. It's about taking risks and none of us knew how much time and resources it would take to establish them" (SP Facilitator, 2011).*

The new sites have had an easier time building relationships with community resources and agencies. SP's growing reputation has paved the way for these new sites and most service providers have been eager to connect with the work of SP. Some regional advisory committees have even had to cap RAC membership and find other ways of keeping stakeholders informed of what is occurring and how they can contribute. The established SP sites continue to build remarkable capacity in the area of relationship-building and are seeing the benefits of their investments in this process.

SP's established relationships are growing from sharing ideas and resources to collective problem solving. It is important to note that these relationships exist with individual service providers and do not necessarily translate into SP having a working relationship with the agencies themselves. This has been a challenge when staff turnover occurs. The exception is Halifax, where it has been possible to institutionalize collaboration through the development of joint work plans (see section 4.3.9). The Advisory Committees vary along a continuum, evolving from being primarily information-sharing forums (new sites) to actively participating in collectively addressing SP objectives (established sites) (see section 4.3.9).
The barriers to collaboration that are linked to the system level are discussed in sections of 4.2 and 4.3 of the report.

Thoughts from the new SP Facilitators

What facilitates collaboration:

- "Clear communication and a commitment to relationship-building"
- "School administrators who encourage teachers to support SP programming and service delivery"
- "The willingness of schools and service providers to be open to new ways of thinking"
- "The new consent forms!"
- "Case conferencing, where possible, with schools, families and service providers"

What challenges collaboration:

- "Service providers who have to travel significant distances to provide service or attend meetings"
- "Service providers who are stretched thin and have limited availability"
- "Rigid mandates"
- "Staff turn over where awareness of SP is lost"
- "Space is unavailable in schools beyond our hub site"

3.7 SchoolsPlus and youth and families

Information regarding the impact of SP on youth and families has been gathered from interviews with 10 parents/caregivers, focus groups with students in two schools, as well as the 65 responses to the online survey conducted with school administrators and staff. The vast majority of comments and responses have been very positive. Points made by school administrators and staff, parents, and SP staff in interviews and surveys have been consistent and reinforce the findings from the previous evaluation reports. They include:

3.7.1 A bridge between schools and families

School staff frequently reported that **SP** creates a **bridge between families and the school** by building trust with parents and breaking down barriers to communication.

When school administrators and staff were asked to rate the impact of SP on parent and family involvement within their schools in the online survey, **88%** of those who responded to the question said that SP has had a **moderately or very positive impact.**

From the perspective of parents, many of them find it daunting to approach the school and are finding value in having a Facilitator or Community Outreach Worker with whom to problem-solve who isn't a teacher or administrator.

> "[SchoolsPlus] has made school way better. I'm able to talk about things and the bullying problems go away." (Student, 2012).
>
> "I like SP because it has resources like Anger Management and family groups and stuff like that – high school is not always easy, kids get bullied or kids have a hard time with school and people don't really realize that things could be going on with them, issues at home, divorces. I think it is great to have the resources to make it easier for them and so they don't have to go to the teachers to tell them why an assignment is late, they'll just know" (Student, 2012).

"*The Facilitator really knows my son and can speak to his challenges. She comes to school meetings with me and it's nice to have someone who can problem solve. I don't feel so alone" (Parent, 2012).*

"SchoolsPlus has filled a big hole in this area. Teachers and principals have other areas of focus and, even with a staff which is dedicated to building relationships with families and parents, finding time to do this is difficult. When SchoolsPlus became a part of the school and I realized its role, I breathed a sigh of relief in that we now had an effective way to reach out to parents and develop the positive relationships which support parents in being more involved with their children and the school" (School Administrator, 2012).

In both new and established sites, despite SP success with engaging parents and families, school administrators and staff report that this continues to vary from family to family. While some families begin to connect with the school others do not.

"It is dependent upon the individual family to a great extent. With some of our families referred we are seeing progress. With others, the progress has been slow or road-blocked. This has no reflection on the efforts of the Schools Plus team" (School Administrator, 2012).

"The programs offered for families have been outstanding for those that have participated. The hope is that more families will recognize the benefits and participate in the programs and services offered. It has been tremendous for those that have participated" (School Administrator, 2011).

3.7.2 More youth being reached

Schools that have a high SP presence note that the range of youth coming to programming has broadened: many youth who previously did not attend programs are now doing so.

In addition, school staff and parents are seeing youth receiving more timely, appropriate and comprehensive services. SP Facilitators and Community Outreach Workers have their finger on the pulse and can therefore take preventative action.

"The Options to Anger program was *so helpful*! Also (because of SP) I have someone to talk to. I also used to react to other kids bugging me and get in trouble with the teachers. SP has helped the other kids to stop bugging me. I have been bullied for 10 years. Now it has stopped and it (bullying) has been talked about with others, and I have developed new skills" (Student, 2012).

"SP has been really good and helpful to my child. Without SP he would have dropped out of school. Before he would not go to school and without the support of SP he wouldn't be there now. His grades have improved and he is doing a lot better academically. Takes a lot of stress off of me. It was a real struggle." (Parent, 2011)

"It provides necessary support to families in need. It may not have solved all problems for the students and families but it has offered support and created positive change" (School Administrator, 2012).

"Before moving to this school, my grandson had no supports. Now he goes to programming and I've seen a real improvement in his anger management. The last school didn't have anything like this. Now he asks, 'Why can't I have school on the weekends?'" (Caregiver, 2011)

"A service provider has [seen my son] at school a few times because we could not get to the office. [The SP facilitator] told [the service provider] that we did not have transportation and so she came to us. Before this, I didn't know that was possible" (Parent, 2012).

3.7.3 Increased availability and accessibility of programs

SP continues to make more programs and services available and accessible for youth and families year by year (see Tables 1 and 2). As the new sites establish themselves, they are beginning to offer programming based on the needs of the area.

"SP is providing programming for my girl and also helping me to find a job so that I can be more independent and can take care of my kids better."(Parent, 2012)

"Parents use the building and the parent room to upgrade skills, search for jobs and attend parenting classes. There is a welcome place within the school to meet." (School Administrator, 2011)

"The SchoolsPlus staff are able to reach parents in such a positive way and help communicate important information. They provide a warm and inviting atmosphere for our families to meet, allowing them to take part in the wonderful services that they offer" (School Administrator, 2012).

3.7.4 Strengthened relationships with families

All parents/caregivers interviewed stressed the importance of feeling that SP really cares. This is especially important to single parents.

"Without Schools Plus we would not have gotten through this school year. Last year SP was not available and it was a hard year for us. There was no extra help. This year is above and beyond—much better" (Parent, 2012).

"Before I was doing everything alone and now I have a team. It has changed everything and I feel a lot of relief" (Caregiver, 2011).

3.8 SchoolsPlus and schools

Information regarding the impact of SP on schools has been gathered from 5 interviews with school administrators in new SP sites and the 65 responses to the online survey conducted with school administrators and staff in both new and established sites. Students provided insights in focus groups in two sites. The findings align with the previous evaluation reports and emphasize that on the whole, schools whether new or old to SP are experiencing similar benefits and surfacing similar questions. The themes outlined below are widely shared among the school administrators and staff we spoke with or surveyed.

All of the sites mentioned the significance of the coordination of services and programs and outreach to families; the established sites however emphasized more heavily the positive student outcomes they are seeing after three years.

3.8.1 The benefits of SchoolsPlus as seen by school administrators and staff

SP is building relationships with agencies and community resources, creating an environment of collaboration. SP has provided a bridge for service-providers to better understand the needs in schools and to develop relationships with schools.

"Before everyone was working with this kid but no one was working together. Now everyone is cooperating and the interventions are working!" (Teacher, 2012)

SP is implementing preventative and supportive programming, changing the culture in schools and communities. Facilitators have placed emphasis on the provision of preventative and supportive programming, with the aim of building the capacity of students and families so that fewer families require intensive services or interventions. Students in a focus group talked about a dramatic reduction in bullying in one school with the introduction of SP.

"The programs we have had for grades 7-9 have been rewarding for the students and affected the school in a positive manner" (School Administrator, 2012).

"We are now able to reach identified students as well as the entire school community through groups, presentations, workshops by having a wonderful inviting environment for students" (School Administrator, 2011).

SP's presence is allowing teachers and administrators to focus on their roles and responsibilities rather than being a "jack of all trades". Prior to SP, school staff often had to address individual youth and family issues that they had neither the time or training to deal with which took them away from their regular duties.

"The SP facilitator and SP have made my work easier and more effective. Many of the issues that students are dealing with and bringing to school are beyond my expertise. Having the SP facilitator who knows which services are required and can coordinate and schedule those services saves a tremendous amount of time and ensures timely response to help the student or family involved. This quick response helps to get students back on track in a reasonable amount of time" (School Administrator, 2012).

SP is improving relationships with families. The neutral role of the SP Facilitator or Community Outreach Worker creates a bridge between the school and the families. They are seen as accessible and non-threatening.

"SP provides support and gives students/parents an ability to be heard as well as establish routines and expectations" (School Administrator, 2012).

"I think Schools Plus has helped students and parents feel more attached to the school, seeing the school as having many aspects to it which can impact their lives. Parents seem more comfortable coming into the school. Numerous students have developed positive attachments to the SchoolsPlus Outreach worker" (School Administrator, 2012).

SP is contributing to and supporting outcomes for youth. Facilitators/Community Outreach Workers achieve better results as they have appropriate training and experience to deal with difficult cases, make appropriate referrals, and identify community resources and services. This is becoming more obvious to the school administrators in the established sites.

"In most cases, the involvement of SchoolsPlus has led to improved attendance, which is directly related to the student's ability to meet the outcomes (and increases the chance they will be able to demonstrate their achievement)" (School Administrator, 2012).

3.8.2 The ways SchoolsPlus makes school administrators' work easier/more effective

- Advocating and finding supports for youth that were previously inaccessible
- Making connections with the home and building trust within the community
- Creating a more preventative environment within the school
- Acting as a thinking partner with the school administration
- Reducing the need for teachers and administrators to be a "jack of all trades"
- Acting as a bridge between families and schools

> "SP has helped to take some of the burden off schools to be all things to all people. They make it much easier to access outside support which schools had to fight for to support students" (School Administrator, 2012).
>
> "The extra support to follow through with intervention strategies is wonderful. It's about the students and putting the students' needs and issues first"
> (School Administrator, 2012).

3.8.3 Challenges encountered by school administrators and staff in working with SchoolsPlus

Most school administrators and staff do not feel that SP has made their work harder or less effective (indeed 41% chose to write specifically in answer to this survey question that SP has not made their work harder). SP has created additional work on the front end (e.g. referrals, keeping up with relationships) and this can be a challenge however they consider the up front work "worth it". Over the past two years, school administrators have noted the following challenges:

- Confidentiality issues can prevent collaboration between agencies and schools
- Sometimes school staff are not made aware of issues external to school surrounding a youth that may impact the classroom/school environment
- SP is being stretched too thin between all of the schools and youth the SP staff work with, and in some cases, SP presence is very infrequent (the established sites emphasized concern around resources if SP expands further).
- Not having or being able to provide a SP designated space in the school
- SP's scope of practice and responsibility is not always clear and misunderstandings can be avoided through information sharing and awareness raising

- Clarity of roles within the school—where established school supports end and SP begins (e.g. guidance counsellors, school board social workers)
- The paperwork feels overwhelming at times and could be streamlined
- Staff turnover means a loss of knowledge within the school about SP

3.8.4 SchoolsPlus requires a change in school culture

This year, a clear and significant theme surfacing within the new sites is that SP is a model that requires changes within the culture of schools. If a thorough integration of SP is to be made, it requires schools to take a look at in-school policies, practices, and processes, and adjust them. A few principals mentioned that they were not prepared for this shift and yet see it as necessary.

"SP requires schools to take a serious look at in-school policies and adjust them. But people don't like being adjusted. I don't like being adjusted! But how are we to become truly accountable to kids without it? This has been a global change" (School Administrator, 2012).

"We had a meeting yesterday to discuss with teachers the new practices. The old style escalation and suspension is not what we're working with any more. Having kids in school is more important than academic performance. If we're reintegrating a child we need to relax the academic expectations – the big deal is they are back in school for the first time in awhile" (School Administrator, 2012).

3.8.5 The characteristics of a school that make SchoolsPlus successful

School administrators and staff were very clear on the characteristics of a school that make SP successful. When asked this question they all cited in one way or another, the following points:

- "Schools need to create and establish a clear internal process—this can take time, be patient!"
- "Everyone must understand roles and responsibilities in order to fully integrate SP"
- "Be engaged, keep an open mind, and work collaboratively"
- "Flexibility and innovation"
- "Shared leadership and control"
- "Staff who have a clear understanding of the program and who can benefit."
- "Don't be afraid to think outside of the box"
- "Think holistically"
- "Have supportive administrators"
- "Be open to changing the idea of what school is"
- "Create a welcoming environment"
- "Respect roles and responsibilities"
- "Always keep students at the centre"

3.8.6 School board involvement

Overall, it was clear this year with the establishment of new sites that more progress was made where school boards had an active (rather than passive) involvement in SchoolsPlus; ensured that role clarification occurred; and ensured that school staff were prepared for the implementation of the model. As one service provider observed, "the school is only one part of SchoolsPlus, yet when a school goes wrong, the program seems to break down." The experience in the established sites is also very consistent with this, and the evolution of SchoolsPlus, and the culture change it brings with it, continues to be most effective in sites where the school board clearly understands the goals of SchoolsPlus, and takes an active role in supporting and facilitating the efforts of both SchoolsPlus staff and the school principals to achieve those goals. The culture change that SchoolsPlus exemplifies applies broadly within the school board as well as within individual schools. As SchoolsPlus expands to more than one site per school board the degree to which the school boards support and actively adopt the new approach will be a factor in determining long term benefits.

3.9 SchoolsPlus and service providers

The response from service-providers continues to be overwhelmingly positive, with a few caveats. The findings presented were collected through 83 responses to the online survey with service providers across new and established sites.

The surveys and interviews captured the perspectives of service-providers from NS Department of Health and Wellness, DHAs, Department of Education, School Boards, Department of Community Services, Department of Justice, Police, RCMP, municipalities, non-profit agencies, and the private sector. Those interviewed and surveyed ranged in the length of their involvement with SP from less than a year to three or more years.

Overall, **53%** of service providers involved with SP for a year or less think that SchoolsPlus has **"helped them a lot"** in their ability to serve the needs of children, youth and their families compared with **71%** of service providers who have been involved with SP between one to three years. This indicates that over time service providers increasingly benefit from the presence of SchoolsPlus (and is confirmed by the year two evaluation findings as well). The points below speak to the *ways* in which SP has made a difference.

3.9.1 Providing access to schools and youth

Both school staff and program providers pointed out the vital role of the Facilitator or Community Outreach Worker in providing the link between schools and programs and service providers.

"SP removes some of the administrative barriers that exist within the school system and creates a bridge between families and agencies/organizations that may not exist otherwise" (Service Provider, 2011).

3.9.2 Providing support for youth and families "falling through the cracks" and increasing preventative interventions

Facilitators and Community Outreach Workers are in close touch with families and schools which has enabled needs to be identified earlier and preventative measures taken. This is welcomed by service-providers, many of whom commented on their expectation that this will pay off in fewer future cases.

"Schools Plus is an effective resource strongly connected to the community. The Community Outreach Worker knows the challenges faced by the families of this community, works with us to fill gaps and assists parents in understanding what is available to help them and how to access the many services" (Service Provider, 2012).

"Students who were falling through the cracks are being picked up by SP. School attendance, self-esteem, mentorship, guidance, linkages to other services, providing programming and training opportunities to community agencies/schools - these are just some of the things SP does that improve our ability to serve families and their children" (Service Provider, 2011).

3.9.3 Promoting collaboration and coordination

Many service-providers noted that collaboration with other services around the needs of a client prevents duplication and enables them to be more effective.

"Being able to collaborate allows for better use of resources, less duplication of services, more comprehensive programming for children" (Service Provider, 2012).

"I understand more about my case which is enabled through the coordination between services. There is less duplication and more specialization by the organizations involved. It provides more accountability for all stakeholders involved to do what they say they will" (Service Provider, 2011).

3.9.4 Providing transportation to and from services and programs

This was cited as one of the most significant services that SP contributes to the work of service-providers who do not work within the schools. Some service-providers are seeing an increase in client attendance at appointments.

"SP often times will transport mutual clients to appointments either at our agency or appointments at other agencies that are required through their participation with our agency" (Service Provider, 2012).

"Support from SP staff has increased client attendance at appointments; SP staff have been able to provide assistance with more challenging cases through collaborative work" (Service Provider, 2011).

3.9.5 Increasing the capacity of program providers

Program providers who collaborate with SP and co-facilitate programs with SP staff (either the Community Outreach Worker or Facilitator) see this sharing of resources as integral to their ability to offer programs more widely.

"SchoolsPlus reduces the time I spend on case management, makes direct clinical work more productive and efficient and provides partners to facilitate programs with" (Service Provider, 2012)

"Working with the SP Coordinator has lessened the stress of facilitating programs by sharing responsibilities" (Service Provider, 2011).

3.9.6 Offering capacity-building and inter-professional training opportunities

SP has built professional capacity to enable service-providers to offer more services, and continues to offer inter-professional training opportunities such as Friends for Life, Restorative Approaches, Incredible Years and Voices.

"SP has provided me with training that has made the work I do more effective and has allowed me to offer programs in the schools" (Service Provider, 2011).

3.9.7 Challenges encountered in working with SchoolsPlus

As discussed above, the vast majority of service providers feel that SchoolsPlus helps them in their ability to meet the needs of families, children and youth. Some service providers state that they will increase their collaboration when SP is more widespread and covers more of their clients. Right now there is some concern around favouring SP students. Some service providers don't feel comfortable communicating about SP widely within their organizations because it is still offered in a limited way in limited regions to limited numbers of students.

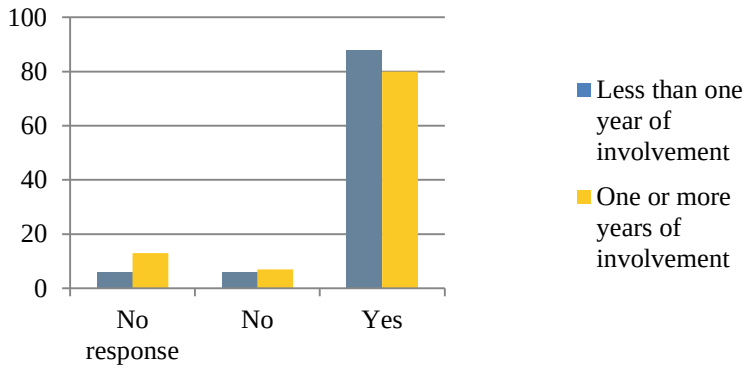
They have identified a few areas that could be addressed to strengthen the model, including:

- **Clarify roles, even on a case-by-case basis.** It is important that everyone is clear on who is involved and what their roles are. *"Sometimes too many people are involved and it gets confusing—this can complicate service provision with students where there was already adequate supports in place" (Service Provider, 2012).*
- **Recognize the limits of service providers.** These include travel time, case loads, waiting lists etc. *"I believe that at times it has been difficult for SchoolsPlus to accept our limitations--unfortunately, our agency operates with a waitlist and most of our clients are in desperate need of our services. It can become very difficult to prioritize one case over another" (Service Provider, 2012).*
- **Clearly communicate case information to those who need to know.** *"It is problematic when the information reported is not accurate. Sometimes this interferes with services" (Service Provider, 2012).*

3.9.8 Increasing involvement with SchoolsPlus

When service-providers were asked if they would like their organization to increase its involvement with SP, **88%** of service providers who have been involved with SP less than a year and **80%** of service providers involved with SP a year or more (up from 70% in 2011) responded that they would.

Figure 3: Would you like your organization to increase its involvement with SchoolsPlus? (Percentage of respondents)



The service-providers who answered that they would not like to increase their involvement with SP cited that they were already at full capacity for collaboration or have reached the limit of their resources.

"We are already successful in collaborating with numerous community partners" (Service Provider, 2012).

"We are currently collaborating at the required levels, and we don't really have the capacity within our own organization to take it beyond the current. So, it's our issue, not a SP issue" (Service Provider, 2011).

3.9.9 What it would take to increase involvement with SchoolsPlus

Shared accountability across the four CYS departments and addressing the limitations of mandates. This is a need identified by a number of service-providers who are long-term collaborators with SP. These service providers are bumping up against limitations to their ability to collaborate that they are unable to address at a regional level.

"Our organization needs to put more emphasis on and value in prevention of illnesses and addressing the determinants of health. SchoolsPlus does this from an education perspective. The health sector needs to do the same" (Service Provider, 2012).

"From my perspective, our department has been a strong partner, and I would like to see other departments follow this lead. This is not to negate the efforts that other departments have made thus far, but I think there is much room for service expansion" (Service Provider, 2011).

More resources and time allocated by their organization towards collaboration. The need for more time and resources to support collaboration continues to be mentioned by some service providers and connects to the need for shared accountability and the inclusion of collaboration in statements of mandate. (This is balanced by comments from a number of service-providers that SchoolsPlus has made their work more effective and reduced inappropriate referrals thereby saving time).

"We need additional staff. Due to high client needs and few workers we don't have much time for collaboration with other groups" (Service Provider, 2012).

"Time and resources are barriers to doing more collaboration (e.g. waiting to hear about whether our budget will remain the same as last year...if there is any budget)"(Service Provider, 2011).

4.0 FINDINGS: THE PROCESS (FORMATIVE) EVALUATION – SYSTEM LEVEL

Ten interviews were conducted with senior individuals in the four CYS departments, one other department, a school board and with several other knowledgeable senior individuals closely associated with aspects of SchoolsPlus. The interviews and discussions with senior individuals were structured around the systemic issues identified in the previous Evaluation Reports and the recommendations contained therein. In addition to the interviews with senior individuals, information about systemic issues and challenges was obtained from monthly reports and interviews with the SP Coordinator and Facilitators, focus groups with RACs, service-providers and CYS staff, and the online survey of service-providers.

The Year Two Evaluation Report was presented and discussed with senior levels of government, with a focus on the systemic issues identified. This reflected the increased profile of SchoolsPlus and an increased determination to address the systemic issues. Presentations and discussions of the Year Two Evaluation Report took place in the fall of 2011 with the Better Health Senior Officials, Deputy Minsters and Ministers. A presentation and half-day workshop was conducted with the Child and Youth Strategy Committee (CYSC) in the fall of 2011; during this session the Year Two Evaluation Report was presented and the role of the CYSC in addressing some of the systemic challenges was discussed in detail.

4.1 Progress at the broad level

"In 'government time', SchoolsPlus is moving very quickly" (Senior official, 2012).

After the apparently slow pace of change at the system level in years one and two, in year three a considerable amount of behind-the-scenes planning and decision-making bore fruit and a major shift in

commitment to the model took place. This sent a clear message from top leadership, and the impact of this is beginning to ripple through the system.

4.1.1 Expansion of SchoolsPlus builds confidence and commitment to the model

The number of SchoolsPlus sites doubled in the past year and every school board now has one site. The government announced a progressive expansion of SchoolsPlus over the next few years with the goal of eventually covering all schools in the province; four new sites have already been selected for the start of the school year in September 2012. This strong commitment to the SchoolsPlus model of collaborative service delivery has accelerated the response of many departments and programs: there is confidence that this model is continuing, is no longer in a pilot phase, and that it will expand across the province and will not be restricted to a few specific sites. Service-providers, schools and school boards can now plan to work with this model across the province.

4.1.2 SchoolsPlus is being incorporated in a number of government strategies

A number of strategies and reports have been released during the past year that mention or incorporate SchoolsPlus, which illustrates the level of commitment to the model. These include Kids and Learning First, Thrive - a Plan for a Healthier Nova Scotia, the Poverty Reduction Strategy, the Cyber-Bullying Report, the Early Years Discussion Paper, the latest report of the Child and Youth Strategy, and the Mental Health and Addictions Strategy (see 4.1.3 below).

4.1.3 The Mental Health and Addictions Strategy

One of the key actions announced in the strategy is to put mental health clinicians in SchoolsPlus families of schools in all school boards to identify and treat mental health problems of children and youth earlier. This is a major commitment of resources from the Department of Health and Wellness to work with the SchoolsPlus collaborative model. It will not only help to address a long-recognized need but reflects a shift towards the goals of co-location of services in schools, a more collaborative way of delivering services to youth and families, and a focus on early intervention which will be much easier to accomplish through collaboration with SchoolsPlus and co-location in schools.

4.1.4 Analysis of the Department of Community Services' future alignment with SchoolsPlus.

In the winter of 2012 DCS undertook an analysis of its alignment with SchoolsPlus and explored the potential for greater alignment. Leadership is sending a clear message of the direction in which to move, and internal discussions and consultations of the analysis are taking place. As a result, an implementation action plan is being developed for December 30, 2012.

4.1.5 Other notable progress

Information-sharing – a major step forward
Another notable breakthrough achieved after long and patient work by the SchoolsPlus Coordinator and an interdepartmental committee is the approval and adoption of a common consent form for SchoolsPlus and the development of information sharing guidelines. This is covered in more detail in section 4.3.6 below.

Formal collaboration and resource-sharing
The newly-announced Restorative Approaches in the Schools Initiative has a project lead jointly funded by Justice and Education, which is another excellent example of collaboration and resource sharing. . The RCMP is collaborating with SchoolsPlus on the alignment of several programs.. The Department of Justice (Probation) has offered free training in Options to Anger to SP staff for the past several years. Similarly, the IWK has provided training to SP staff in the Incredible Years Parenting Program. A positive outcome of this training is that SP can offer these programs in SP schools, thereby making these programs far more accessible around the province than they would otherwise have been.

4.2 Challenges and issues at the broad level

4.2.1 Demand for and expectations of SchoolsPlus are very high.

As a result of the positive impact achieved by SchoolsPlus in years one and two, and the strong commitment to its expansion province-wide, there are now very high expectations and an increasing trend to connect many services to SchoolsPlus and involve SchoolsPlus personnel in many consultation, planning and implementation activities. Managing expectations and handling the increased coordination activity that comes with growth, higher profile and success with no increase in staffing ratios is a challenge; SchoolsPlus personnel were already over-stretched in previous years, particularly at the provincial coordination level, where the job to be done continues to grow with no increase in personnel resource.

4.2.2 Resource requirements as a result of expansion

The expansion of SchoolsPlus brings into sharper relief the question of how collaboration in general and the SchoolsPlus model in particular are resourced. The more active the partner departments are in allocating resource, whether new or existing, to the model (for example the addition of mental health clinicians to hub schools), the more effective the collaborative model will be, and the faster it will become a normal way for services to be delivered. On the other hand, if the service-providers maintain a more passive stance in terms of resources and method of working, the SchoolsPlus model risks becoming another bottle-neck or choke point, limited by the slender facilitation resources provided directly through the SchoolsPlus budget. However resource allocation is a challenge in times of budget cuts among many of the service-providers.

4.2.3 Developing a culture of collaboration

SchoolsPlus is widely seen among senior officials and those at site level as a practical example of a much larger shift in culture within government, and as a learning opportunity for this shift. It is recognized that there have been previous collaborative activities that laid some excellent groundwork, but also that there is still quite a way to go. The experience of collaborative processes gained through SchoolsPlus has value and applicability across the government, and this is part of the value of SchoolsPlus.

> "Collaboration as a theme is growing in government – a general trend beyond just this government. People were talking horizontal government in the 1990s. It is getting "walked" better every year. It has all the bubbles and warts that you'd expect – when it gets hard it can be easy to walk away - but from where I sit I'm very hopeful" (Senior official, 2012).

4.2.4 Needs identified for training in collaborative working

To support such a fundamental shift in culture, needs were identified for training and support for personnel to work in a new way: a clear message from the top is necessary but not sufficient for personnel to learn to work in new, unfamiliar ways.

> "This culture of collaboration that we're espousing: we don't yet have the behaviour of collaboration. We've trained ourselves to respect department boundaries. This is the shift that's needed" (Senior official, 2012).

4.2.5 Leadership and the sense of lack of empowerment.

In the year two evaluation a pervasive sense of lack of empowerment was noted as an obstacle to change. In year three, with the strong message of commitment to the SchoolsPlus model being communicated by the expansion of the model and the planned allocation of mental health clinicians to hub schools, there is clearly a higher level of confidence within the system to make changes in the direction of collaborative service delivery (also illustrated by the DCS alignment study). It will also be easier for service delivery organizations to adapt to the model once the model is operating across whole regions rather than in isolated pockets.

> "The regions don't know how much power they have. They could pull off getting a presentation to Deputy Ministers in their region quicker than we could pull something like this together in Corporate" (Senior official, 2012).

That said, there are still contradictory views as to the amount of authority or influence regional level management has to implement changes or influence change at the top. Central officials believe that the "movers and shakers" in the regions have more ability than is recognized to make change and influence those at the top, while those in the regions often feel otherwise. The large amount of variation between regions in the ways in which service-providers work with SchoolsPlus, and the level of independent authority held by school boards and district health authorities indicates that

> "Some district health authorities were in schools long before SchoolsPlus" (Senior official, 2012).

there is power to achieve quite a lot at the regional level. However, for province-wide, systemic change to take place, a clear message from the very top is crucial.

4.2.6 Varied departmental mandates and structures

The varied departmental mandates and structures noted as an obstacle in previous years remain (regionalized-centralized; preventative-reactive), and are not likely to change. Varied regional boundaries among the different services compound the obstacles to change. Strong leadership at the top and consistent policy messages backed up by mandates and budget priorities for collaborative approaches help, and the expansion of the SchoolsPlus model across the province will also make it easier to accomplish greater consistency among varied services in supporting collaborative approaches.

> "Prevention is done off the side of people's desks. We have a legal mandate. We recognize the need for prevention and the early years but that is moving us out of our expertise. It's a question of resources, priorities and time" (Senior official, 2012).

4.3 Specific issues identified in previous years

4.3.1 Service delivery and co-location in schools

Service delivery in schools, with an initial focus on the hub schools, is a primary focus of SchoolsPlus. The provision of suitable meeting rooms and basic office facilities to enable services to be provided in a suitable environment is a necessity for this and progress has been made in established sites. For new sites, such facilities are a prerequisite, and start-up funding has been provided for this. The established site where SchoolsPlus staff had less than adequate office space in previous years has now provided appropriate facilities. In at least two cases where new schools are being planned, suitable facilities for SchoolsPlus activities and service-provision are being designed as part of the buildings.

The biggest step forward in relation to co-location of services was the announcement of the co-location of new mental health clinicians in SchoolsPlus hub sites.

4.3.2 Roles of the departmental representatives on the RACs

All four CYS departments are represented on RACs, although this "representation" is indirect in the case of Education (except for the SP Coordinator) and Health and Wellness, since it is personnel from the School Boards and District Health Authorities who actually sit on the committees. In year two the picture was one of passive rather than active support from most of the departments involved. In year three two of the departments have sent clearer messages from the top that suitable staff are expected to participate in RACs, and participation from those two departments has been more active and consistent in almost all SchoolsPlus sites. This has brought benefits in terms of consistent attendance and greater engagement in collaborative and coordinated service and program delivery, as well as problem-solving. Inevitably, there is still

regional variation, and participation is limited by staff availability, but feedback from service-providers about the value of working with SchoolsPlus is overwhelmingly positive (see sections 4.3.9 and 4.3.10).

4.3.3 Information flow and progress reports

i) Through CYS

During 2011 and 2012 the CYS improved information flow between its regional structures and the CYSC, and its annual symposia for members of Provincial, Regional and Community Tables (held in fall 2010 and 2011) were considered by SchoolsPlus RAC participants to have been extremely useful in opening up communication and increasing understanding of mandates, roles and priorities. In regions where the SchoolsPlus structure meshes well with that of the CYS, information flow and the communicating of issues up the line to more senior levels has improved. However this will become more challenging as SchoolsPlus expands. The CYSC also took on the role of province-wide interdepartmental committee for SchoolsPlus. Quarterly progress reporting was instituted, and in June 2012 the CYSC had the first of planned annual meetings with the SchoolsPlus Steering Committee.

ii) The Better Health committee structure

There has been no direct, formal reporting about SchoolsPlus other than presentations and discussion of the year two evaluation report.

iii) Informal mechanisms

The expansion and increasing profile of SchoolsPlus in year three has resulted in an increase in this activity. SchoolsPlus is now included or mentioned in new strategies and reports in a range of departments (see section 4.1.2), and there is increasing contact and communication among a widening circle of stakeholders and relevant staff in provincial departments.

iv) Within each department

In the lead department (Education) there continues to be information flow upwards from the SP Coordinator, and also regular reports to meetings of School Board and Department Program Directors. In the case of the other departments, there are now active discussions under way within Community Services about alignment with SchoolsPlus, and in Health and Wellness and the DHAs the implementation of the new Mental Health Strategy is being worked out. The implementation of the common consent form and the development of information sharing guidelines has also required formal communication through all four departments, DHAs and school boards (see section 4.3.6). In other departments and agencies the stance is responsive but less active, with information flow when needed.

v) School Boards and District Health Authorities

Communication with and among the School Boards and District Health Authorities about SchoolsPlus was not examined in detail in the evaluation, but there were some indications that more could be happening. Formal communication about the introduction of the common consent form and the work on the information-sharing guidelines highlighted the need for better information flow about such issues, and some actions were taken to address initial confusion and inconsistency in interpretation.

At the strategic level, more collaborative thinking could be taking place: it seems that little discussion of strategy ideas or sharing of visions and goals takes place formally or informally. Within Education, a recent discussion with School Boards and the Department in which the Boards shared their priorities and considered their potential alignment was mentioned as a rare occurrence.

4.3.4 Accountability for the success of SchoolsPlus

Accountability remains one of the biggest challenges of integrated or collaborative service-provision. At one end of the spectrum of collaboration there is the danger that no single entity may feel responsible and accountable because everyone is, while at the other end of the spectrum accountability is owned clearly by one specific entity, and there may be little or no true collaboration. The debate continues with respect to SchoolsPlus, but there has been clear progress. Education is accountable for the SchoolsPlus budget, and with clear leadership and consistent messages from the Better Health Deputy Ministers and Ministers, those departments are taking SchoolsPlus (and collaborative models in general) more seriously, either in mandates or strategies. Accountability for tackling interdepartmental policies and protocols is still somewhat vague, but the CYSC is more engaged and the Better Health committee structure provides a vehicle. At the practical level, accountability down the line from top to bottom of the relevant departments and agencies needs to be spelled out in concrete expectations included in job descriptions and reporting formats (see section 8).

4.3.5 The role of the Child and Youth Strategy in achieving the success of SchoolsPlus.

As mentioned above, the CYSC adopted the role of province-wide interdepartmental committee for SchoolsPlus. It has worked on improving vertical information flow through the CYS structure which has been helpful to SchoolsPlus in addressing some broader issues in those regions where the distribution of SchoolsPlus sites fits well with the regional structure of the CYS. In the Halifax region, where the regional structures of all key stakeholders and the CYS are identical, much progress has been made in building SchoolsPlus priorities into the action plans of the four CYS departments and the municipal recreation department. The alignment of regional boundaries and the dedication of the individuals involved have shown what is possible in this respect.

The CYSC also highlighted and began considering working on one or two of the province-wide gaps and issues identified by SchoolsPlus, and has tackled the issues of horizontal working more

broadly in the collaborative service delivery approaches focus area. This group, chaired by the SchoolsPlus provincial coordinator, has recently completed its report, but the report has not been seen by the evaluation team.

4.3.6 Completing the common consent form and information-sharing guideline

A major milestone has been achieved with respect to information-sharing among service-providers. After much patient work over several years by the SchoolsPlus Coordinator and an interdepartmental committee, a common SchoolsPlus consent form for use by all four CYS departments, school boards and district health authorities has been adopted. The form enables a family to select the services with whom information may be shared, and to sign just one common consent form. Its use has already simplified the process of collaborative service delivery. The development of an information-sharing guideline by a seasoned former government lawyer working with the interdepartmental committee is in the final stages; it provides guidance on information-sharing based upon the principles of the FOIPOP legislation that allows people to understand their responsibility with regard to confidentiality without having to hand over to lawyers for answers or permission. The next steps will take place in fall/winter 2012-13 and will consist of a combined training and consultation process with users. The consultative process by which the work of developing and introducing the guideline has been undertaken has been important in increasing buy-in.

4.3.7 Establishing an interdepartmental policy working group to address issues such as mandates, policies, and rules, interdepartmental protocols and resource allocation.

A working group has not been set up but the higher profile of SchoolsPlus and the top level commitment to the model has helped in addressing some issues as noted above in various places in section 4. Further progress is still required and some form of interdepartmental policy group probably connected to the Better Health committee structure would be helpful.

4.3.8 Has there been evidence of improvements at the site level regarding systemic barriers?

A number of the broad systemic issues identified in year two and discussed above are still creating obstacles, with the exception of information-sharing where the new consent form is making collaboration easier, and the new mental health strategy. Some modest progress is noted with regard to some of the others:

- Varied departmental mandates and jurisdictional boundaries remain an obstacle.
- Wait lists still exist, although it is expected that the mental health wait lists will reduce with the hiring of the additional clinicians to be located in hub schools.
- Access to centralized services for low income families with limited support systems outside of Halifax remains limited although there have been some modest steps taken by services such as the IWK to reach out to more distant areas.
- Some improvements have been made with regard to providing space in schools for service-provision and programs.

- Some new attempts at resource-sharing at the regional level are being made with varying degrees of success in several SchoolsPlus sites.

4.3.9 Evolution in the role of SchoolsPlus Regional Advisory Committees (RACs)

> "This advisory committee has changed [its] culture in creating a strategic plan. It's harder, more work, effort, more action-oriented this year, more commitment …" (RAC member, 2012).

Among the established sites, the role of the RACs continues to evolve. Relationships and understanding of each others' roles are well established, and several of the RACs have become more focussed on *action* rather than *advice.* They are setting priorities and actively seeking solutions to gaps or problems, and exploring which agencies can allocate budget and in-kind resource towards the solutions. RAC members are starting to put one another on the spot more than before to come up with solutions, and this has in some cases increased energy, attendance and commitment, and in others it may have contributed to a drop in attendance. In addition, the expansion of SchoolsPlus and the increased commitment at the highest levels has improved attendance and active engagement from some departments and agencies.

Despite this progress there is still a way to go. Obstacles to progress identified by one RAC are:

- Financial and budget constraints
- Need for top down communication
- Key players not present, and unequal commitment (which is why a top down message is needed)

There is evidence of the awareness of the required culture shift that was referred to among senior government officials: *"SchoolsPlus is challenging all of us to re-envision how we best provide services ourselves."* Advice from one RAC member to any new SchoolsPlus site starting up is: *"Think outside of the box – who can contribute to what SchoolsPlus is trying to accomplish?"*

The benefits of seamless communication and consistent regional coverage across participating departments can be seen in the experience of the Halifax RAC/ CYS Regional Table. Members of this combined group tend to be at a level where they have some decision-making authority or are easily able to access the decision-makers in their own organizations. In year two, SchoolsPlus priorities and needs were built into the CYS Regional Table's priorities and work plan, and each organization around the table has articulated what they will do towards accomplishing the actions. During year three, sub-committees with additional participants from relevant organizations have been set up to develop and implement concrete action plans, and monitor progress. This has increased the sharing of ideas and information, built more relationships and increased collaborative activities and overall buy-in to the "culture of collaboration".

4.3.10 The impact of SchoolsPlus on the way services are delivered: the view of the service providers

In the online survey, 46% of those who had been involved in SchoolsPlus for one year or less and 58% of those with more than one year of involvement said they or their organization had

made changes in the way they deliver services as a result of SchoolsPlus. This suggests that with longer experience of collaboration greater change takes place. The types of changes include increased services and programs, increased engagement, increased capacity-building among service-providers, and greater efficacy of services and programs. Improved collaboration and communication were also frequently mentioned.

When asked if they had encountered barriers to collaboration, 61 % (57% last year) had not, while 28% (21% last year) said they had. The most frequently-cited barriers were restrictions due to their organization's mandate, rules or regulations, restrictions regarding information-sharing, and lack of human resources. This is a similar picture to last year's survey. It is expected that the information-sharing restrictions will diminish as the guidelines and training are provided in the fall/ winter of 2012-13.

The survey indicated overall a very positive response from the service-providers.

> "It is a wonderful program that should expand to all communities. It is the answer to many of the issues being faced by school aged children and youth and their families. It is supportive and strengths based and allows for flexibility to meet community needs. Great work is being accomplished!" (Service-provider, 2012)

5.0 FINDINGS: OUTCOMES (SUMMATIVE) EVALUATION

SP is intended to accomplish a wide range of outcomes, including improving access to and coordination of direct services for children, youth and families experiencing multiple challenges, as well as providing programs that will benefit all children and youth.

Outcomes are difficult to define and measure, especially for children and youth who are dealing with complex, multiple challenges. Positive outcomes may be measured in small steps, such as keeping a youth from dropping out of school, helping a family to provide a more supportive situation for their child, or helping a child develop improved social skills so that he or she can stay in the classroom and focus on learning. Outcomes may be achieved slowly over a period of years, and set-backs may occur: progress should not be expected to be linear. With many factors influencing a child's development and behaviour, it is also difficult to attribute an improvement or deterioration to a specific cause.

While recognizing the complexity and difficulty of defining or measuring outcomes, an attempt was made to gather data that would indicate in several ways how students were doing on some simple school-related measures covering academic achievement, attendance, disciplinary referrals and school attachment. Gathering the data had to be done manually and was collected by requiring that baseline data forms or surveys be completed by school staff or students. Work done in 2011-12 to incorporate all SP forms in TIENET, the province-wide information system for education, will ease the tasks of data-collection and analysis in future.

In year 2 of the evaluation an attempt was made to have data on these measures extracted manually from school records. This was not attempted in year 3 because with the lack of standardization of data among schools, grade levels and school boards, it was very difficult to obtain meaningful and comparable data sets for analysis. In one to two years' time, once the province-wide Student Information System is in use across the province, standard outcome measures for all students will be more readily accessible. In the meantime, despite some comments from school administrators about the extra work involved in completing baseline data forms, SchoolsPlus has insisted on consistent data-collection since year one.

The three types of data collected included different ranges of student coverage:

- Students receiving direct services through SP only: baseline data forms covered only students receiving direct services through SP.
- Students participating in SP-coordinated programs as well as those receiving direct SP services: the online survey of school administrators broadened the coverage to include students participating in programs as well as those receiving direct services.
- A representative sample of all students: the survey completed by students giving their perceptions of their own progress was completed by a representative sample of all students in 1-3 schools in each of six of the eight sites.

Measures used were:

- Baseline Data Forms, which provide a simple rating of students' academic performance, attendance, disciplinary issues and school attachment were completed for every student receiving direct services through SP on referral and in May 2012. 172 students' forms from all eight sites were analyzed.

- Survey of 65 school administrators and relevant staff: The online survey of school administrators and staff contained questions about their perception of the impact of SP on students' academic performance, attendance, discipline and attachment.

- Student surveys: surveys of a representative sample of students were conducted in six of the eight sites: 3 established sites and 3 new sites. The surveys gathered students' self-perceptions of their academic performance, attendance, disciplinary issues and school attachment, as well as their satisfaction ratings of SP programs and services. They were conducted in 1-3 schools per site, and included students from grades 6-12 (it was determined in the Year 2 evaluation that younger students were less able to complete the survey accurately). The samples covered approximately 25% of students per school, and included students who were not participating in SP programs and services as well as those who were. 1,213 student survey responses were analyzed, a much larger sample than in the previous year.

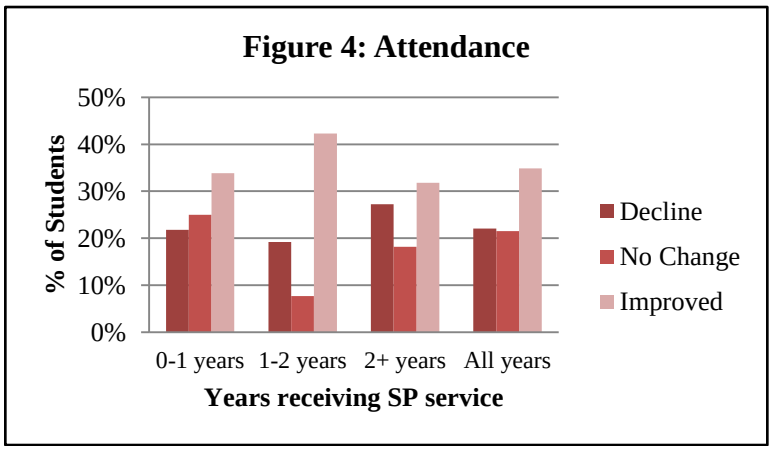
5.1 Students receiving direct services through SchoolsPlus

5.1.1 Baseline data forms

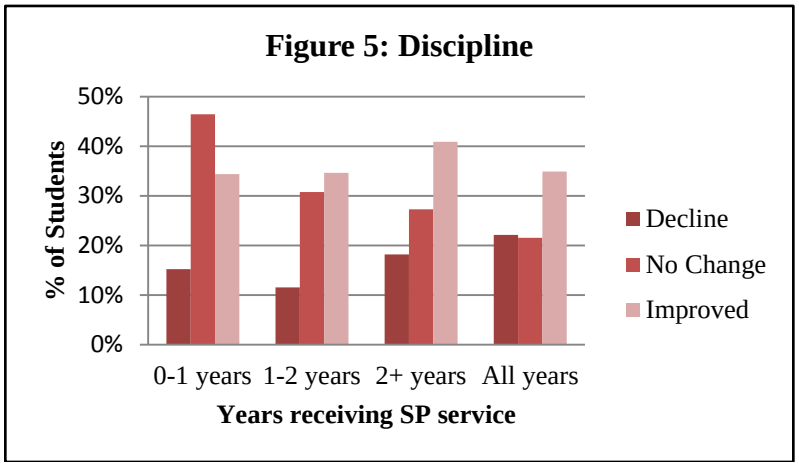
172 baseline data forms of *currently open* cases from all eight sites were analyzed. Of these, 124 (72%) covered students who had been receiving direct service for less than one year (from both new and established sites). There were 26 forms (15%) covering students who had been receiving service for 1-2 years, and 22 (13%) for students receiving service for more than 2 years.

Figures 4-8 below show the proportion of students who were reported as showing improvement, no change or decline on each of five measures. The results are shown by length of time the students have been receiving direct service, and all cases in total. Overall the picture is one of improvement, and it is similar to the results obtained in 2011. In general the number of students showing improvement is greater than the number showing no change or decline except on the measure of the school's perception of parental involvement with the school. Added to this is the fact that the most common reason for cases to be closed is that students have improved to the point where they no longer need individual service; these closed cases are not represented in the data analyzed here.

Among the currently open cases shown in Figures 4-8, on all measures except parental involvement with the school 30-45% of students showed improvement, although on the learning outcomes measure in the first year the majority of students showed no change, with the proportion showing improvement increasing among students receiving service for 2 or more years. On discipline, attendance and engagement a further 20-25% showed no change, while on all measures except parental involvement the proportion of cases showing declines was between 10% and 23%. On learning outcomes, engagement and to a lesser extent attendance, the proportion showing improvement increased among students receiving service for 2 or more years.



Notes:
1. Percentages do not add up to 100 due to incomplete data on some forms.
2. Figure includes currently open cases only: closed cases are not included. The most common reason cases are closed is student improvement.



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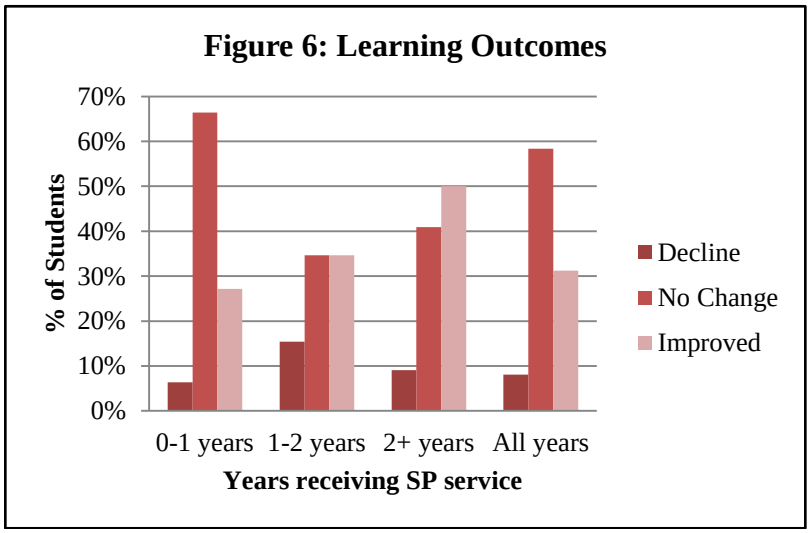
The most common reason cases are closed is student improvement.



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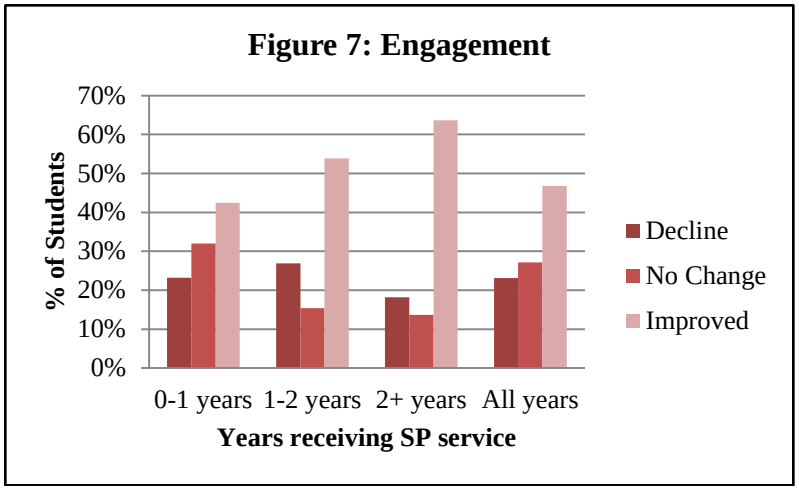

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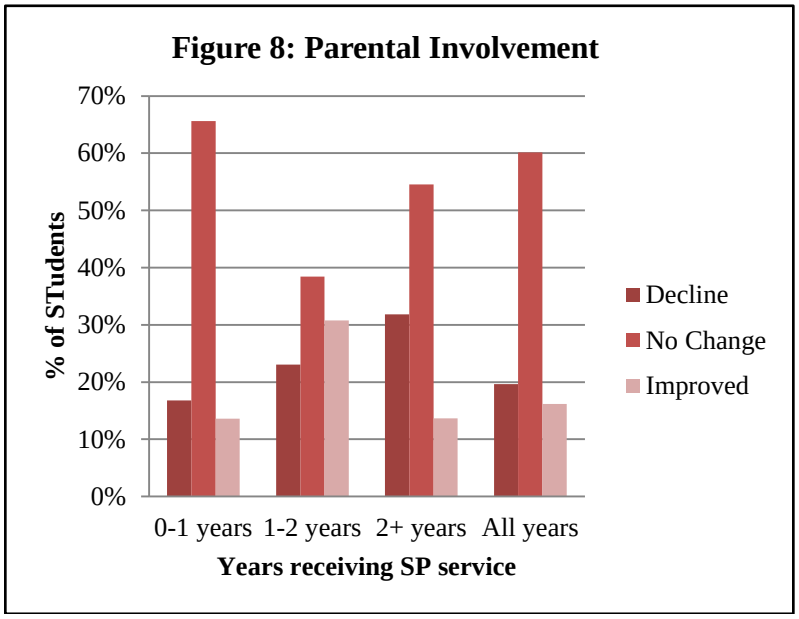
The most common reason cases are closed is student improvement.



Notes:
1. Percentages do not add up to 100 due to incomplete data on some forms.
2. Figure includes currently open cases only: closed cases are not included.
The most common reason cases are closed is student improvement.

5.1.2 Student surveys

In the survey, students were asked to indicate on a five-point scale how they were doing one year ago and how they are doing now on school work, social life, attendance and getting into trouble. They were also asked to rate the importance of school in their life one year ago and now. In the analysis below, the responses of students who said they had received direct service of any kind over the past two years through SP (even though ongoing SP case files may not have been opened for them) - "SP clients" - are contrasted with the rest of the school population (some of

whom would have participated in programs coordinated by SP). The results are divided into established and new sites, and two grade level categories: grades 6-8 and 9-12.

On three of the measures – social life at school, discipline ("getting into trouble") and the importance of school in their lives, there were fairly consistent patterns across the grade levels and the new and established sites. On the academic and attendance measures the results were more varied.

Amongst all students surveyed (SP clients and the rest of the students), their perceptions of their own progress were in general positive, although most students did not report improvements in their academic performance. SP clients reported the most progress with regard to discipline (where most of them caught up with the rest of the students' self-ratings) and the importance of school in their lives.

Importance of school in students' lives.

In all sites and grade categories, the percentage of students reporting that school is more important now than it was a year ago increased. It is noteworthy that SP clients rated school now as more important in their lives than the rest of the students did, and in most cases they noted a larger increase in its importance compared to a year ago than did the rest of the students. This larger increase is similar to last year's results, but what is new is that SP clients now rate school as more important than the rest of the students do. This may indicate that for these students, there are few sources of support other than through the school, and that SP is having an even more positive impact than last year on what is being provided to them at school.

Table 6: Importance of school in my life

	SP clients (459)		Rest of students (750)		
	Very or quite important a year ago	Very or quite important now	Very or quite important a year ago	Very or quite important now	Total no. of responses
Grades 9-12 Established sites	45%	64%	46%	57%	380
Grades 9-12 New sites	56%	69%	50%	60%	227
Grades 6-8 Established sites	59%	69%	45%	58%	392
Grades 6-8 New sites	52%	66%	49%	59%	210
All students	**52%**	**66%**	**49%**	**59%**	**1209**

Social life at school

In all sites and grade categories, the percentage of students reporting that their social life at school was good or excellent increased. There was little difference between SP clients and the rest of the students except in grades 9-12 in established sites where SP clients' levels were lower a year ago than those of the rest of the students but improved more, moving from 64% to 78% compared to the rest of the students whose ratings moved from 76% to 85%.

Amongst the other sites and grade categories, the percentages reporting good or excellent social life at school ranged between 67% and 82%.

Frequency of "getting in trouble" at school
In almost all sites and grade categories, the percentage of students reporting that they rarely or never got in trouble at school improved, and in three of the four groupings the SP clients caught up with the rest of the students.

In grades 9-12, the SP clients showed a greater improvement than the rest of the students, and caught up with the rest of the students' ratings from last year to this year: in established sites the SP clients' improvement was from 74% to 79%, and in the new sites it was from 60% to 77%. SP clients in grades 6-8 in established sites also caught up with the rest of the students (moving from 74% to 77%) with the rest of the students noting a slightly larger improvement (from 68% to 76%). In grades 6-8 in the new sites the picture was a little different: SP clients in grades 6-8 rated themselves at a lower level and with a smaller improvement (from 56% to 59%) than the rest of the students (from 62% to 71%).

School work
In grades 6-8 the percentage of students rating their school work as good or excellent ranged in general between 70% and 80%, with not much change between last year and now except for SP clients in established sites whose ratings increased from 71% to 84%, slightly higher than the rest of the students.

In grades 9-12 ratings were more modest, in the 54% - 68% range. Among most of the students there was a decline in the percentage of students rating their school work as good or excellent from last year to this year except among SP clients in new sites whose ratings showed an increase (from 56% to 66%) to a level higher than that of the rest of the students (whose ratings declined from 62% to 55%). In established sites the SP clients' ratings were lower than those of the rest of the students and both declined: SP clients from 60% to 54% and the rest of the students from 68% to 60%.

Attendance
In most sites and grade categories, the percentage of SP clients reporting that their attendance was good or excellent was lower than that of the rest of the students. The exception was grades 6-8 in established sites where both groups had very similar ratings with little change between last year and now (just under 80% self-rating attendance as good or excellent). In grades 6-8 in new sites, SP clients rated themselves lower and declining (from 75% to 67% rating good or excellent) while the rest of the students' self ratings increased slightly (from 78% to 81%).

In grades 9-12 in established sites the SP clients' good or excellent ratings stayed at 66% while the rest of the students' ratings were higher and declined slightly from 83% to 79%. In the new sites the pattern was a little different: while the rest of the students' self-ratings declined from 68% to 56%, the SP clients held their ratings almost constant (65% to 62%).

5.2 Students participating in SchoolsPlus- coordinated programs and services

The on-line survey of 65 school administrators and relevant staff contained questions about the impact of SP on students who had participated in SP-coordinated programs and services. This extends the assessment of the impact of SP on students to include a wider group: many students who were not receiving individual services (and a number who were) participated in group programs. Specifically the survey respondents were asked to rate the impact of SP on a five-point scale (from very negative to very positive impact) on those students':

- academic performance,
- attendance,
- school attachment,
- disciplinary referrals, suspensions and levels of conflict,
- family and parental involvement in school programs and activities

Roughly one third of the respondents felt they were not well enough informed to rate these impacts, and did not respond to some or all of these questions. Of the two thirds who did respond, the impacts were rated as overwhelmingly positive: between 88% and 95% rated the impact of SP on these students on the factors listed above as moderately or very positive (between 54% and 66% of all respondents, including those who did not respond to these specific questions).

The difference between the modest outcomes reported in the baseline data forms and the much more strongly positive impacts of SP indicated in this survey suggest that participation in programs is having a very positive effect on students. Both the baseline data forms and the online survey were recording the perceptions of the same group of people: school administrators and teachers. The results are also consistent with the comments made in interviews.

Comments from the survey included: *"Speaking with one student today who had a history of school refusal - his report card had grades of 80% today"*

"I have been a principal for 21 years and it [SP] is the most effective program I have seen introduced for those at risk other than the O-2 program."

6.0 IMPACT OF EVALUATION

In general, evaluation (especially those of a large scope and dedicated resources such as the present evaluation), is of great value to the developmental and implementation stages of a new model. Now that the evaluation is coming to an end, it is a suitable time to reflect on the impact of evaluation on the SchoolsPlus model. In interviews with SP Facilitators and Community Outreach Workers, the Provincial SP Coordinator and various individuals within the partnering departments, we captured their thoughts and observations.

6.1 Site Level

Facilitators in the **new sites** all commented on the usefulness of the initial evaluation visits to their sites. These visits included providing and orienting the Facilitators and Community Outreach Workers to a document sharing the lessons learned so far from across the province and presenting the RACs with a overview of SP, recommendations moving forward, and Outcome Mapping as a helpful tool.

"The lessons learned document was helpful as well as the initial meeting with the RAC. It was the first overview of SP they had had and it was helpful to hear what other sites have learned through the process."

"Having the concrete document of lessons learned has been useful. It presents what's been learned so far, what's going well and what to avoid. As different as each site is, it's a great resource for all of us."

"You confirm for us that it's all about relationships—that this is normal and is about building a strong foundation. This helps us to feel less stressed out and that it's a shared feeling across the sites. You've provided reassurance that growing pains are a natural part of the process."

Facilitators in the **established sites** see the impacts of evaluation as follows: communicating at the provincial level around province-wide gaps; helping the Facilitators improve their work and the model in their areas; steering the RACs towards realistic goal setting; and ensuring accountability at the site and provincial levels.

"[The evaluation] provides a neutral, knowledgeable voice about provincial gaps."

"*It holds us accountable and it's clear that evaluations are valued and recognized. It helps us improve and reflect upon our work."*

"The reports have been helpful reference points, especially in providing a provincial picture"

"The evaluation is a vehicle to voice and demonstrate the gaps—there is collective evidence and it opens up possibilities for recommendations—this has been huge."

"Outcome Mapping has made a tremendous impact on how people think of progress and success. I think we would have made less progress by now if we'd only been moving towards the "love to sees". Without having clear steps along the way, change is hard."

"The feedback provides the foundation for our work as an RAC moving forward."

6.2 System Level

The major impact of the evaluation at the system level has been to document and demonstrate the benefits of SchoolsPlus which has informed decisions made around SchoolsPlus, including its expansion province-wide. Presentations of the evaluation findings to senior levels of government

have also been helpful in raising awareness and stimulating discussion of the system-level issues and obstacles. A third impact has been that the interviews with senior officials have provided an opportunity for frank and confidential discussion of the system-level obstacles, and have in some cases prompted action.

7.0 CONCLUSIONS

7.1 How well has SchoolsPlus addressed the outcomes so far?

SP is a model designed to accomplish long term outcomes over a period of years. SP has existed for just over three years and the focus of the three years of evaluation has been to examine progress towards the intermediate (12-24 months) outcomes, rather than the long term (24-60 months) outcomes. Progress towards the SP outcomes is summarized in section 7.1.1 below.

Outcome Mapping was used throughout the three-year evaluation as a way of tracking progress in collaboration and systemic change. It breaks down the steps taken by all the SP partners into more detailed progress markers and is a useful way of measuring progress towards goals that of necessity can take years to reach. The rating of progress made is included in section 7.1.4.

7.1.1 Outcomes related to collaboration and partnerships

Intermediate

Improved inter-agency understanding and collaboration

- Good progress continues to be made at the established site level, and has got off to a good start in the new sites. In the established sites, collaboration is becoming more strategic and long term, such as partnering in the introduction of restorative practices and in some cases addressing priorities and gaps in a systematic and collaborative way, exploring shared resources and building priorities into regional or local work plans. Collaboration among partners is becoming a more common way to work for a number of service-providing organizations, particularly in running programs. In general, non-government and community-based organizations are able to adapt more quickly than government services.

- Widening the circle through increased communication and collaboration is taking place: the number of new programs and services continues to increase in established sites, and new sites have made an excellent start. With the expansion of SP and its much higher profile, awareness of SP has risen rapidly, and deeper understanding of SP continues to expand among community partners.

- It was noted last year that more commitment and support from regional and provincial levels of government departments is needed for deeper, more substantive collaboration to develop, but that progress was very slow. In year 3 progress at upper levels of

government towards integrated service delivery has noticeably moved forward (see section 7.2), although it is still a long journey ahead to the long term goal of fully integrated service delivery.

Improved access to services within the community

- Access to services continues to improve in established sites through the efforts of Facilitators and Community Outreach Workers bridging the gaps and facilitating access and increased service-provision in schools. Again, a good start has been made in the new sites. Even in service-rich Halifax, it is clear that the bridging and coordinating function of SP is vital to improving access, and it is even more important in non-metropolitan areas. In some cases however, access to services continues to be limited by the resources available to service-providers, and little change has been noted in this respect: where there were long waiting lists last year there are still long waiting lists. A hopeful sign is the announcement in 2012 of new mental health clinicians to be located in SP schools. Waiting lists for mental health services were among the most intractable.

- Rural and remote schools and communities have major challenges in accessing services due to the distance from regional service bases and transportation difficulties for youth and families, and with a few exceptions little has changed in the past year in this respect. SP continues to provide some resources and to coordinate volunteers to assist some youth to travel to where the services are located. Finding innovative and efficient ways to bring the services to where the youth and families are e.g. through delivery or co-location of services in schools remains a crucial issue.

- With the exception of the additional mental health clinicians, only very modest progress has been made in co-location of services in schools for a variety of reasons, although service-provision in schools has increased as more schools have provided suitable space for services-providers. To address the obstacles to full co-location will require willingness and commitment from more senior levels in school boards and regional and provincial levels of government departments. It is expected that as SP expands across the province (and across the service-providers' regions) and becomes the norm, it will become easier to address this.

More appropriate referrals

- More appropriate referrals continue to be made as a result of the involvement and expertise of the Facilitators and Community Outreach Workers. Service-providers in the new sites have welcomed this change as they experience SP for the first year.

Increased parental involvement and youth engagement

- Modest progress continues to be made in youth engagement, and in year three SP clients rated school as more important in their lives than did the rest of the student body. High levels of active participation by youth in programs and in consultation processes and leadership programs indicates interest in and potential for greater engagement. Parental

involvement continues to increase at a noticeably faster rate in schools where staffing ratios allow for Community Outreach Workers who can focus on only one or two schools.

Increased community awareness and use of programs and services

- There is an increase in awareness and use of programs and services in the schools and among parents and students, and service providers continue to become more aware of each other's services as they collaborate more. No attempt was made to assess awareness in the wider community, and ensuring that there is awareness of services and programs in the community at large is a responsibility of all service-providers. SP has participated in some collaborative events aimed at raising awareness in the community.

7.1.2 Outcomes related to direct services, and other outcomes

Intermediate

Improved school attendance and use of alternate models of credit recovery

- Improved attendance by SP clients is reported by school administrators, although it can take time for this to be achieved with some students. There are some schools where the use of alternate models of credit recovery has increased as a result of SP involvement.

Improved school achievement

- According to the baseline data forms and the responses to a survey of school administrators, there has been a modest improvement in the school achievement of SP clients. In future, as more school-wide programs such as Restorative Practices are introduced, measures of whole school populations should be taken, and this will become possible when the new Student Information System is introduced province-wide in the next year or two.

Reduced disciplinary referrals and suspensions

- According to the baseline data forms and the responses to a survey of school administrators, there has been a modest reduction in disciplinary referrals and suspensions among students receiving direct service, and a greater improvement was seen among the wider group participating in programs. School administrators frequently mentioned improvements as well, in some cases noting that the whole school atmosphere had changed. In future, as more programs such as Anger Management, MH-IN and Restorative Practices are introduced, measures of whole school populations should be tracked in the Student Information System.

Increased school attachment

- According to the baseline data forms, the survey of school administrators and the student survey, there has been an improvement in school attachment among SP clients. Parental engagement has improved most markedly in school where there is a Community Outreach Worker.

Provision of interim support services

- There continues to be an increase in the provision of interim support services through programs and students and families often refer to the feeling that with SP there is someone (Facilitator or Community Outreach Worker) who is advocating for and trying to help them. The positive impact of this has been noted by service-providers and school staff and administrators.

Increased range of services/ programs

- Over both years of the evaluation there has been a marked increase in the range of services and programs offered or made available, but this is more modest in the rural and remote schools where service provision is minimal. In rural regions it is a much more difficult process to either persuade/ facilitate the service-providers to come to the school or community, or to transport the youth and families long distances to the services (which is less effective than bringing the services to them).

Improved professional skills

- SP continues to collaborate with various program and service providers to make professional training available to a wider range of school staff and service-providers in their regions. This has improved skills, increased capacity and made it possible for more programs to be offered to children and families.

Improved personal/life skills

- As a result of SP, the number of programs offered in personal or life skills for youth and families has increased and they are being offered in a larger number of schools and community venues. The student surveys in a number of schools this year indicated that most of the students who had participated in these programs found them useful or very useful.

Long term

Reduced wait times for all appropriate services including mental health

- No measures of wait times were taken; it appears from case notes that wait times are still an issue for a number of services (particularly mental health although this is expected to be resolved in future when there will be more clinicians available), although SP

Facilitators and Community Outreach Workers can get faster service in some cases through building relationships with service-providers. They continue to arrange other supports such as programs for youth or families who are waiting for services, and in some cases these supports prove to be sufficient. It is hoped that the emphasis on early intervention and preventative programming will reduce the number of referrals in future. It would be helpful to track service-providers' data on wait times.

Improved rates of school readiness

- No data were gathered, but in schools where pre-primary programs are available the staff and administrators note that these programs make a big difference to children's ability to do well when they start school. Some sites were involved in pre-primary screening, recognizing the importance of families connecting to appropriate services prior to children beginning school.

Best practices embedded; problems prevented or avoided

- SP continues to collaborate to provide training and information on best practices, and in the survey of service providers it was noted by some that this had improved the quality and relevance of the programs they offered; in the long term this could have a major impact and this focus should be maintained.

7.2 System change and developing a culture of collaboration

After the apparently slow pace of change at the system level in years one and two, in year three a considerable amount of behind-the-scenes planning and decision-making bore fruit and a major shift in commitment to the model took place. This progress sent a clear message from top leadership, and the impact of this is beginning to ripple through the system.

The expansion of SP and commitment to province-wide coverage in the future has signalled a strong commitment to the SchoolsPlus model of collaborative service delivery. This has accelerated the response of many departments and programs: there is confidence that this model is continuing, is no longer in a pilot phase, and that it will expand across the province and will not be restricted to a few specific sites. Service-providers, schools and school boards can now plan to work with this model across the province.

Specific achievements in year three include the SchoolsPlus Common Consent Form and the development of the information-sharing guideline, the announcement in the Mental Health and Addictions Strategy to put mental health clinicians in SchoolsPlus families of schools in all school boards to identify and treat mental health problems of children and youth earlier, the SchoolsPlus alignment study by Community Services and the inclusion of SchoolsPlus in a number of other government documents.

This is very encouraging, but system change takes time and there is still a long way to go to implement fully the change to collaborative service delivery. SP has undoubtedly brought about improvements and should be justly proud of its accomplishments so far, but many of the gaps

identified previously are still not being addressed, and the service-providers still have difficulty in effectively working with families with multiple issues.

Progress will remain limited until practical ways are found to tackle the systemic issues one by one. The operational success of SP relies to a large extent on the relationship-building, information-sharing and goodwill in the sites. In the long run, without system change the potential savings to be gained from efficiencies and the benefits of early intervention and integrated service delivery will elude Nova Scotia.

The danger of not fully implementing system change and supporting the cultural shift towards collaborative working is that SP could simply be in effect an additional layer, cobbling together as best it can the separate and silo-based services of government and community groups around the needs of families. SP will also continue to risk being drawn in to fill gaps, in effect potentially becoming another service-provider, diverting scarce human and financial resources away from its true role as coordinator and facilitator.

The lessons being learned in other jurisdictions support the need presented here for systems change. Saskatchewan SP has articulated that in order to move forward they need "top down" support and enabling legislation. Toronto's Full Service Schools sees integrated policy and integrated funding among relevant Ministries as paramount to success.

7.3 Costs and benefits

The following reported impacts of SP are mentioned frequently by service-providers and schools, and are expected to have a bearing on overall system costs and benefits in the long term.

- Early intervention and capacity-building programs are expected to pay off in a reduction of referrals and interventions.
- Schools are beginning to notice reductions in discipline problems and suspensions. This brings benefits to all students in the school, not just those with the problems.
- Better school attendance by at-risk youth keeps them connected to a supportive environment and increases their chances of reaching better educational levels.
- Collaboration among services avoids duplication and is more effective.
- Appropriate referrals reduce wasted time and resources.
- Grant-providers can make better-informed decisions in allocating financial resources.
- Programs aimed at culture change across groups of schools (such as Restorative Practices, Friends For Life, Options to Anger) have the potential over time to achieve major improvements in discipline, suspensions, inclusiveness, school atmosphere, academic outcomes, and early identification and treatment of mental health issues.
- Students in some schools report a dramatic reduction in bullying, resulting in better attendance.

The costs of not continuing SP and of not addressing the systemic barriers to integrated service delivery are huge.

7.4 Outcome mapping progress markers

Outcome mapping distinguishes between a project's spheres of control, direct influence and indirect influence. In this respect, it enables the definition of a more graduated and realistic set of outcomes than can be expressed in the logic model developed for SP, in effect defining a series of intermediate outcome measures between the Outputs and the Outcomes columns in the logic model.

It defines the process outcomes as changes in the behaviour of the "boundary partners" – those organizations which SP attempts to influence and through whose actions or behaviour the outcomes will be achieved.

A graduated set of progress markers is defined for each boundary partner, describing the behaviour changes that the project would:

i) Expect to see: early positive responses
ii) Like to see: active engagement
iii) Love to see: deep transformation

These are defined jointly with the boundary partners, and can be used to track and make visible progress towards the goals.

The progress markers were identified by the SP Steering Committee and were discussed with the SP RACs in Years 1 and 2 of the evaluation. In Years 2 and 3, two of the RACs used the progress markers as a structure around which to set priorities and determine actions.

"Grades" indicting progress in accomplishing the progress markers were allocated in the Year 1 evaluation and these have been updated in this report, below.

SP Boundary Partners

The 4 Departments

Department of Community Services
(including: Child and Youth Strategy, Early Intervention, Income Assistance and Employment Support, Child Welfare, NS Housing Authority, Family Resource Centre, Parenting Journey, Services for Persons with Disabilities)

Department of Health and Wellness
(including: Mental Health, Public Health, Addiction Services, Sport, Physical Activity & Recreation, Youth Health Centres, Health Promoting Schools, Early Childhood, IWK, Community Health Boards)

Department of Education
(including: School Boards, African Canadian Services, Student Services, Health Promoting Schools, Mi'kmaq Liaison Office, Early Learning, Race Relations, Cross-Cultural Understanding and Human Rights)

Department of Justice
(including: RCMP, Restorative Justice, Municipal Police, Probation, Youth Court, NS Youth Facility, Crime Prevention)

Other Government Departments and Agencies (Federal, Provincial, Municipal)

Recreation
Department of Labour and Workforce Development
Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women
Community Counts
Service Canada

Other Boundary Partners

Including but not limited to: Child and Youth Strategy Regional Committees, Black Educators Association, First Nations Communities, Family Services of Eastern Nova Scotia, Dreams Take Flight, Pre Primary Programs (e.g. School Transition Entry Program, Early Learning Opportunities), St Francis Xavier University, Dalhousie University, NSCC, Youth Advocate Program, NS Council for the Family, Margaret and Wallace McCain Foundation, APSEA, Nicodemus Project, Empire House, 811, Career Resource Centre, Big Brothers Big Sisters, YMCA, Heartwood

Progress Markers

Progress markers measure changes in boundary partners' behaviour or actions over time that contribute towards the accomplishment of the outcomes of the SP model. They are not ratings of SP itself. Many of the progress markers are tied to the accomplishment of systemic change, and are outside the powers of the SP RACs to accomplish. These are shaded in grey in the tables below. The ratings given below for the "Expect to See" category are, naturally, somewhat more positive than those for the "Like to See" category which indicate further progression toward the ultimate goals of SP. The ratings for the "Love to See" category which are further in the future and represent the fruition of genuine systemic transformation are all at the bottom grade this year except for one: Agreement on interdepartmental information sharing, where a breakthrough was achieved in year three.

The grades below are average grades across all the boundary partners for the established sites. It was felt that it was too early in their first year to give grades to the new sites, although baseline grades have been developed for them and discussed with the RACs. To use this tool fully, each boundary partner would agree to a specific set of progress markers appropriate for them, and progress would be tracked for each partner separately. It is suggested that the boundary partners

consider undertaking this either through the RACs or the CYSC. Several RACs have also developed their own regional grading, to track their own progress and determine priorities.

The grades indicate the following:

A Extensive evidence of behaviour aligned with the SP Project Charter
B Consistent evidence of behaviour aligned with the SP Project Charter
C Some evidence of behaviour aligned with the SP Project Charter
D Little evidence of behaviour aligned with the SP Project Charter
E No evidence of behaviour aligned with the SP Project Charter

ESTABLISHED SITES

Expect to see [Early positive responses]

Progress marker	Bound-ary partners	NS Progress Year 1 A-E	NS Progress Year 2 A-E	NS Progress Year 3 A-E	Comments
Attending SP Advisory Committee meetings	All	B	B+	B+	
Attending case-specific meetings for Comprehensive Service Plans	All	C	B	B	
Identifying gaps in services	All	A	A	A+	
Communicating SP objectives and information to own department, organization	All	D	C	B	Progress at site and top levels.
Sharing service/resource information	All	A	A	A	
Conferencing innovative service solutions	All	C	B	B+	
Collaborating around cost sharing/accessing alternative funding sources	4 Depts.	B	A	A	
Providing joint training opportunities	All	A	A+	A+	
Signing off on Policy/Project Charter (systemic)	DoE/DCS	A	A	A	
Discussing Pre Primary program supports (Early Years)	DCS/ DoE/ H&W/ other	C	C	B-	
School administrators demonstrating flexibility in expectations around use of schools, policies and programming for youth	Schools / school boards	B	A	A	Changes are happening more in some schools than others
Accountability for school administrators in contextualizing a youth's situation	School boards, Dept of Education	B	B	B	Progress is being made in some schools

Like to see [Active engagement]

Progress marker	Bound-ary partners	NS Progress Year 1 A-E	NS Progress Year 2 A-E	NS Progress Year 3 A-E	Comments
Being flexible in their mandates and resource allocation in response to gaps	4 Depts	C	C	B -	
Increasing shared resources; planning for this in budgets	4 Depts	C	C	B -	It is taking place piecemeal, at site level
Providing programs beyond the school day (resource allocation issue)	4 Depts	C	B	A -	
Expanding services	All	D	C	B	In some areas
Offering services in schools	All	C	B	A -	In some schools, based upon relationships rather than organizational policy
Co-locating in schools for flexible service delivery	4 Depts	D	D	C+	E.g. Mental Health clinicians to be located in SP hub schools
Agreeing upon interdepartmental information sharing	4 Depts	C	B	A	Significant progress made in year three.
Forming an inter-departmental policy working committee	4 Depts	C	C	C+	Can apply at both system and site levels
Sharing training, professional development and capacity building	All	A	A	A	
Realigning goals, priorities and working procedures at the regional level in response to gaps	4 Depts	D	C	C +	Great progress in one region
SP in business plans/ statements of mandate	All	D	C	B	
Existing pre-primary programs to be taken on by one or more boundary partners and be sustainably delivered in schools	DCS/ DoE/ H&W/ other	C	C	C+	Sustained funding for STEP
Policy/Project Charter signed by more Depts. (systemic)	4 Depts	E	E	C+	Expansion of SP
Incorporating SP design requirements into all planned and anticipated new school construction	DoE/ school boards	E	D	B	Happening in several school boards

Love to see [Deep transformation]

Progress marker	Bound-ary partners	NS Progress Year 1 A-E	NS Progress Year 2 A-E	NS Progress Year 3 A-E	Comments
Transforming policies to support integrated service delivery in a real and sustainable way	4 Depts.		E	**E**	
The information-sharing protocol is being followed	4 Depts.		E	**B**	Major progress made during year three and is almost completed.
Changing policies and principles re. prevention and protection	4 Depts.		E	**E**	
Collaborative co-location is a daily ongoing process	All		E	**E**	
Providing holistic, seamless service delivery	All		E	**E**	
Building space into each department budget for interdepartmental collaboration, and resource reallocation	4 Depts.		E	**E**	
Community and agencies working seamlessly together on Policy/ Project Charter items (systemic)	All		E	**E**	
All communities have at least one school that offers a pre-primary program	All		E	**E**	

8.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1 At the system level

8.1.1 Accountability for success

There has been considerable progress at the system level in year three. To continue the momentum towards effective, broadly collaborative models of operation as exemplified by SchoolsPlus, concrete and practical ways of building accountability for success need to be built into the system at all levels. Recommendations 1-2 address this.

Recommendation 1

Maintain a balance between the benefits and limitations of having one department clearly accountable (Education) for the success of SchoolsPlus, and the necessary sense of interdepartmental ownership through the Better Health structure. Ensure that SchoolsPlus has a formal, direct link to the Better Health structure, whether it be through the CYSC or some other

mechanism. This is especially important since SchoolsPlus is widely regarded as having government-wide significance as a useful, practical model of horizontal government.

Recommendation 2

Build accountability for the success of SchoolsPlus into each of the Departments engaged with SchoolsPlus through top-to-bottom mechanisms, for example:

- Statements of Mandate, mandate letters, job descriptions and the definition of performance indicators, evidence and markers of success at appropriate levels.
- Templates, frameworks and tools to support decision-making.
- Where appropriate, create accountability frameworks (for example in relation to funding for third party organizations such as school boards, health authorities and service-delivery agencies).
- Clearly articulate accountability for effectively addressing the needs of children, youth and families in mechanisms such as these.

Address horizontal accountability through mechanisms such as:

- Having staff accountable to supervisors for meeting their horizontal peers' expectations for collaboration.
- Undertaking SchoolsPlus alignment studies like the one undertaken by Community Services.
- Signing partnership agreements between regional agencies such as District Health Authorities and School Boards to undertake specific joint actions.
- Taking as a model the Halifax SchoolsPlus RAC's response to defined priorities of needs (building actions into the work plans of partner organizations) and exploring ways of undertaking a similar process at the province-wide level.

8.1.2 Create a Culture of Collaboration

The SchoolsPlus model requires making a cultural shift from vertical accountability towards a truly collaborative and integrated approach to service-delivery and priority-setting. This fundamental revision of the way of working can be challenging for everyone involved, and support for new ways of thinking and working, and for the development of new skills needs to be provided. Recommendations 3-5 address this need.

Recommendation 3

The Better Health Deputy Ministers should bring together the leadership of the CYS departments, the School Board Superintendents and DHA CEOs for a seminar that focuses on innovative ways in which the SchoolsPlus collaborative model can be developed.

Recommendation 4

Support individuals to develop inter-departmental working skills and inter-professional service-provision on an ongoing and regularly renewed basis to keep up with pace of change. Suggestions include:

- Provide targeted funding for inter-professional training in collaborative service-provision to support SchoolsPlus.
- Create a learning community through training and modeling collaborative working methods.
- Provide recognition and reward for working creatively to find ways to collaborate.
- Celebrate and share stories of success widely.

Recommendation 5

Learn from what makes SP successful at the site level: champions, facilitation, relationship-building and communication, and apply these lessons at the senior, systemic levels. Start by identifying and empowering champions, especially at the top.

8.1.3 Identify more specific actions to address gaps in services

While province-wide gaps in services and programs have been identified and discussed, in order for more specific actions and responsibilities for tackling them to be identified, it is necessary to undertake more detailed analysis to define more finely-grained actions to address gaps and improve effectiveness. Recommendation 6 addresses this.

Recommendation 6

Addressing many of the gaps will not clearly fall within the mandate of just one department or agency, but will require changes among two or more providers. Undertake focussed analyses such that each CYS department can clearly understand the causes of the service gaps, and identify specific actions they should take towards addressing them, and the benefits to be gained by addressing them. The School Boards and DHAs could also participate in this kind of analysis. Suggestions include:

- The other service-providing departments should undertake a SchoolsPlus alignment study similar to the one conducted by Community Services.
- Take a number of complex SchoolsPlus cases and analyze each department's role, looking at the cases through the lens of each department.
- Take one or more of the identified gaps or issues (such as early intervention or youth housing issues) and examine them in a similar way, examining each department's role in a number of cases.
- Have the Better Health departments assess themselves along a continuum, for example, from early intervention to crisis response. Map the departments, then the non-governmental service-providers and undertake a comparative analysis against the types of issues and gaps SchoolsPlus is dealing with.

8.2. At the SchoolsPlus provincial level

8.2.1 Support the model as it expands

Recognize that collaboration requires adequate facilitation and coordination, and that investing in support for the model as it expands will be repaid in effectiveness and efficiency and better results for children, youth and families. Dilution is a false economy. Recommendations 7-9 address this.

Recommendation 7

Consider the level of support required at the provincial layer of SP to sustain the integrity of the model as it expands. A modest investment in additional administrative support is recommended. At a minimum, define some specific deliverables to address administrative and communication needs that can be achieved via a contract.

Recommendation 8

The collaborative model exemplified by SchoolsPlus is new and relatively unfamiliar, and requires a culture change for many organizations. With the expansion of SchoolsPlus, orientation needs to be made available to a widening number of staff in a sustainable way: there will be very little capacity to brief new personnel informally or one-on-one. Flexible and responsive ongoing orientation and support is provided through the extremely valuable monthly Steering Committee meetings for all SP Facilitators, and this needs to continue. While a lot has already been done to develop materials and provide orientation, with several years' of operation it is now possible to formalize some key principles and practices. Create a plan for orientation that builds upon, formalizes and extends previous actions and materials, and have well-organized, easily-delivered and easy-to-understand orientation, training and communication materials developed for the following groups:

- New SchoolsPlus staff (Facilitators and Community Outreach Workers)
- School board supervisors of SchoolsPlus staff and other relevant personnel such as guidance counsellors and psychologists
- School administrators
- Regional Advisory Committee members and other service providers who will be working with SchoolsPlus

Recommendation 9

Ensure that realistic expectations are in place around the appropriate ratio of SP staff to schools and youth, and avoid dilution of staff ratios as SchoolsPlus expands. In general no more than 20-30 active cases can be handled at any one time by a Facilitator or Outreach Worker in addition to their coordination and programming activities.

8.2.2 Knowledge transfer and capacity building

The monthly SchoolsPlus Steering Committee meetings provide an invaluable and effective knowledge-transfer conduit for SchoolsPlus Facilitators, and RACs provide within-site communication among service-providers. However currently most of the other knowledge transfer happening between the wider group of SP actors (school principals, SP Community Outreach Workers, service-providers) at the provincial level, new sites, established sites and the school boards is occurring informally.

Recommendation 10

In addition to the orientation sessions and materials outlined above, ensure that knowledge transfer and capacity-building opportunities continue to be developed, balancing the need to keep SP organic in its development while providing structure and support, and capturing and communicating the lessons learned.

Suggestions on how to approach this include:

- An opportunity for school administrators to gather from around the province to discuss SP best practices.
- SchoolsPlus Facilitators should encourage and facilitate networking between sites among Community Outreach Workers; attendance at one or two Provincial Steering Committee meetings per year would be extremely helpful for the Community Outreach Workers
- Continue to build SchoolsPlus staff capacity to enhance collaboration (e.g. facilitation skills)

8.3 School Boards

Recommendation 11

School Boards have a crucial role in ensuring the smooth and successful introduction and operation of SP. Recommended actions include:

- Prepare the way before SP starts—provide school administrators and staff with an orientation to SP, including clarity around roles and responsibilities, where SP fits in the schools' "ecosystem" etc.
- Provide a private space for SchoolsPlus to use in each of the SP schools (as well as the hub site).
- Ensure that realistic expectations are in place around appropriate ratios of SP staff to schools and youth.
- Post job openings widely to ensure that a good selection of appropriately skilled and experienced candidates may apply.
- Hire new SP Facilitators early in the summer so that they can establish themselves in the hub school, attend orientation in August and prepare for the school year.

8.4. Making RACs more effective

These comments from the year two evaluation report still apply and bear repeating as SchoolsPlus expands. The RACs naturally progress from primarily relationship-building and information-sharing bodies to committees that take collective action, collaboratively problem-solve and engage in strategic planning.

It is a testament to the work of the members and Facilitators that the RACs are evolving towards "Regional Action Committees". Taking steps to formalize this process will further support RACs at all stages of their development.

1. **New RACs should focus primarily on relationship building and information-sharing.**

   Intentionally supporting RACs in the development of a coherent, shared sense of purpose will establish and strengthen relationships as well as promote shared accountability and ownership.

   Spend time sharing with the new RACs the purpose and objectives of an integrated service delivery model and SP as a particular interpretation of this. Share lessons learned, stories and information about models that have been implemented in other jurisdictions.

2. **Once an RAC is established, implement an annual planning cycle.**

   Once RACs establish relationships and members understand each other's roles and scope of work, conducting a strategic visioning process will serve to further enhance their effectiveness. It is suggested that each year RACs undergo the process of developing priorities, creating action plans and committing to next steps. As part of this annual planning cycle, committee members could be involved in the developing of the SP budget (some "mature" RACs are already doing this). Establishing an annual planning cycle will empower members and encourage them in the sharing of resources and in taking collective responsibility.

3. **RACs should take responsibility in communicating and following up on barriers and gaps that cannot be addressed at the regional level.**

   When barriers to collaboration or gaps in services arise that cannot be addressed at the regional level, RACs should investigate where the message should be passed up (either through CYS, individual departments or both).When a barrier or gap is passed along, the RAC should commit to following up at regular intervals with the body they have sent the information to.

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Detailed Background to SchoolsPlus

Nunn Commission Recommendations

The Nunn Commission made a number of recommendations specific to education and the development of a strategy for children and youth. *Our Kids are Worth It – Strategy for Children and Youth* sets out a comprehensive vision to ensure that children and youth are healthy, safe, nurtured and responsible and are given the right opportunities to be the best they can be. The draft Logic Model for the CYS that was developed in collaboration with the Nova Scotia Health Research Foundation includes the activities, target population, outputs, intermediate and long-term outcomes for the strategy. The long term outcomes include:

- Fewer children are living in low-income families
- Higher percentage of youth getting appropriate level of physical activity
- Improved rates of school readiness
- Lower drop-out rate
- More youth volunteering
- Fewer youth involved in crime
- Reduced wait times for appropriate mental health services
- Reduced rates of youth homelessness

SP Model Description

SP is an inter-agency approach where schools become centres of service delivery. This enables enhanced collaboration and brings professionals and programs together to help children, youth and families in a welcoming, accessible place. (Our Kids Are Worth It, 2007, p. 36).

SP promotes the co-location and/or partnership of services within a school such as: Community Services, Justice, Mental Health, Addiction Services, Health and other community organizations. SP is characterized by: a comprehensive, collaborative seamless delivery of services, sharing of information and resources between agencies, timely and effective services and service beyond the school day. The unique needs of each community will be respected and addressed by the services provided.

Each SP site has a SP facilitator who is the liaison and link between the school and the community. Each site has a SP Advisory Committee with representation from government departments (Department of Education, Community Services, Justice, and Health and Wellness), the CYS and community organizations. The purpose of the committee is to enhance and expand the array of services and programs for children, youth and their families.

The SP Coordinator was hired by the Department of Education in October 2008 to assist the four initial school boards in establishing SP sites and providing support and supervision to them. The role includes three aspects – coordination and support within SP, links between SP and the rest

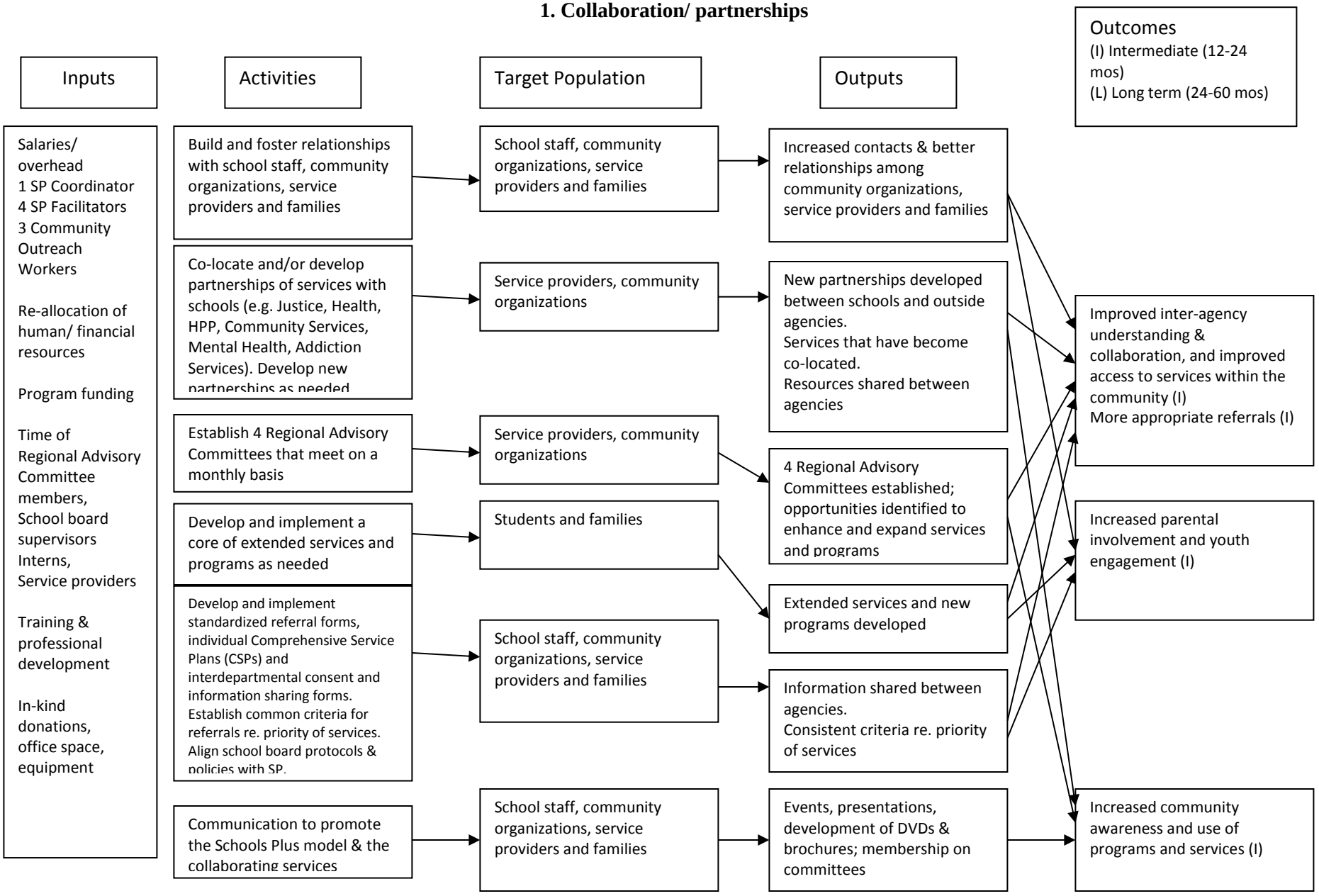
of government, and links with similar models in other jurisdictions. The role of the SP Coordinator is crucial to the success of SP. In hiring a social worker rather than an educator to fill this role the Department of Education has modeled a collaborative approach to SP: the current Coordinator is one of very few non-educators among the professional staff of the Department. The Coordinator also models collaboration in the way she deals with the many partner organizations including the school boards, the four key departments and the other organizations involved in or collaborating with SP.

Similarly, the roles of the SP Facilitators and Community Outreach Workers at the sites are essential to the success of the model. They coordinate services, programs and activities at the site level and build relationships with and among families, students, school staff, the school board, service-providers and community organizations.

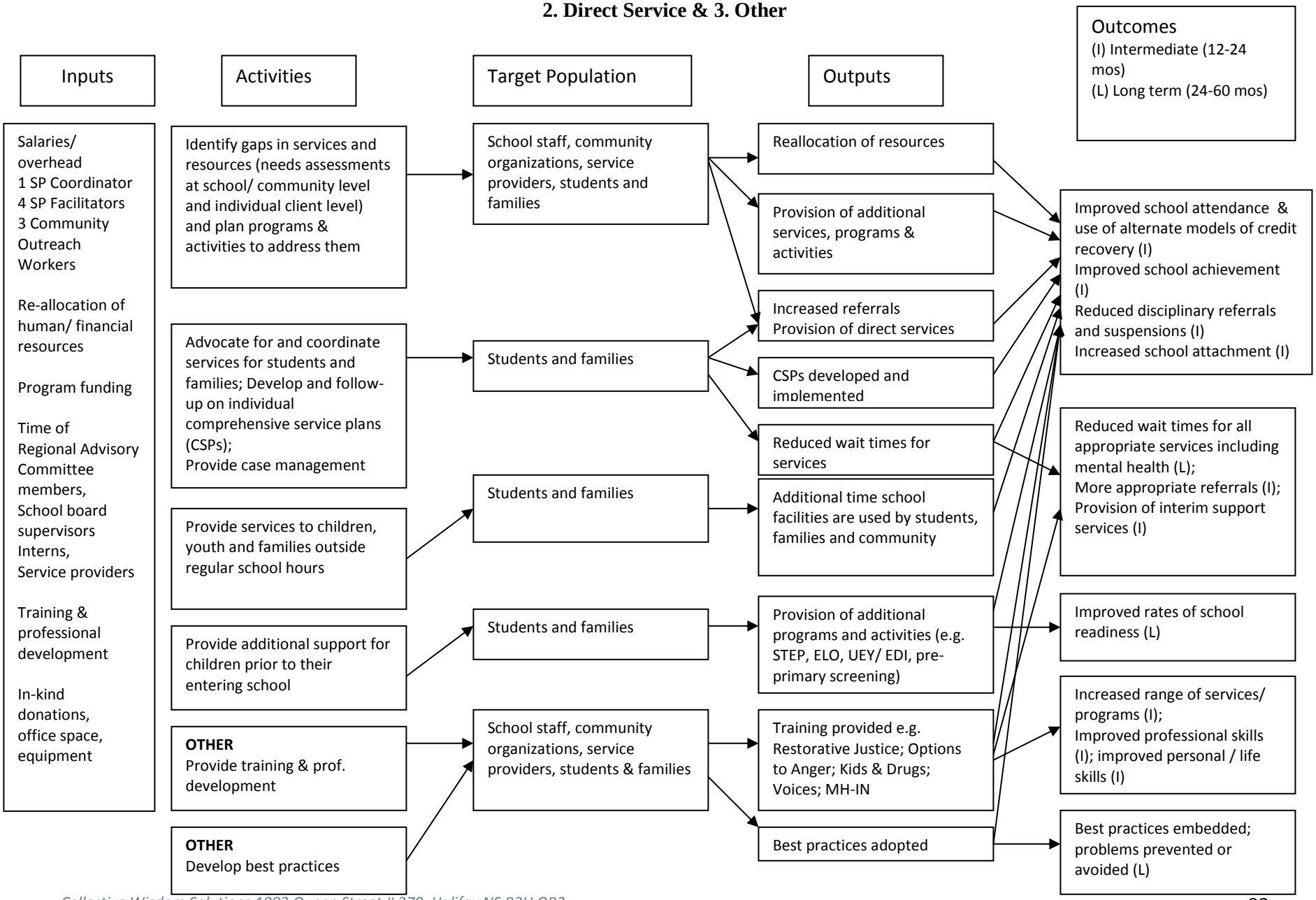
A provincial SP Steering Committee has been established and meets monthly. The committee membership includes: SP Coordinator, the SP Facilitators and their school board supervisor.

Appendix B: SchoolsPlus Logic Model

1. Collaboration/ partnerships



2. Direct Service & 3. Other



Appendix C: Literature Review

The following literature review surveys a number of comparable jurisdictions where an integrated service delivery model has been implemented or will be implemented in the near future. The scope of each model is discussed along with the lessons they are learning. The models presented include: Full Services Schools (Toronto), The Coalition of Community Schools (United States), Full Service Extended Schools (UK), SchoolPlus (Saskatchewan) and the recently unveiled Integrated Service Delivery model for New Brunswick.

Full Service Schools (Toronto)

As defined by the Toronto District School Board (TDSB), a Full Service School "is the coordinated delivery of education, health, prevention and social services designed to improve the quality of life for students, families and communities" (TDSB, 2010, p.1). The programs and services may be located inside an operational school or in the community, based on the availability of the service. The framework recognizes the diversity of its schools and communities; each school may look different in its approach to providing programs and services. The goal for a Full Service model is integrated policy and integrated funding among relevant Ministries that will support all schools to be full service schools and vibrant hubs of the community (TDSB, 2010).

While no Full Service schools are in operation as of yet, the TDSB has been diligently researching other existing models and refining an approach that will be implemented in 2011. A Steering Committee has met regularly since November 2009 to identify existing programs, services and partnership opportunities. Membership on that committee includes several Board departments, three Ministries, Community and Mental Health Agencies, Toronto Public Health, City of Toronto, United Way, and Trustees (TDSB, 2010). The TDSB has identified that "in implementing a successful integrated service delivery model, there is a need for a process and structure that involves different levels and departments of government working together with local communities" (Dandy, 2009, p.1).

Sixteen sites have been selected based on criteria that take into account community needs, current services within the schools and partnership readiness. The next year will be spent engaging stakeholders in building an ecosystem around the selected schools.
The TDSB intends to evaluation the success of the Full Services Schools model they are implementing by the following criteria (TDSB, 2010):

- Improved service to schools should support student success. This can be measured through existing data sources: student achievement, suspension rates, attendance, surveys etc.
- Improved access to schools should also be measured: parent involvement, community participation, perception surveys to identify community interest and satisfaction.
- Interagency collaboration at the community level leading to a formalized provincial process. The development of a shared, integrated plan of action for Ministries (Health, Education, Child/Youth Services, etc) to support children and communities.

Coalition for Community Schools (United States)

The Coalition for Community Schools is an alliance of around 160 national, state and local organizations representing community development, education, family support and human services, government, health and mental services, policy, training and advocacy, philanthropy and school facilities planning and youth development organizations, as well as national networks of community schools.

The Coalition for Community Schools identifies five areas for program and service development in community schools including: quality educational services, youth-development programs, family support activities, family and community engagement and community development. Because community schools typically arise as unique responses to the specific needs of their communities, no two are exactly alike (Making the Difference, 2003, p.2).

In a comprehensive report and evaluation published in 2003 entitled *Making the Difference: Research and Practice in Community Schools*, an evaluation of 20 community school initiatives across the United States demonstrated improvements in the following areas:

- **Student learning.** Community school students show significant and widely evident gains in academic achievement and in essential areas of nonacademic development
- **Family engagement.** Families of community school students show increased stability, communication with teachers and school involvement. Parents demonstrate a greater sense of responsibility for their children's learning success.
- **School effectiveness.** Community schools enjoy stronger parent-teacher relationships, increased teacher satisfaction, a more positive school environment and greater community support.
- **Community vitality.** Community schools promote better use of school buildings and their neighborhoods enjoy increased security, heightened community pride, and better rapport among students and residents.

What They're Learning

A number of lessons have been learned through the community school experience to date, and these can be summarized as follows (Spence, 2009, 10-11):

- **Attendance matters.** Higher attendance in community schools contributes to improved achievement. Children in community schools want to come to school, and so they learn more.
- **Everyone benefits – the neediest most of all.** Students in the greatest need – those most likely to be in low-performing schools – benefit the most from the community schools environment. Community schools that reach out to low-income and underachieving students can begin to narrow the performance gap among student groups and across schools.

- **Build consensus and partnership.** Extending learning time at a school through programs such as tutoring in reading, homework centres, mentoring, or drug prevention will require collaboration among diverse partners. Not only parents and educators, but also community residents, service providers, and public officials will need — and want — to be involved in the process. Programs should draw on all of the community's resources while also addressing the concerns of all who are affected as partners.

- **Conduct a community assessment of needs and resources.** A community assessment helps a partnership turn a shared vision for continuous learning and safety into strategies that use resources efficiently to address local conditions. Assessment information can come from interviews, surveys, focus groups, and community forums. All local stakeholders can contribute to the process so that the resulting strategies address real concerns and consider all possible resources.

- **Design programs with care.** Successful partnerships have concluded that every school and community must choose its own combination of opportunities to address local conditions and concerns. Nevertheless, effective programs establish vision and focus, address needs in an appropriate manner, coordinate efforts, and from the beginning create a system of accountability.

- **Consider the details.** School governance, liability, and building-maintenance issues are paramount in making a community school work. Strong leadership, collaborative decision making, and a clear understanding of management and organization procedures and policies such as liability, along with managed, mutually acceptable arrangements for physical space, are critical elements of successful programs.

- **Provide effective staff.** Staff for after-school or summer learning can come from the school, a partner agency, or the community, but should have appropriate experience, realistic expectations, and a true interest in caring for children. Paid professionals and teachers can be supplemented with volunteers and parents.

- **Evaluate a program's accomplishments.** Community school programs are by nature complex and, no matter how well designed, will evolve through experience. Continuous monitoring of a program's progress — in addition to a shared understanding of its goals — can help leaders and staff maintain their focus, improve effectiveness and accountability, ensure parent and participant satisfaction, and identify changes that need to be made. Continuous monitoring allows a program's director to assess whether its key features are working as intended, and helps the program to improve.

Full Service Extended Schools (UK)

The Full Service Extended Schools (FSES) initiative was launched by the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) in 2003. The aim was to support the development in every local authority (LA) area of one or more schools which provide a comprehensive range of services, including access to health services, adult learning and community activities as well as study support and childcare. Local FSES projects received funding from DfES, and came on stream in

each of three successive years starting with schools in low income areas. Each site was given progressively less funding over the three years (Cummings et al., 2007).

National guidance to FSESs outlined a range of activities in which they might engage, and indicated a host of outcomes and benefits that might ensue. However, it did not set out a blueprint of what a FSES should do, nor did it identify one sort of outcome that should take precedence over all others. This gave local FSES projects considerable freedom to work in ways which suited local conditions, but also left them with much work to do to clarify their aims and set their priorities (Cummings et al. 2007).

In 2007 a study run by Newcastle University and the University of Manchester found that full-service extended schools had a positive impact on the attainment of pupils. They also found that these schools improved engagement with learning and family stability, and that they enhanced life chances for families and local people and generated positive outcomes for them.

In 2010 over 8000 schools – one in three – are now provided access to extend services in partnership with voluntary, private and independent providers. The goal is to extend services into all schools by 2015.

What They're Learning

- **A leadership team is crucial.** The FSES approach makes significant demands on and posed significant challenges for schools. These are in terms of managing FSES provision alongside all the other demands on leadership teams, establishing productive partnerships with other agencies and providers, and finding ways of making provision sustainable.
- **Local conditions take priority**. Schools should be given considerable flexibility to develop approaches to match their own circumstances. In practice, there has been a convergence around a focus on outcomes for students, and a more holistic focus on students in the context of families and communities.
- **Seeing positive outcomes.** The outcomes from FSESs have been positive in terms of impacts on students' attainment, personal, social and health outcomes for young people, family stability, community well-being and school performance. These effects have been strongest for children, young people and adults facing difficulties.

SchoolPlus (Saskatchewan)

From 1999-2001 the Task Force on the Role of the School undertook a public dialogue focusing on the changing role of schools. From this process the Task Force recommended a new approach called SchoolPlus.
This particular IDS model focuses on the school as the centre of its community and the hub of services and supports for the neighbourhood it services. Under this model schools not only educate children and youth but also serve as centres for the delivery of appropriate social, health, recreation, culture, justice and other services for children and their families.

The model seeks to achieve the following (Tymchak, 2010):

- avoid children and youth "falling between the cracks"

- avoid duplication amongst services agencies, staff and programs
- create collaborative methods amongst the services to maximize shared resources and understanding
- better adapt services to needs through consultation, reflection and review

Working together are the provincial government departments of Community Resources and Employment; Corrections and Public Safety; Culture, Youth and Recreation; Government Relations and Aboriginal Affairs; Health; Justice and Learning (Saskatchewan Government, 2008).

What they're Learning

- S**choolPlus is a "greenprint".** It is organic, adaptive and responsive to its environment. It is not inevitable but needs to be cultivated through supported collaboration.
- **Coordination is necessary.** A coordinator is needed who promotes community connections, coordinates programs, connects with families, supports inter-agency collaboration and identifies needs. SchoolPlus had identified two kinds of positions and skill sets needed 1. Community Facilitator (non-professional) and 2. an Inter-Agency Coordinator (Social Worker, Health Care Worker or Teacher).
- **Regional Advisory Committees are required.** Inter-Agency Advisory Committees are needed in each area or region.
- **Needs "top down" support.** And integrated service delivery model needs support within government which seeks to bridge departmental silos and mandates.
- **Requires enabling legislation.** Every department needs to identify and prioritize interagency capacity and projects and designate funding that targets them.
- **Create incentive funding.** Incentive funding or "pull" funding could be introduced that is conditional upon multiple agency collaboration.
- **A redesign of school architecture.** Minimal needs include a cluster of smaller offices and meeting rooms, parent space and zones that can be secured. The options are to either adapt existing school spaces and/or include design elements in new school construction.
- **Create a supportive culture.** Promote the professional development of inter-professional collaboration skills, avoid the dominance of one agency, and encourage mutual willingness to bring something to the table. This kind of culture has implications for the kind of supportive leadership required and skills that are facilitative, process oriented, developmental and include asset based problem solving.

New Brunswick

In 2009, the Government of New Brunswick committed to the development and implementation of a child and youth centered Integrated Service Delivery (ISD) Framework. Prior to the announcement of two demonstrations sites in June 2010, an interdepartmental directors' committee has been developing a provincial ISD model over the past eighteen months. The

model has been developed through a review of existing provincial service delivery strengths, an analysis of best practices from literature and other provincial and international models and through consultations with departmental and community stakeholders carried out over a six month period (Government of New Brunswick, 2010).

To date, an interdepartmental agreement on the ISD conceptual framework has been reached from the Departments of Education, Public Safety, Social Development and Health. In addition, a draft implementation plan has been developed for the roll out of the ISD framework beginning with two regional demonstration sites**.** The components of the model include: A New Service Delivery Paradigm, A Three-tier Continuum of Support, A Holistic Service Mandate, A Centralized Regional Intake System, Child and Youth Development Teams, Regional Advisory Committees, Step-up and Step-down Case Management, Service and Transition Linkages with Early Childhood Intervention and Adult Services, the Provincial Clinical Team, An Accountability and Quality Assurance Framework, and Application of Evidence-Informed Practices[3] (NB, 2010).

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[3] For an expanded explanation of these components please see: Government of New Brunswick. (2010). *Integrated Service Delivery Project Description.* Fredericton, NB: Government of NB.

Tymchak, Michael. (2010) *The Integrated School-linked Service Environment.* [PowerPoint Slides]

Appendix D: SchoolsPlus Comprehensive Service Plan Criteria

Children, youth, and families referred who will be serviced by ***SP*** through a **Comprehensive Service Plan** must meet all the following **criteria**:

1. must reside in a _____ **SP** Schools service area,
2. have displayed school attendance issues, behavioral/discipline issues, and/or school engagement issues,

and/or

3. have presenting issues and/or barriers that cannot be addressed through usual practices or referral processes in a service or system (i.e. guidance counselor to address a loss issue, vice-principal to arrange increased learning support for a student, or Child Welfare to make referral to Mental Health, Restorative Justice referring to Addictions Services),
4. have no other appropriate supports available in their lives to provide coordination of services and support (i.e. Child In Care social workers, a parent or guardian),

or

5. have a variety of services already provided, but they require the support , involvement , and coordination of agencies and services who must work collaboratively to resolve the issues ,
6. require the development of creative and co-operative solutions as all available services and solutions have been exhausted,
7. are willing to sign Consent to _____ ***SP*** Services and exchange of information with other identified services form, and the youth and/or family are willing to engage with the services.

Appendix E: Interviews, Focus Groups and Surveys

Interview Guides

Interviews with School Administrators

1. How long have you been involved with SP/has your school been involved with SP?
2. What has been your overall experience of SP so far?
3. In what ways has SP made your work easier/more effective?
4. In what ways has SP made your work harder/less effective?
5. Has SP made a difference to your schools ability to meet the following:
    - Educational needs of students?
    - Provide a good learning environment for students?
    - Impact on overall academic performance?
    - Student attendance?
    - Attendance of SP students?
    - Student attachment
    - Disciplinary referrals, suspensions and levels of conflict?
6. What impact has SP had on family and parent involvement in school programs?

7. What impact has SP had on use of appropriate services by youth and families?
8. Has after-hours or extended hours use of the school increased/ changed as a result of SP? Please give details.
9. What has been the impact of the addition of the Community Outreach Worker (if applicable)?
10. Overall, what difference do you think SP is making in your school/family of schools?
11. What are the characteristics of a school that make SP successful?
12. Any further comments?

Interviews with Parents and Caregivers

1. How long have you and your child been involved with SchoolsPlus?
2. What has been your experience with SchoolsPlus/ (name of SP Facilitator/ COW) so far?
3. In what ways are they working with your child? Programs/Service
4. Has SchoolsPlus made a difference to your child?
5. Has SchoolsPlus made a difference to you? How?
6. Have there been challenges? Please describe them.
7. Do you find services are more easily accessible?
8. Is there anything else you would like to add?

Interviews with Established Facilitators

1. Now that you have a process in place for working with students, have any changes occurred in how the youth's family and other key stakeholders (such as school, social workers, community organizations) are involved in the development of the youth's action plan changing over time?
2. Since last year, what notable new collaborations, services and linkages are occurring as a result of Schools Plus?
3. How are the more established relationships developing?
4. What progress has been made to address barriers to collaboration?
5. Have any new barriers been identified?
6. Are previously identified gaps in services/programs being addressed?
7. Have any new gaps in services been identified? What is being done to address them?
8. Are youth receiving quicker access to services through Schools Plus over time?
9. How much have schools and/or other organizations extended their hours?
10. What activities are occurring as a result of extended hours?
11. With what frequency are students and their caregivers participating in activities available through extended hours?
12. What is the impact on students and their caregivers of participating in the activities that are available through extended hours?
13. Have you been collaborating or sharing information with any of the new facilitators?
14. Are the Advisory Committee members communicating SP objectives and information to their respective departments or organizations?
15. Do you and/or the Advisory Committee have regular communication with the CYS regional table? If so, what kinds of information or issues do you communicate about?
16. In your opinion, what impact (if any) has the evaluation had on SchoolsPlus at your site? (For example, has it made any difference to your ability to provide services and collaborate with service providers?)

17. Thinking back over the time since you first started your job with SchoolsPlus, what would you say are the 3 biggest, most profound improvements SP has brought about at your site?
18. What are the 3 most important areas where SP has NOT been able to bring about improvements, and what has prevented change?

Interview Questions with New Facilitators

1. Tailored follow-up questions from facilitator's monthly report.
2. How are you deciding which students to work with? Are you using the criteria? Is it helpful? Do you have any challenges with this process or do you find it is fairly straight forward? Please elaborate.
3. How are the families of youths and the key stakeholders included in the development of a youth's action plan?
4. Are you creating Comprehensive Services Plans (CSPs)? And to what degree are they being followed?
5. What makes your work easy? Where are the obstacles in your work?
6. Are any SP youth moving out of your "family of schools" this year? Do you have transition plans for the youth, family and service providers?
7. What additional services and/or programs have become established as a result of SchoolsPlus?
8. What new collaborations and linkages can you see occurring as a result of Schools Plus?
9. With regard to inter-agency collaboration, what facilitates collaboration and what are the barriers to collaboration?
10. What gaps in services and programs have been identified by the regional advisory committee? How are they being addressed?
11. Are the Advisory Committee members communicating SP objectives and information to their respective departments or organizations? Please elaborate.
12. Do you and/or the Advisory Committee have regular communication with the CYS regional table? If so, what kinds of information or issues do you communicate about?
13. Is the wider community aware of programs and services? How?
14. Overall, what difference do you think SchoolsPlus is making in your family of schools?
15. What supports have been most useful to you in learning your new role and establishing SP at your site?
16. In your opinion, what impact (if any) has the evaluation (and evaluation visits) had on SchoolsPlus at your site?
    - Has the Lessons Learned Document been useful (e.g. developmental trajectory of RACs, collaboration tips)?
    - Outcome Mapping (e.g. progress markers) & Intro to the Evaluation Process?
17. As you know SP is continuing to expand to new sites, what recommendations would you make for how the expansion should be implemented?
18. Any further comments and suggestions?

System Level Interview Questions

Interviews focussed on the systemic issues and recommendations from the year 2 report, and varied depending on the individual, their department, and their level of involvement in the CYS.

Focus Groups

CAYS Regional Specialists Focus Group

1. Evolution of SP—Over time, how has SP evolved and developed, from your point of view? Successes? Challenges?
2. What has been your role in helping information to flow vertically (upwards and downwards) and horizontally (across different services)?
3. What has been your role in helping to address obstacles?
4. What suggestions do you have for the expansion of SP across the province?

ESTABLISHED REGIONAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING FORMAT		
TIME	TITLE	NOTES
15 minutes	**Update & Introduction**	1. Update on Evaluation 2. Review Outcome Mapping
5 minutes	**Reflection**	Reflect: (Like to See and Love to See) • Top three progress markers (where we are doing well) • Bottom three (where we are doing not so well)
30 minutes	**Group Discussion**	• In the last year, where have we made progress and where have we not? • What would it take to do more? • How have the progress markers be useful for you as committee in moving SP forward?
5 mins	**Conclusion**	• Let them know upcoming surveys
NEW REGIONAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING FORMAT		
TIME	TITLE	NOTES
10 minutes	**Update & Introduction**	3. Update on Evaluation 4. Review Outcome Mapping
15 minutes	**Group Discussion #1**	1. What difference has SP made to your ability to serve the needs of children, youth and their families? 2. In what ways has SP made your work easier/more effective? 3. In what ways has SP made your work harder/less effective?
30 minutes	**Group Discussion #2**	• Where are we making progress and where have we not? (Describe range and type of progress markers – top 3 you're making progress on?)

		• What would it take to do more? • How have the progress markers been useful for you as a committee in moving SP forward?
5 minutes	**Conclusion**	• Let them know or remind them about surveys (if applicable)

Surveys

School Administrators and Staff Survey

The purpose of this brief survey is to gather information about the successes and challenges of SP, and the ways in which it is easy or difficult to collaborate. This questionnaire information will be aggregated together with focus group and interview information to form general conclusions and make recommendations about how SP is working, its successes and challenges, and how improvements can be made.

Individual questionnaire responses are confidential and will be seen only by the independent evaluation team from Collective Wisdom Solutions. No individual responses will be identified in reports or in any other way.

1. Please indicate the type of school you are in
Please check the type of school you are in
Elementary
Junior High
P-9
High School
P-12
Other (Please specify)

2. Please indicate your school board. *
Select at least 1.

Chignecto-Central Regional School Board
Halifax Regional School Board
South Shore Regional School Board
Strait Regional School Board
Tri-County Regional School Board
Annapolis Valley Regional School Board
Cape Breton-Victoria Regional School Board
Conseil Scolaire Acadien Provincial, Région sud-ouest
Conseil Scolaire Acadien Provincial, Région nord-est

3. How long have you been at your current school?

Just the current school year
Two school years
More than two school years
Other, please specify

4. How long have you been involved with SP?

Just the current school year
Two school years
More than two school years

5. How long has your school been involved with SP?

Just the current school year
Two school years
More than two school years

6. Thinking about your overall experience of SP so far, please describe up to three highlights?

7. Thinking about your overall experience of SP so far, please describe up to three challenges.

8. What impact has SP had on the students who have participated in SP services and programs? PLEASE RATE ITS IMPACT ON STUDENTS' ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE.

0 Don't know/ not applicable	1 Very positive impact	2 Moderately positive impact	3 No difference	4 Moderately negative impact	5 Very negative impact

9. Comments

10. What impact has SP had on the students who have participated in SP services and programs? PLEASE RATE ITS IMPACT ON STUDENTS' ATTENDANCE.

0 Don't know/ not applicable	1 Very positive impact	2 Moderately positive impact	3 No difference	4 Moderately negative impact	5 Very negative impact

11. Comments

12. What impact has SP had on the students who have participated in SP services and programs? PLEASE RATE ITS IMPACT ON STUDENTS' DISCIPLINARY REFERRALS, SUSPENSIONS AND LEVELS OF CONFLICT.

0 Don't know/ not applicable	1 Very positive impact	2 Moderately positive impact	3 No difference	4 Moderately negative impact	5 Very negative impact

13. Comments

14. What impact has SP had on the students who have participated in SP services and programs? PLEASE RATE ITS IMPACT ON STUDENTS' SCHOOL ATTACHMENT.

0 Don't know/ not applicable	1 Very positive impact	2 Moderately positive impact	3 No difference	4 Moderately negative impact	5 Very negative impact

15. Comments

16. What impact has SP had on the students who have participated in SP services and programs? PLEASE RATE ITS IMPACT ON FAMILY AND PARENT INVOLVEMENT IN SCHOOL PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES.

0 Don't know/ not applicable	1 Very positive impact	2 Moderately positive impact	3 No difference	4 Moderately negative impact	5 Very negative impact

17. Comments

18. In what way(s) has SP made your work easier/ more effective?

19. In what way(s) has SP made your work harder/ less effective?

20. Overall, what difference do you think SP is making to your school?

21. What would help your school to benefit more from SP?

22. What does a school need to do to ensure that SP can bring the most benefit to students and families?

Service Providers and Community Partners Survey

The purpose of this brief survey is to gather information about the successes and challenges of SP, and the ways in which it is easy or difficult to collaborate. This questionnaire information will be aggregated together with focus group and interview information to form general

conclusions and make recommendations about how SP is working, its successes and challenges, and how improvements can be made.

Individual questionnaire responses are confidential and will be seen only by the independent evaluation team from Collective Wisdom Solutions. No individual responses will be identified in reports or in any other way.

1. Your organization

What type of organization are you with? Please select an organizational category

✓	Organization category
	NS Health or DHA
	NS Education or School Board
	NS Community Services
	NS Justice, Police or RCMP
	Other NS government
	Municipal (e.g. recreation)
	Non-government (non-profit and private sector)
	Other (please specify)

2. How long have you been involved with SP?

Less than one year
One to two years
More than two years
Other, please specify

3. In what ways have you been involved in SP?

✓	Type of involvement
	Member of Advisory Committee
	Receive referrals from SP Facilitator or Community Outreach Worker
	Collaborate with other services around individual cases referred by SP
	Collaborate with SP to provide programs or training
	Participate in professional development/ training coordinated by SP
	Made referrals to SP
	Other (please describe)

4. What difference has SP made to your ability to serve the needs of children, youth and families?

Please check appropriate box

Not applicable to me	1 Helped a lot	2 Helped a little	3 No difference	4 Hindered a little	5 Hindered a lot

5. Please give details

6. In what way(s) has SP made your work easier / more effective?

7. In what way(s) has SP made your work harder/ less effective?

8. Would you like your organization to increase its collaboration with other partners through SP?

YES	9. What would it take for your organization to increase its collaboration?
NO	10. If not, please give reasons.

11. Have you or your organization made any changes in the way you deliver services or programs as a result of SP?

YES/NO

12. Please give details about how SP is changing the way you and/or your organization are delivering services or programs.

13. In your experience of providing services to youth and families, what impact has SP had in facilitating collaboration with other service providers?

0 Not applicable to me	1 Collaboration is much greater	2 Collaboration is a little greater	3 No difference	4 Collaboration is a little less	5 Collaboration is a lot less

14. Over the time you/ your organization have been involved in SP, have you encountered barriers to collaboration?

NO/ YES

15. If so, please check all that apply.

Barriers	Check all that apply
Restrictions due to my organization's mandate/ rules/ regulations	
Restrictions due to another organization's mandate/ rules/ regulations	
Restrictions regarding information-sharing	
Lack of financial resources/ restrictions on use of budget	
Lack of human resources	
Lack of authority at my level to overcome the barrier	
No direction/ encouragement from my superiors to enable me to overcome the barrier	
No action on the part of my superiors to overcome the barrier	
Other (please specify)	

Comments

16. Do you have any other comments or suggestions about SP?

Student survey

(Highlighted sections were customized to specific sites / schools).

STUDENT SURVEY

We are asking for your help in improving programs and services for students at *….. Junior High School* and *…. High School.* Specifically, we are looking for ideas and suggestions on how to improve the *Schools Plus* program. If you haven't heard of *Schools Plus* or are not involved with *Schools Plus*, that is OK; your input is helpful.

PLEASE DO NOT WRITE YOUR NAME ON THIS SURVEY

Thanks for your help!

What grade are you in? ☐ **7-8** ☐ **9 -12**

***THIS TIME LAST YEAR*, how were you doing in school? (Please circle one.)**

1.	**Last year, my school work was**	**Very Poor**	**Poor**	**OK**	**Good**	**Excellent**
2.	**Last year, my social life at school was**	**Very Poor**	**Poor**	**OK**	**Good**	**Excellent**
3.	**Last year, my school attendance was**	**Very Poor**	**Poor**	**OK**	**Good**	**Excellent**
4.	**Last year, I got in trouble at school**	**Very Often**	**Quite Often**	**Occasionally**	**Rarely**	**Never**
5.	**Last year, how important was school in your life**	**Not at all**	**Slightly**	**Fairly**	**Quite**	**Very**

How are you doing in school *NOW*?

6.	**This year, my school work was**	**Very Poor**	**Poor**	**OK**	**Good**	**Excellent**
7.	**This year, my social life at school was**	**Very Poor**	**Poor**	**OK**	**Good**	**Excellent**
8.	**This year, my school attendance was**	**Very Poor**	**Poor**	**OK**	**Good**	**Excellent**
9.	**This year, I got in trouble at school**	**Very Often**	**Quite Often**	**Occasionally**	**Rarely**	**Never**
10.	**This year, how important was school in your life**	**Not at all**	**Slightly**	**Fairly**	**Quite**	**Very**
11.	**What would help you to do better in school?**					

12. What new programs or activities would you like to have in school?

13. Below is a list of programs that you may have done at school in the past year.

Please check √ the appropriate box.

PROGRAM	WERE THE PROGRAMS THAT YOU DID USEFUL OR NOT?					
	I didn't do it	Not at all useful	Not useful	Moderately useful	Quite useful	Very useful
Options to Anger /Anger Management						
Art of Web Development						
Art of Cooking						
Art of Scrapbooking						
Art of Yoga						
Art of Photography						
Schools Plus meetings with [SP staff]						
Recreation Group with [Outreach Worker]						
Concrete Roots Hip-Hop						
Tough Case Play/Restorative Justice						
Restorative Practice						
Student Success Class						

14. Did you get help or service of any kind from [Names of SP Facilitator and relevant Community Outreach Worker] in the past 2 years?

☐ YES ☐ NO

IF YOU SAID, "YES" HOW USEFUL WAS THE HELP? (check one)				
Not at all useful	Not useful	Moderately useful	Quite useful	Very useful

15. Did [Names of SP Facilitator and relevant Community Outreach Worker] help you get help from somewhere else in the past 2 years?

Please check √ the appropriate box.

SERVICE(S)	HOW USEFUL WAS THE SERVICE?					
	I didn't use the service	Not at all useful	Not useful	Moderately useful	Quite useful	Very useful
Mental Health						
Community Services/ Income Assistance						
Child Protection/Welfare						
YMCA						
Guidance Counsellor						
Private Counselling Services						
Town Police						
Public Health						
Teen Health Centre						
Sexual Health Centre						
Extra Academic Help						
Legal Aid/Support in Court						
Housing						
Maggie's Place						
Autumn House						
C. A. N. S. A.						
Restorative Justice (CCAS)						
IWK						
Probation Services						
Recreation Department						

THANK YOU FOR YOUR HELP IN IMPROVING YOUR COMMUNITY AND SCHOOL!!