Charity Central Essentials is a new project to help small and rural charities face the unique challenges of income tax reporting. Print and electronic resources, such as the "Office in a Box", will be available. Visit www.charitycentral.ca for more information.


The early development imperative: A pan-Canadian conference on population level measurement of children's development
November 16-18, 2009, Winnipeg
Sponsored by the Council for Early Child Development in partnership with the Human Early Learning Partnership, the Offord Centre for Child Studies and Healthy Child Manitoba, this conference will highlight initiatives across the country to better understand and address inequities in children's development. www.councilecd.ca

The National Center for Children in Poverty has released Social and Emotional Development in Early Childhood: What Every Policymaker Should Know.
This new report makes several recommendations for policymakers with regards to social and emotional development and mental health for young children and their families. www.nccp.org

Do you have news, information, or new research to share? Let us know and we'll include it in our next Research Update.
Reviews

Creating Vibrant Communities


The percentage of Canadians living on low incomes fell from 29 to 13 percent between 1961 and 1977, but has not substantially decreased in the last three decades. At the core of the Vibrant Communities mindset is the realization that poverty reduction is the means to improve overall quality of life in a community.

Rather than focusing on supports for those living in poverty, the founders envisioned communities in which it would be impossible for poverty to exist. The basic themes of the Vibrant Communities approach are:

- Poverty reduction
- Comprehensive thinking and action
- Multi-sector collaboration
- Community asset building
- Community learning and change (rather than short-term intervention)

Vibrant Communities began as Opportunities 2000 in Waterloo, Ontario. As a four year initiative involving eighty-six community organizations in forty-seven poverty reduction projects, Opportunities 2000 ultimately helped 1600 families. This book includes two background papers on the driving forces behind Vibrant Communities, as well as ten case studies of communities across Canada – including Edmonton - that have followed this path.

Vibrant Communities Edmonton has developed a strategy focused on three areas: workforce development, family economic support, and community investment. The Job Bus was designed to provide transportation to work so that employees could find and keep jobs. The Make Tax Time Pay campaign sought to make low-income families aware of services available from the Alberta Child Health Benefit. The Home Program was created to help low-income individuals overcome the obstacles in their path to being homeowners.

The British Columbia Capital Region Quality of Life Challenge focuses on sustainable incomes, affordable housing, and community connections. As part of the Employer Challenge, HR Options for Action educates employers about ways they can improve the lives of their low-income workers. Mentors help those moving towards sustainable incomes make good choices through the Mentorship Challenge. Collaboration between many organizations established the Regional Housing Trust Fund to address housing affordability and availability.

In the Niagara Region, Opportunities Niagara offers services such as brokering and coordination, social marketing, technical assistance and coaching, and improved access to resources, while facilitating collaboration between community organizations. Target areas in this region include adequate employment, affordable housing, and accessible transportation.

In New Brunswick, Vibrant Communities St. John is examining low-income neighbourhoods and targeting the issues that make it difficult for residents of these areas to move out of poverty. VCSJ has focused on children and youth, providing early childhood development opportunities for low-income families. Other targeted areas are education for employment, safe and affordable housing, and neighbourhood change. VCSJ recently received five-year program funding from the municipal government for the neighbourhoods they have prioritized.

Vivre Saint-Michel en Santé is focusing on social exclusion and poverty in this east-end Montréal neighbourhood. They continue to work for more affordable housing and lobby for better access to services in the areas of culture, sports, recreation and commerce. In collaboration with the Cirque du Soleil and the local school board a program for promoting arts and culture among youth has been established. As part of an effort to train residents for employment in local businesses, a development worker is visiting local employers to match up needs with resources.

This book is useful for anyone interested in community development; those interested specifically in poverty reduction strategies; fans of Vibrant Communities Canada. Visit tamarack-community[dot]ca or vibrantedmonton[dot]ca.

Immigrant youth and crime:
Stakeholder perspectives on risk and protective factors


Did you know?
- 46 to 74 percent of immigrant youth whose first language is not English fail to finish high school.
- Immigrant youth are recruited into gangs and illegal activity as early as the age of 10, and continuing to the ages of 18-20.
- Immigrant and refugee youth are not perceived to be in conflict with the law more than their Canadian peers, but they are more vulnerable to gang recruitment.

If the basic needs of immigrant youth are not met they will seek alternative means, which may lead to involvement in organized crime.
Immigrant Youth and Crime continued...
This report examines key factors at play in the lives of immigrant youths who become involved in crime, gangs, and violence in Edmonton.

Prime risk factors identified are:
- **Family** – poverty, lack of healthy family relationships, mental and physical health
- **Individual** – pre-immigration violence, addiction, health issues
- **Peer** – social exclusion, discrimination, inter-ethnic conflict
- **School** – lack of ESL and curriculum adaptation; bullying; interrupted formal education
- **Community** – lack of role models and leadership opportunities within their ethno-cultural community; lack of safe and affordable housing

Many of these risk factors will compound on each other to create extremely volatile situations.

4 major policy recommendations are made by the authors:
- **Enhance integration** by providing adequate funding for settlement, mental health, and multicultural services to facilitate adaptation.
- **Government** must ensure that the socio-economic circumstances of immigrant families allow them to meet their basic needs. Programs for safe housing and appropriate employment are necessary.
- **Communities** must have comprehensive support networks for immigrant youth and their families in place to provide youth with information about social and health services, education, employment, and other resources.
- **Schools** are in an ideal place to meet the needs of immigrant youth. A process of needs and risk assessment should be set up, followed by adequate ESL support and necessary curriculum adaptation. Culturally and ethnically diverse staff populations are in a position to act as role models. Zero-tolerance methods for dealing with bullying and other transgressions should be replaced with restorative measures. Immigrant students should be supplied with career counselling, goal-setting guidance, after-school programs aimed at helping them adapt and integrate, and funding for further education.

Coordination between multiple levels of government and diverse sectors of the community is essential for reducing the risk of immigrant youth becoming involved in criminal activity.

This paper is useful for anyone working with immigrants or at-risk youth; educators.

### Resources

**Non-profit organizations**


Improving the non-profit, voluntary and charitable sector’s effectiveness in influencing decisions of government. Report by Sean Moore, the Muttart Foundation, 2006.


Non-profit space needs survey. City of Edmonton, June 2009.

The current state of non-profit charitable organizations in Western Canada; report on survey results. The Goldie Company, June 2009.


**Immigrants**


**Social inclusion/exclusion**


**Poverty**


Taking it Back: the Halifax Coalition Against Poverty’s Special Needs Campaign. DVD produced by Praxis Media Productions.
We want your input! How can this Update be made more useful for you? Contact us:

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I'm new here!

As of August 20th I have taken over for Erin Krekoski as the Resource Coordinator for the ESPC. I’m excited about this job and look forward to working with you. Please be in touch to let me know how myself and the resource library can be of assistance!

Jennifer Hoyer
780.423.2031 ext. 354
library[at]edmontonsocialplanning[dot]ca

Resources, continued


Transportation

Health

Experiences with primary health care in Canada. Report by the Canadian Institute for Health Information, July 2009.

Aboriginal Issues


Environment
The (un)happy planet index 2.0: why good lives don’t have to cost the Earth. Report by the New Economics Foundation, 2009.

Our Fair Share: Canada’s role in supporting global climate solutions. Report by Clare Demerse, the Pembina Institute, April 2009.

Seniors


Homelessness


Racism and Multiculturalism


Other Issues


Of Interest...

Homeward Trust Edmonton is hosting the next Homeless Connect on October 4, 2009 at the Shaw Conference Centre. For more information visit www.homelessconnect.ca.