

**BEST PRACTICES IN
REPORTING ON CHILD WELL-BEING**

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The views expressed in this paper are the author's and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of The Early Learning and Child Care Task Force, Social Development Canada, or of the federal government.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

The Government of Canada and the provinces and territories, with the exception of Quebec¹, have taken leadership in research and reporting on early childhood development in Canada. Together they have cooperatively developed the National Children's Agenda (NCA), an Early Childhood Development Agreement (ECDA) which includes a Communiqué on Early Childhood Development (ECD), and a framework for reporting on indicators of child well-being.

As a result of the NCA and the ECDA, a new cooperative process of ongoing knowledge creation, research, and reporting has been developed. This cooperative effort between the Government of Canada and the provinces and territories has created a common focus and understanding among governments and the public about key issues facing children. It has opened up a number of exciting possibilities. The NCA agenda and ECDA reporting framework could be used to guide future children's policy development and encourage further data development and knowledge generation.

Research Objectives

To date, the Government of Canada has released two Child Well-Being reports: *The Well-Being of Canada's Children: the Government of Canada Report 2002* and *The Well-Being of Canada's Children: Government of Canada Report 2003*. These reports deliver

¹ While sharing the same concerns on early childhood development, Quebec does not adhere to the present federal-provincial-territorial agreement because sections of it infringe on the constitutional jurisdiction over social matters.

on the F/P/T governments' commitment under the ECDA to report regularly to Canadians on how young children are doing. As part of their reporting and research sharing commitments under the ECDA, The F/P/T governments cooperatively developed a common set of eleven indicators and an additional 'optional' set of twelve indicators for reporting on child well-being. F/P/T governments are required to report on the common eleven indicators. They decide independently whether they want to use the optional twelve indicators in their report. Any additional content items are at the discretion of individual F/P/T governments.

The objective of this project is to develop recommendations for a best practices framework for the Government of Canada 2005 child well-being report. This project evaluates the frameworks used in the past two reports, and explores the report's utility as a research, knowledge, and policy tool. The recommendations provide direction and guidance on the objective, content, structure, audience, and presentation and discussion of child well-being indicators in the report.

Methodology

This project is grounded in a review of the literature on child well-being reporting. This review of the literature includes both child well-being reports and academic literature on child well-being reporting. The academic literature explores child development, influences on child well-being, and performance measurement. The child well-being reports included in the review are the Government of Canada reports, provincial/territorial reports and U.S. child well-being reports.

A stakeholder survey was used to solicit feedback on the structure, content, objective and audience of past reports, as well as input on the framework of the 2005

report. Survey participants were recruited from the Federal Advisory Committee on ECD Public Reporting, jointly chaired by Social Development Canada and Health Canada. This Committee was established in 2001 to help frame and shape federal thinking regarding ECD commitments on public reporting. These commitments include the development of a baseline report, and a shared framework for reporting on progress and outcome indicators of child well-being. The composition of the committee reflects a range of child development domains, sectors, and services active in the four areas for action outlined in the ECD agreement: healthy pregnancy, birth and infancy; parenting and family supports; early childhood development, learning and care; and community supports.

Summary of Results

Seven recommendations are made for the framework of the Government of Canada 2005 child well-being report. These recommendations focus on both the theoretical pieces and the practical parts of the reporting framework. All of the recommendations are linked to findings in the literature, international and Canadian well-being reports, and in the survey data and are grounded in the reporting context.

- 1) The reporting framework should be constructed as a research, knowledge, and policy development tool (see Figure 1, p. 42). These roles should be considered fluid and interconnected. The report is valuable and influential in all three of these functions. Research and knowledge on child well-being that is presented in the report should support the children's policy agenda, and the children's policy agenda should be informed by research and knowledge located within the report.

- 2) The reporting framework should build and strengthen the networks in the knowledge, research and policy communities in Canada. Stakeholders, research bodies, non-profits and universities are a part of the reporting context, and are important contributors to the research, knowledge and policy development relationship (See Figure 1, p. 42). Researchers who specialize in early childhood development and/or child well-being should be invited to contribute their recent research findings (related to the child well-being indicators) to the report. The report should also make linkages to the National Child Benefit (NCB) report, and research initiatives like Understanding the Early Years (UEY), and the National Longitudinal Survey on Children and Youth (NLSCY) or at least cross-reference them. Establishing these links creates greater awareness of research, policy and knowledge on child well-being.
- 3) The policy implications of research findings and knowledge on child well-being should be explored in the 2005 report. Past Government of Canada well-being reports do not make clear links between child well-being indicators and children's policy. The report needs to explore what the indicators mean for children and families and what they mean for policy. The research and knowledge that is being produced in the child well-being reports is valuable for policy development and should be utilized.
- 4) The reporting framework should be built around the creation and dissemination of knowledge on child well-being. The Government of Canada child well-being report is a central part of the knowledge base on early childhood development and

child well-being in Canada. The report should serve as a vehicle leading research on child well-being indicators and important data gaps.

- Table 3 provides a possible outline for the presentation of the indicators. It recommends that the indicator presentation include the following:
 - a clear explanation of the indicator and any associated research on the indicator;
 - several sections (i.e.: health, cognitive development, social development, etc). In these sections reviews of sophisticated (cause and effect) academic literature should be discussed;
 - tables and/or graphs used to present the indicator data on all of the reporting years (2002, 2003, and 2005); and
 - older data on the indicators (i.e.: the last decade), to paint a clearer picture of present and past child well-being in Canada.

- Table 3 provides a possible outline for the discussion on data gaps. The discussion on data gaps dedicates two chapters of the report on Aboriginal children and on children with disabilities in Canada. There is no new data on either child group for the 2005 child well-being report.

5) The report should incorporate the following specific recommendations taken from the participant survey. Respondents indicated the objective, the content, and the structure of the 2005 report should be a mixture of what was presented in the 2002 and 2003 reports. It should incorporate both the factual indicator based analysis, as well as the thematic research based focus. A number of themes such as parenting, family environment, parental health and socio-economic status should be considered as sources of information on child well-being.

- 6) The framework should enhance its collaborative approach to reporting. The Federal Advisory Committee on ECD Public Reporting has provided invaluable feedback on the reports. For the 2007 report, the Committee should be more involved in building the reporting framework. A face-to-face focus group meeting could be held with the committee members to enhance the quality of their feedback and recommendations. The Committee could also be expanded to include experts in ECD and child well-being from post secondary institutions in Canada. Their perspectives should be represented on the Committee and in the reporting framework.
- 7) The audience of the report should be expanded so that the report's impact and position within the knowledge base is increased, and the relationship between knowledge, research and policy is strengthened. Producing and distributing a Child Well-Being Report summary document would ensure greater awareness of the report and its findings. The summary document would also reduce distribution costs of the report. Stakeholders should be sent a copy of the summary document and a reference to the web site where the full document is housed, instead of being mailed a copy of the entire report. The report should be released at a conference or media event. At this event, a short summary of key findings should be presented and the summary document distributed.

Section I: INTRODUCTION

The Government of Canada and the provinces and territories, with the exception of Quebec², have taken leadership in research and reporting on early childhood development in Canada. Together they have cooperatively developed the National Children's Agenda (NCA), an Early Childhood Development Agreement (ECDA) which includes a Communiqué on Early Childhood Development (ECD), and a framework for reporting on indicators of child well-being.

The National Children's Agenda set the stage for federal/provincial/territorial (F/P/T) cooperation in policy and research on children in Canada. In 1999, F/P/T governments started to work on a shared vision for Canada's children. The NCA shared vision outlines values and goals for Canadian children, along with six policy areas in which federal, territorial and provincial governments could cooperate to better support children. These policy areas include: supporting the role of parents and strengthening families; enhancing early childhood development; improving economic security for families; providing early and continuous learning experiences; fostering strong adolescent development; and creating supportive, safe and violence free communities. Governments decided to move forward together on enhancing early childhood development.

As a result of the NCA and the ECDA a new, cooperative process of ongoing knowledge creation, research, and reporting has been developed. This cooperative effort between the Government of Canada and the provinces and territories has created a common focus and understanding among governments and the public about key issues

² While sharing the same concerns on early childhood development, Quebec does not adhere to the present federal-provincial-territorial agreement because sections of it infringe on the constitutional jurisdiction over social matters.

facing children. It has opened up a number of exciting possibilities. The NCA agenda and ECDA reporting framework could be used to guide future children's policy development, and encourage further data development and knowledge generation.

Objective

The objective of this project is to develop recommendations for a best practices framework for the Government of Canada (GOC) 2005 child well-being report. To date, the GOC has released two well-being reports, *The Well-Being of Canada's Children: the Government of Canada Report 2002* and *The Well-Being of Canada's Children: the Government of Canada Report 2003*. The framework and content used in the two reports is different. The 2002 report presents a factual analysis of the indicators, whereas the 2003 report is focused around research themes on child well-being. This project evaluates the frameworks used in the past two reports, and explores the report's utility as a research, knowledge, and policy tool. The recommendations provide direction and guidance on the objective, content, structure, audience, and presentation and discussion of child well-being indicators in the report. The recommendations for the framework are based on a comparative analysis of relevant literature, Federal Advisory Committee on ECD Public Reporting perspectives on child well-being reporting, and the policy and reporting context. This project is designed to ensure that the next 2005 child well-being report is meaningful, useful, innovative, and contributes to knowledge, research and children's policy.

Structure of the Report

In Section II, all of the related background information on the project and the client is presented. In Section III, the methodology used in this research project is described. In Section IV, the relevant literature and the survey results are discussed and analyzed. The analysis section is built around common themes found in the literature and the survey results. It also grounds the findings in the reporting context and policy environment. In Section V, a number of recommendations for a best practices framework are developed and defended. These recommendations are based on findings in the analysis section of the paper. In Section VI, the major findings of the paper are presented and gaps in the research identified.

Section II: BACKGROUND

Client: Early Learning and Child Care Task Force

The Early Learning and Childcare Task Force provides policy leadership to Social Development Canada and the Government of Canada as a whole on issues related to early childhood development and early learning and childcare. This includes responsibility for the implementation of the commitments in the 2000 Federal / Provincial/ Territorial (F/P/T) Early Childhood Development Agreement, and the March 2003 F/P/T Multilateral Framework on Early Learning and Child Care. As part of the implementation of the ECD Agreement, the Task Force is also involved in the creation and dissemination of knowledge and information pertaining to young children, including reporting on indicators of young children's well-being.

Federal/Provincial/Territorial Agreement on Early Childhood Development

Building on the shared vision of the NCA, F/P/T governments, in September 2000, reached a momentous agreement to improve and expand the service and programs that they provide for children less than six years of age and their families. This agreement established two reporting commitments for F/P/T governments. The first was to report annually to Canadians on investments and progress in enhancing programs and services, beginning with establishing a baseline of current early childhood development expenditures and activities. The second was to report regularly to Canadians on outcome indicators of young children's well-being, using an agreed upon set of common indicators related to objectives established for early childhood development. The ECD Agreement specifically states, "make regular public reports on outcome indicators of child well-being using an agreed upon set of common indicators to be developed by September 2002 related to the objectives established for early childhood development" (Early Childhood Development Agreement 2000).

The report on outcome indicators of young children's well-being provides valuable information on the physical health and early development of young children in Canada. The F/P/T governments have published and released reports for 2002 and 2003. The Government of Canada and the provinces and territories, report on child well-being independently. The Government of Canada presents national level data. The provinces and territories report on child well being for each of their respective jurisdictions. Under the agreement, F/P/T governments agreed to work together, where appropriate, on research and knowledge related to early childhood development, share information on

effective practices that improve child outcomes and work together to disseminate the results of research.

Section III: METHODOLOGY

The first step taken in this project was an examination of the literature on child well-being reporting. This review of the literature includes both child well-being reports and academic literature on child well-being reporting. The academic literature explores child development, influences on child well-being, and performance measurement. The child well-being reports included in the review are the Government of Canada reports, provincial/territorial reports and American child well-being reports.

After the literature review was completed a stakeholder survey was developed from themes and questions raised in the literature review. This stakeholder survey solicited feedback on the structure, content, objective and audience of past reports, and sought input on the framework of the 2005 report. The survey contains quantitative multiple-choice questions. The majority of the questions are nominal, a few are ordinal. One question on the survey is qualitative. It asks participants for comments and recommendations.

Survey participants were recruited from the Federal Advisory Committee on ECD Public Reporting, jointly chaired by Social Development Canada and Health Canada. This Committee was established in 2001 to help frame and shape federal thinking regarding ECD commitments on public reporting. These commitments include the development of a baseline report, and a shared framework for reporting on progress and outcome indicators of child well-being. The composition of the committee reflects a

range of child development domains, sectors, and services active in the four areas for action outlined in the ECD agreement: healthy pregnancy, birth and infancy; parenting and family supports; early childhood development, learning and care. Committee members were sent an email requesting their participation (Annex B), a participant consent form (Annex C), and a Best Practices in Child Well-Being Survey (Annex D).

As the majority of the data from the survey was numerical, the data analysis was straightforward. Microsoft Excel was used to analyze the data. To ensure confidentiality the surveys were coded to guarantee that the participants' names were not attached to the data. For the qualitative question, recommendations and comments were summarized and integrated into the rest of the findings. After the data analysis was complete, the results were compared to elements that emerged in the literature review, and grounded in the everyday reality of the policy and reporting context. Recommendations for the framework for the 2005 child well being report were constructed from this analysis

Section IV: ANALYSIS

Literature Review

Three themes emerge on reporting on child well-being in the literature. The first focuses on the vital importance and the long-term impact of early childhood experiences. The second explores the complex relationships between societal influences and child well-being. The third theme looks at the performance measurement model as a model for child well-being reporting. The final section of the literature review analyses a number of Canadian and international child well-being reports.

Early Childhood Development Experiences

Research shows that early childhood years are critical, and that the kind of nurturing and stimulation that children receive can have a major impact on the rest of their lives. What happens to children from conception to age five sets the stage for how they will fare in the future in all aspects of their lives. The first five years are pivotal in a child's ability to learn, to think, to create, to love, to trust and to develop a strong sense of themselves (Oldershaw 2002).

The development of the brain in the early years of life, particularly the first three years, sets the base of competence and coping skills. Most of the critical periods for brain development are over or waning by the age six (i.e.: binocular vision, emotional control, habitual ways of responding, peer social skills, language, and symbols). The early years have the most important influence of any time in the life cycle on brain development and subsequent learning, behaviour and health (McCain & Mustard, 1999; Mustard, 2000; Willms, Audas, Dalton, Frempong & Law, 2001).

There is disturbing evidence that children who do not receive the nutrition and stimulation necessary for good development in the earliest months and years of life may have great difficulty overcoming deficits later. Evidence from longitudinal studies show that the children brought up in dysfunctional families without external support in the early years are at increased risk for behaviour and mental health problems (McCain & Mustard, 1999; Willms, Audas, Dalton, Frempong & Law, 2001). The quality of sensory stimulation (through nurturing and care) and nutrition affects early brain development, influencing learning, behaviour and health through the life cycle. Environments that provide positive stimulation and nutrition during the early years foster optimal physical,

emotional, social and intellectual development. An environment of neglect and/or abuse during the early years contributes to later learning, behavioural, emotional and physical health problems (McCain & Mustard, 1999; Mustard, 2000; Willms, Audas, Dalton, Frempong & Law, 2001).

Societal influences and child well-being

The literature on influences on child-well being illustrate that influences do not exist in isolation from one another. The influences are linked in a number of complex associations. For example, children who grow up in lone-mother families, with disabilities, living in poverty, or in a specific neighbourhood experience the world in very different ways. Each child is unique and has a number of distinctive societal influences at play in their lives that affect their well-being.

Children in lone-mother families and children with disabilities have experiences linked with certain child well-being outcomes. Lone-mother families have more children born with low birth weights. These children are more likely to have asthma, accidents, to be anxious and frightened (PEI, 2003; Phipps, 1999). CICH (2001) and Prince (2001) find that children and youth with a chronic illness or disability are more than twice as likely to report a history of abuse as children and youth without health problems. A far great portion of them also report emotional distress and low self-esteem.

Beauvais and Jenson (2003) and Fields and Smith (1998) find that neighbourhood effects on child well-being are associated with one another. The effects of neighbourhood are shaped by children's different experiences by gender, class and ethnicity. Having strong neighbourhood or community connections can provide an environment that

reinforces school commitment. Evidence suggests that neighbourhoods and communities in which children grow and learn can directly influence their development. They can affect parents' ability to provide the best possible family environment and the ability of schools to offer the best possible education.

Poverty has intricate associations with other child well-being influences and societal factors. In their article Sobolewski and Amato (2005) assess whether economic resources in the family of origin have long term effects on psychological well-being into adulthood. They test two processes one involving interpersonal processes in the family of origin and the other involving children's socioeconomic attainment. Using 17-year longitudinal data from two generations, they find evidence that economic status in the family of origin is associated with worse outcomes in later adult life.

Children who live in poverty can encounter more hurdles to a healthy development than children from middle and upper class families and can be at an elevated risk for a wide range of negative health outcomes (CCSD 2002). In her discussion paper using data from the 2001 census, Singer (2003), finds that poverty is related to food insecurity, inadequate housing, and prolonged exposure to violence and stress. Children who are living in poverty are at increased risk of asthma, cancer, lead poisoning, neuro-developmental problems and other illnesses (Singer 2003). Ross and Roberts (1999) examine 27 elements of child development including family functioning, neighbourhood safety, aggression, health status, math and vocabulary scores, and participation in sports or clubs. They found that the level of family income is strongly associated with child outcomes. In 80 per cent of the variables examined, the risks of negative child outcomes and the likelihood of poor living conditions were noticeably

higher for children living in families with annual incomes below \$30,000 (Ross and Roberts, 1999). In Oldershaw's (2002) parent self-report survey he found that there are associations between poverty, crime and poor educational outcomes (Oldershaw 2002).

In their work, Kamerman, Neuman, Waldfogel and Brooks-Gunn (2003) reveal complex relationships between income and a number of other influences. They find that child poverty and disadvantage are the consequences of multiple factors including, living in a family with no employed adults, being reared in a lone-mother family, having only one wage earner in the family working at low wages, and being a teen parent. Waldfogel (2004) identifies a number of influences on child well-being. She describes how children start life with different genetic endowments, environmental effects, parents and home environments. She outlines associations between parental care, income, parent's endowments with respect to health and ability, and the number of, and role played by other family and household members. Dooley and Stewart (2004) also acknowledge the likely importance of variables, such as parental health and skill that are correlated with both child outcomes and income.

Hertzman (1998) analyzes poverty and human development from an international perspective. He considers the complex relationship between human development and social/economic/psychological (SEP) conditions across the lifespan. He finds that health status increases with socioeconomic status in wealthy countries, but that the world's wealthy countries do not have similar health status; there are large variations among them. He develops a number of hypotheses and theories on how these associations work. His work reveals the complexity of the associations between the SEP and human development and the need for further exploration in this body of research.

The literature has established that poverty is associated with a number of child and human development outcomes. However, associations must be distinguished from causation. A number of factors are at play in a child's life and many of these factors are correlated with family income. Children may have poorer outcomes because their parents are poor and poorly educated but also because of other factors associated with SES. Poor children whose parents have access to good quality social housing may do better than poor children without any access. Parents may be poor because they have poor health, poor perhaps they have lower cognitive abilities than the average, and those characteristics may have been passed on to their children. The correlation between poverty and poor child outcomes may be spurious. Poverty may be the result of diminished capacity (health, cognitive, behavioural) and that diminished capacity will also explain poor child outcomes.

Income, marital status, neighbourhood, and ability, are all important inputs into the well-being of children, but only a few possible influences of children's well-being (Phipps, 2002; Willms, Audas, Dalton, Frempong & Law, 2001; McCain and Mustard, 1999). The developmental path of each child is influenced by a broad range of social, economic, biological, and environmental factors (Jenson and Stroick 2000). Societal influences do not affect children in the same way, as each child's overall life experience is different making it difficult to accurately identify the impact of a particular factor on children's well-being. The question the literature raises is how do societal influences work together to influence child well-being and how is one influence's impact separate from all of the others? The 2005 WBCC report should address these complex

associations. In its discussion of each individual indicator, it should present high quality research on the possible social determinants of that indicator.

Performance Measurement Model

Economic and political forces are driving a systematic search for greater effectiveness, accountability and efficiency in the public sector. The public sector is increasingly being called upon to measure its performance and to demonstrate its value. In the public sector, measuring the impact, or the difference between having a program or policy and not having it, is the crux of performance measurement (Kates, Marconi, Mannle 2000). Performance measurement models typically create a ‘conceptual chain’ that includes program inputs, activities, and outputs that are linked to short and long term outcomes (Scheirer 2000). A variety of different models and approaches exist within the performance measurement model.

Within the literature, the majority of those writing about child well being reporting and writing child well-being reports do so within a performance measurement framework. Academics outline a systematic approach to developing indicators, setting directions, priorities, goals, and objectives (ACPH, 2000; Tipper and Avar, 1999; Brown, 2004). The Government of Canada, the provinces, the territories, and many international reports on child well-being are presented in a performance measurement framework. In the majority of these reports child well-being is measured through analysis of indicators and outcomes. The WBCC reports are loosely guided by a performance measurement reporting model. The goal of the WBCC reports is to measure and report on child well-being indicators. However, the reports do not set goals, nor do they connect

policy, programming and funding to child well-being outcomes. (Manitoba, 2002; Manitoba, 2003; PEI, 2002; PEI, 2003; GOC, 2002; GOC, 2003; Federal Interagency Forum on Child and Family Statistics, 2001).

Performance measures have been embraced as the key to a more responsible, accountable government. There is a strong push in the Government of Canada toward results based measurement frameworks. The Treasury Board's *Management, Resources and Results Structure Policy* is attached as Annex E. This policy mandates the development of a common, government-wide approach to the collection, management, and reporting of financial and non-financial performance information. It provides a standard basis for reporting to citizens and Parliament on the alignment of resources, program activities and results. The policy reinforces the government's commitment to strengthen public sector management and accountability.

However, the performance measurement model is criticized for having too narrow a focus, providing an inaccurate and distorted picture of what policies and programs are really doing, inappropriately diverting policy initiatives and program activities away from their intended purposes, and often causing unintended consequences (Perrin, 1999; Courtney, Needell and Wulcyn, 2004). Strong arguments are made for greater assessment and monitoring of performance measurement, to determine which factors are likely to facilitate the achievement of expected results, lead to unintended outcomes, and act as barriers to effective implementation (Robinson, 2003; Wells & Johnson, 2001; Winston, 1999).

Champions of performance measurement argue the reason it has failed in some areas is because it has been poorly designed and implemented. They believe that the

ideology behind performance measurement is not flawed; it is rather those who implement performance measurement who are flawed. They recommend a holistic approach, one that accounts for program context and activities, includes stakeholders and informs ongoing program planning. In this model performance measurement is one activity in a larger effort that uses performance data to assess how it is doing and chart its course (Bernstein, 1999; Irwin, 2002; Kates, Marconi and Mannle, 2001). The literature identifies a number of valid concerns about the performance measurement model. Both critics and advocates of the model stress that careful attention should be paid to how performance measurement is used, implemented, and designed. These concerns will be taken into consideration and dealt with in the analysis portion of the paper.

Canadian and International Child Well-being Reports and Data Sources

In recent years, academics, research bodies, the Government of Canada, the provinces, territories, and the international community have all identified early childhood development as an important research and policy area and have made substantial investments in data collection and analysis on young children. For example, Social Development Canada funds Understanding the Early Years (UEY), and the NLSCY. UEY is a Canada-wide research project looking at the factors that help or block child development. UEY is designed to help communities understand how their children are doing and how to help them. The UEY project explores how well children are developing, the strengths and needs in the community and how ready children are to begin learning at school. UEY has three components: a community mapping study identifying community risk factors, strengths, and assets; an assessment of senior

kindergarten students' readiness to learn as measured by the Early Development Instrument (EDI) and the National Longitudinal Survey of Children and Youth (NLSCY); and a program inventory of the local services for families with young children (Willms, Audas, Dalton, Frempong & Law, 2001). Data from UEY was not used in the 2002 and 2003 WBCC reports. UEY should be considered as a possible source of indicator data on communities in Canada.

The NLSCY is a long-term, groundbreaking study of Canadian children that tracks their development and well-being from birth to early adulthood. It collects information about a child's family, friends, schools and community and their physical, behavioural and learning development. The NLSCY is a longitudinal survey consisting of several longitudinal and cross-sectional samples. The longitudinal samples are representative of the population of Canadian children (i.e.: the population of Canadian children at the time of sample collection). Cross-sectional weights are provided when an age cohort can also be considered to be representative of a cross-sectional population. The NLSCY only surveys the non-institutionalized civilian population (aged 0-11 at the time of selection) in Canada's 10 provinces. The survey excludes children living on Indian reserves or Crown lands, residents of institutions, full-time members of the Canadian Armed Forces, and residents of some remote regions (NLSCY Cycle 5).

At present, the majority of the 11 common indicators and 12 additional indicators of child well-being are derived from the NLSCY. However, the NLSCY is a possible data source for a number of other indicators of child well-being such as: child care, school readiness, as well as additional parenting measures. The NLSCY has four parenting

measures: positive interaction, ineffective parenting, consistent parenting and rational parenting. The 2002 and 2003 reports only use positive parenting, which is the percentage of parenting indicating a positive interaction within the family. Future WBCC reports should consider the other parenting measures as well as other possible indicators that could be mined from the NLSCY.

Of all of the provinces and territories, Manitoba and PEI's 2003 child well-being reports stand out as exceptional in their presentation of background and contextual information on reporting and in their presentation of the indicators of child well-being. In the background section of each report, they speak to why the report is important and the overall movement of the F/P/T governments to invest in research, policies and programs for young children. PEI's discussion of the indicators is excellent. It provides a long description of each indicator, why they are important, what they mean, what they are associated with, and preventative steps that can be taken to address deficiencies. PEI'S report compares Canada to other nations and itself to other provinces and territories in Canada. It also looks at indicators over a 12-year period (where data is available) and speaks to data availability and data sources. PEI and Manitoba are clear on what they are reporting, where it came from and what it means (Manitoba 2003; PEI 2003). The 2005 GOC report should follow Manitoba and PEI's example. It should provide detailed and focused information on the indicators.

In addition to the federal, provincial and territorial well-being reports, the federal, provincial and territorial governments also report on the well-being of children living in low-income families (Government of Canada, 2002) (Government of Canada, 2003). The

National Child Benefit (NCB) report provides detailed information on the contributions of the Government of Canada through the Canada Child Tax Benefit (CCTB) system and the NCB Supplement, as well as information on the contributions of provincial and territorial governments and First Nations through the programs and services that they provide under the joint NCB initiative to improve the well-being of children in low-income families (National Child Benefit, 2002). The 2002 and 2003 WBCC reports do not include a reference or link to this report. The 2005 WBCC report should include a reference to the NCB report in its discussion of the parental income indicator. The 2005 WBCC report should highlight some of the NCB findings on low-income families. This link would provide the reader with additional information on low-income families and strengthen the information base on child well-being in Canada.

Substantial time and resources have been invested in researching and reporting on child well-being in the United States. Three recent U.S. reports are focused on understanding and tracking the well-being of American children. In the first report, Land, Lamb, and Mustillo (2001) explore how children and youth's well-being in the U. S. changed in the last quarter of the 20th century. Their study asks: how did child and youth well-being in the U. S. change in the last quarter of the 20th century? Did it improve or deteriorate, and by how much? To address these questions 28 national level time series of social indicators in seven quality of life domains are reviewed. These indicators date back to 1975 or earlier and are indexed by percentage change from base year (Land, Lamb, and Mustillo 2001). The 2005 WBCC report should take this approach and report on all reporting years to date. The 2005 report could also work backwards, incorporating data on the indicators from years prior to the first reporting year. It could, for example try to

report on the indicators over the past decade, depending on data availability. This approach would provide a better understanding of child well-being in Canada in past and in present. It may also shed light on the impact of investments in child well-being programming and policy and their influence on children in Canada.

America's Children: Key National Indicators of Well-Being utilizes eight contextual measures to describe the changing population and family context in which children are living, and twenty-four indicators to depict the well-being of children in the areas of economic security, health, behavior and social environment, and education. This report presents an excellent presentation of the indicators (Federal Interagency Forum on Child and Family Statistics, 2001). *Early Child Development in Social context: A Chartbook (2004)* provides a similar discussion of indicators of child well-being. It groups indicators into topic areas. For each indicator, a single page of text is accompanied by one or two illustrative charts on the opposite page. Each write-up begins with a brief explanation of why the indicator is important for early development, based on the latest available research. Bulleted findings from existing data sources are provided featuring differences across social groups, and where available trends overtime (REF??) The 2005 WBCC report should present research that establishes the casual links between government policy, parental practices, and/or other determinants of indicators of child outcomes. This information should be built upon every year as new research becomes available.

The literature has showed that academics and governments have both made significant research and reporting investments in early childhood development. A number of lessons are taken from the data sources on child well-being and from Canadian and

American child well-being reports. UEY and the NLSCY should be mined for additional indicators of child well-being. Well-being reporting should direct its main focus on the indicators, why they are important, and present recent research on them so that they are clearly understood. The WBCC should be linked to other related reports like the NCB so that the knowledge base is strengthened and expanded.

Overall, three lessons are drawn from the three themes and the review of the Canadian and international well-being reports in the literature review. The first is that societal influences on child well-being are associated with one another and should be analyzed and interpreted with this in mind. Well-being reports should explore these associations in their discussion of indicators. The second is that there is evidence that there are some problems associated with the performance measurement approach and it should be used with care and caution. The third lesson is taken from the literature on early childhood development and the provincial and American child well-being reports. Well-being reports should provide ample contextual and background information, they should be indicator focused, and present research on indicators that explains why the indicator is important and what it represents.

The Well-being of Canada's Children: the Government of Canada Report

The Well-Being of Canada's Children: the Government of Canada Report 2002 and *The Well-Being of Canada's Children: Government of Canada Report 2003*³ deliver on the F/P/T governments' commitment to report regularly to Canadians on how young children are doing. As part of their reporting and research sharing commitments under the ECDA,

³ From now on the reports will be referred to as WBCC reports.

the F/P/T governments cooperatively developed a common set of eleven indicators and an additional ‘optional’ set of twelve indicators for reporting on child well-being. F/P/T governments all must report on the common eleven indicators. They decide independently whether they want to use the optional twelve indicators in their report. The eleven common indicators and twelve optional indicators are listed in Annex A.

Indicators were selected so that they should be:

- reflective of early childhood development objectives;
- manageable in terms of number;
- understandable and meaningful to target audiences;
- balanced across ages (prenatal – 5 years) and outcome areas;
- representative of the population, including special sub-groups such as children with disabilities and Aboriginal children;
- feasible to collect at the national provincial and territorial level, with respect to cost and availability; and
- grounded in research on what matters for children aged 0-5.

In their report, the Government of Canada reports on a total of twenty-nine indicators (Government of Canada, 2002; Government of Canada 2003).

Significantly different approaches were taken in writing the 2002 and 2003 Government of Canada reports. The 2002 report presents a factual analysis of the data on the indicators of child well-being. The framework used in the report outlines five domains of child well-being: physical health and motor development, emotional health, social knowledge and competence, cognitive learning, and language communication. The 2003 report takes a research based, thematic approach. It emphasizes the importance of the environment in which children grow up, and presents current research that links the environment to child well-being. The report focuses on two aspects of the environment: the physical environment and the family environment. Both reports highlight where information gaps exist for young Aboriginal children and children with disabilities and

describe potential future sources of data (Government of Canada, 2002; Government of Canada, 2003).

As Table 1 illustrates there are four common sections in the 2002 and 2003 reports; the background and context, the discussion of indicators of child well-being, Aboriginal child well-being and children with disabilities. Both 2002 and 2003 present important background and contextual information on the key issues in the Early Childhood Development and child well-being reporting context. They discuss the NCA, the ECDA, the associated reporting requirements, and the common and additional child well-being indicators. The 2002 report is more thorough in its discussion. It includes a dialogue on the sources of data that are used in the indicator analysis, and the framework for monitoring child well-being. Although it may seem repetitive, providing a greater amount of detail is preferred as the reports may be read in isolation from one another. The reader needs to understand the context of reporting, what it means, and why it is being undertaken. For the 2005 report, this section should be written in a stronger tone highlighting the importance of the report to research, policy and knowledge on children in Canada. The 2005 report should provide a context/background section like that found in 2002; it should be detailed and clear. It should also make reference to the 2002 and 2003 reports so that readers understand that the report is part of a larger on going effort to monitor child well-being in Canada.

The 2002 and 2003 reports both present information on the common and additional indicators of child well-being. In the 2002 report, the indicators are a central focus. Three chapters are devoted to indicator explanation, analysis and discussion. In the 2003 report one small chapter and an annex to the report present a broad introduction to

the indicators and data sources. Tables are used to list the indicator and its associated rate or percentage for both reporting years (2002 and 2003). The 2003 report is less effective in its presentation of the indicators than the 2002 report, as it does not leave the reader with a sense of what the indicator means. It is just a number listed with little context. The 2005 report should take an approach similar to that used in 2002. It should clearly explain the indicator, what it means, and any research that is associated with it. It should also use the table format or graphs to present a trend analysis on the data that is available for all of the reporting years.

The sections on Aboriginal child well-being and on children with disabilities are nearly identical in both the 2002 and 2003 reports. The 2003 report provides less detail and information on Aboriginal child well-being than does the 2002 report. Both identify data gaps and potential data sources for Aboriginal children. The chapters on children with disabilities are the same in the 2002 and 2003 reports. They address data gaps, potential data sources, rate and type of disability, family structure, parental employment and mental health, and family income. The 2005 report should also include sections on both Aboriginal children and children with disabilities. This section should be used to identify the substantial information gaps that exist for these child demographic groups, as well as potential future possible sources of information. These sections could even look at what other countries are doing to measure well being in these two child groups.

The 2003 report has two chapters on environmental influences on child well-being that the 2002 report does not cover. The first focuses on the physical environment; it explores environmental hazards, the natural environment, measures of health and disease, and emerging issues like climate change. The second explores the family environment

including parental health, parenting, family income, maternal education, family structure and family stressors. The information presented is research-based, it is not linked to the indicators of child well-being. The 2003 research-based theme approach should be considered as a possible approach to reporting for the 2005. A combined indicator and research driven approach would go beyond merely presenting trends towards explaining trends in the indicator data. It would make the data more useful and accessible. The 2002 report has a concluding summary of the report and the data presented, 2003 does not. The 2005 report should in a short final chapter provide a synopsis of the report and of the data on the outcome indicators.

The next well-being report will be released this fall 2005. It will continue to monitor the common set of indicators, as well as measures of key family and community characteristics, building on the 1998-1999 baseline data and the 2001-2002 data presented in the 2002 and 2003 well-being reports. Based on the comparative analysis of the utility and appropriateness of the 2002 and 2003 reports, the following preliminary recommendations have been developed for the 2005 report. The report should include:

- a detailed context and background section similar to what is presented in the 2002 report,
- a comprehensive indicator section; this section will explain what each indicator is, what it means and why it is important;
- a section on Aboriginal children and children with disabilities focused on data gaps, potential data sources, family structure, income, parental employment, substance use, and parental mental health; and
- research on child well-being and on indicators of child well-being.

TABLE 1: COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF THE 2002 AND 2003 GOC CHILD WELL-BEING REPORT			
Common sections / areas covered in reports		2002 report	2003 report
		Background and Context	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 2000 Federal/Provincial/Territorial Agreement ▪ reporting commitment ▪ common set of 11 indicators ▪ expands upon 11 provides valuable info on physical health, safety and security, and early development ▪ Quebec footnote ▪ ECD A & E box ▪ background (ECD Agreement and National Children's Agenda) ▪ reporting on child outcomes ▪ framework for monitoring child well-being: what it is, five domains, environmental influences, indicators ▪ box lists eleven common indicators ▪ format of report ▪ sources of data
	Discussion of the indicators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ family type ▪ housing ▪ communities ▪ parental education ▪ parental employment ▪ tobacco and alcohol use during pregnancy ▪ low income ▪ parental depression ▪ parenting style (interaction, family functioning, time spent with child, reading to child) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ explanation of ECDA and reporting commitments ▪ presentation is in tables year to year ▪ indicators chart ▪ trend analysis ▪ annex to the report outlines how indicators and measures were operationalized in the report

	Aboriginal child well-being	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ data gaps ▪ potential data sources ▪ # children ▪ family structure ▪ living arrangements ▪ income status ▪ mortality, injury, disability ▪ breast feeding ▪ substance use ▪ highlights 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ data gaps ▪ potential data sources ▪ demographics ▪ birth weight ▪ mortality
	children with disabilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ data gaps ▪ potential data sources ▪ rate of disability ▪ disability type ▪ family structure ▪ parental employment ▪ family income ▪ parental mental health ▪ highlights 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ data sources ▪ data gaps ▪ rate of disability ▪ disability type ▪ family structure ▪ parental employment ▪ family income ▪ parental mental health
Different sections / areas covered in the report	The physical and family environment and its impact on child well-being	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ no research in this area is presented 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ environmental influences ▪ NCA shared vision ▪ introduction to types of hazards; chemical contaminants, molds ▪ foetal exposure ▪ the natural environment – outdoor air quality, water, food, soil and dust ▪ indoor environment – air, tobacco, biological, pesticides, chemical contaminants ▪ measures of health and disease – asthma, birth outcomes, neurodevelopment disorders ▪ emerging issues – climate change ▪ parenting and parental health ▪ family income level ▪ maternal education ▪ family structure (parental separation) ▪ negative impacts of family violence, abuse and neglect

	Summary	▪ summary of data presented	▪ no summary
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Child Well-Being Indicators: Data Sources

The majority of the child well-being indicators used in the well-being reports are taken from data in the National Longitudinal Survey of Children and Youth (NLSCY), a resource for measuring outcomes for children. The NLSCY is a long-term study of Canadian children that follows their development and well-being from birth to early adulthood. The NLSCY began in 1994 and is jointly conducted by Statistics Canada and Social Development Canada. The study is designed to collect information about factors influencing a child's social, emotional, and behavioural development and to monitor the impact of these factors on the child's development over time. The survey covers a comprehensive range of topics including the health of children, information on their physical development, learning and behaviour as well as data on their social environment (family, friends, schools, and communities). The first collection of information (cycle 1) took place in 1994-95; the most recent collection (cycle 6) went into the field in fall 2004. At cycle 5, the sample consisted of about 30,800 children and youth (National Longitudinal Survey of Children and Youth, 2004). Data for the other indicators are taken from health sources and the Survey of Labour and Income Dynamics (SLID).

Survey Findings

Of the fourteen Federal Advisory Committee members who received an invitation to participate in the study, seven completed the survey resulting in a 50% response rate. The response rate is good but the initial sample was small. However, some patterns do emerge in the data. The findings on the 2002 and 2003 child well-being reports did not show a marked preference for one report over the other. The data collected on the 2005

report yielded clear preferences on how the report should be structured, the content items that should be included, the usefulness of the indicators, and the audience of the report.

The majority of the respondents were satisfied with the content of both the 2002 and 2003 child well-being reports. Participants were slightly more satisfied with the 2003 information on child well-being, then with what was presented in 2002. The results for information on Aboriginal child well-being and information on children with disabilities were similar, overall respondents were satisfied. The results on the reporting context were identical for both years. Respondents were slightly more satisfied with the framework and presentation of indicators in the 2002 report. The data on participant satisfaction with the content of the 2002 and 2003 reports does not reveal any clear preferences. The content characteristics of the two reports are not consistently identified as exceptional or poor. Overall, the respondents expressed satisfaction with both reports in all areas.

Most of the respondents found the 2002 and 2003 reports useful and were satisfied with the presentation of the child well-being indicators. Respondents were equally satisfied with the usefulness of the reports. Respondents were satisfied with the reports' contribution to the knowledge base on young children in Canada, and with the reports as reference tools. The reports' utility as a policy development tool, stands out as an area in which respondents voiced dissatisfaction for both 2002 and 2003. Respondents also expressed dissatisfaction with the comprehensiveness of the child well being indicators to reflect the situation of young Canadian children.

The respondents found the overall structure of both reports to be satisfactory. They rate the 2003 report slightly higher than the 2002 report. There is also overall satisfaction with the appropriateness of the reports to their target audience. Respondents

showed no obvious preference between the two reporting styles or to the presentation of the information to the audience. The respondents felt that the 2002 and 2003 reports were equally accessible in their distribution on the web and in hard copies. In the overall rating, both reports score very high.

The data on recommendations for the 2005 report reveal a specific audience, objectives, content items, and structural pieces for the report. The highest rated objective was tracking indicators over time to present a picture of how young children are doing. The second highest rated objective was contributing to the knowledge base on young children in Canada. The third most important objective was fulfilling the reporting requirement under the ECD agreement. The least important objective was identifying areas for further research. Under ‘other’ participants listed two additional objective items: “contributing to the familiarity of Canadians with the circumstances and well-being of the nation’s children”, and “the state of the developments in the field of the French-speaking early childhood”. The informed public was identified as the most important audience for the 2005 well-being report. Governments and policy makers were a close second. Stakeholders were in third place, followed by the general public. Elected officials were rated the least important audience.

The content item that is identified as the most important for the 2005 report was, research on child development and the relationship between determinants and child outcomes. The second most important content item was trend analysis of the indicator data from past reports, closely followed by, available research and data on specific groups of children. In the ‘other’ option one participant identified, “report on the action plan for

the official languages and a section on the context of the French-speaking communities” as an important content item that should be included.

There were no clear patterns in the data on themes on child well-being beyond the most favoured theme, parenting. Parenting is closely followed by family environment. Maternal prenatal health, parental health, family socio-economic status, physical environment and community and neighbourhood cohesion all received similar ratings. Under ‘other’ participants identified early learning and child care supports and language, identity, and culture of French speaking children as other themes that the report should explore. The majority of the recipients felt that a 2005 WBCC summary document should be produced.

Respondents found the majority of the indicators useful. Participants expressed dissatisfaction with the following indicators: parental smoking, parental health: alcohol use during pregnancy, parental education, injury hospitalization, emotional problem – anxiety and pre-term birth weight, family functioning, injury mortality rate, breastfeeding, invasive meningococcal disease, measles, and haemophilus influenza b. As Table 1 illustrates the respondents suggested eight indicators in addition to the 29 indicators the Government of Canada presently reports on.

Indicators	Possible data sources
Child care spaces and usage Children supported by early learning and child care programming	Administrative data and the NLSCY Census
Changes in family structure	NLSCY and/or SLID perhaps
Parental stress and time use	GSS perhaps
Child poverty – depth and duration	SLID
Social inclusion - participation by family in community - libraries, community centres, and events, volunteering etc.	
Children attempting suicide	Hospital records

Children able to read	School test scores
Situation des francophones en milieu minoritaire	Initiative de recherche communautaire Comprendre la petite enfance

The majority of the data collected on the 2002 and 2003 reports was not helpful in establishing which report provides the best framework for the 2005 report. The respondents were satisfied with the content, structure, objectives, presentation of indicators, and the suitability for the target audience in both reports. However, the data on recommendations for the 2005 report provides concrete direction for the 2005 CCWB reporting framework. According to respondents, the main objective should be tracking indicators overtime, the main audience the informed public, and content should focus on research on child development and the relationship between determinants and outcomes. Aboriginal children and children living in poverty are identified as important child groups the report should focus on. Parenting (parent/child interaction) is identified as the most important theme that should be covered in the 2005 report although the data was close on all theme areas. Overall participants are satisfied with the format of the both the 2002 and the 2003 reports. Regarding whether the next 2005 child well-being report should emphasize a theme, parenting was identified as the most important theme although the data was close on all themes. The majority of the participants think a 2005 GOC Child Well-Being Report should also include a summary document that would focus only on the key data highlights. The review on the indicators shows that consideration of the established indicators is needed to better understand why some of the indicators are not found useful and to consider the additional recommended indicators.

The quantitative survey design was not the most appropriate vehicle to gather information from the Federal Advisory Committee. The sample size was too small. The

participants did not feel engaged, nor did they feel that they were fully able to express their opinions about the reports. A focus group would have been a more appropriate research tool for a group of this size. A focus group should be considered for the 2007 WBCC report.

Discussion of the Literature, Survey Findings, and the Policy Context

Three sources of information have been compiled and analyzed in this report: literature, child well-being reports and data from the CCWB survey of stakeholders. The literature review introduced the importance of early childhood experiences, the complex associations between societal influences and child well-being, and child well-being reporting models through a theoretical lens. The review of performance measurement provided a broad framework for reporting. The review of Canadian and international child well-being reports supplied concrete examples of what a child well-being report should look like. The survey and the associated findings focused mainly on the practical issues involved in writing a child well-being report. The survey explored the tangible pieces, the objectives, structure, content, and audience of the report. Although the literature review and survey come from two different perspectives, when viewed comparatively they provide a holistic picture, incorporating both the theoretical pieces and the practical contextual basis upon which to construct a reporting framework.

A comparative analysis of the three sources of information: the stakeholder survey, the literature and the Canadian and international well-being reports is used to construct a reporting framework (Figure 1, p. 43). This reporting framework is informed by the reporting context. Three influences are outlined in the reporting context: F/P/T Agreements (ECDA), the Government of Canada's policy agenda, and the non-profits,

research bodies, universities, and stakeholders. As the connecting arrow illustrates, the ECDA's influence over the reporting objectives (research, knowledge, and policy) is directive and overarching. Under the ECDA, the Government of Canada has committed to a child well-being reporting framework that is focused on reporting on indicators of child well-being. Since its implementation, the ECDA has had a notable influence on research, knowledge and policy on children in Canada. To meet this reporting requirement the Government of Canada has made substantial investments in research, knowledge, programs, evaluation, and policy in early childhood development. The CCWB reports, UEY, and the NLSCY, are all examples of the Government of Canada's investments in research and knowledge generation on children.

The Government of Canada children's policy agenda and the non-profit, research body, university and stakeholder group are important influences in the reporting context. However, their influence on the research, knowledge and policy relationship is far more fluid than that of the ECDA. The children's policy agenda can direct research, knowledge and policy in specific directions. A certain research issue may receive attention because it is a political priority. However, knowledge and research can also influence the children's policy agenda. Specific knowledge and research findings may spark interest in certain policy areas. The non-profits, research bodies, universities and stakeholders group is an important player in the reporting context, and within the research, knowledge and policy relationship. This group is a major producer of research and knowledge on child well-being in Canada.

Figure 1 outlines three reporting objectives: research, knowledge and policy. These three roles are distinctive. The CCWB report provides knowledge on child well-

being indicators, undertakes research on child well-being, and informs children's policy in Canada. A complex relationship between the research, knowledge and policy roles also exists. This relationship is fluid and circular. The policy objective of the CCWB report influences its knowledge and research objectives and the knowledge and research objectives in turn influence policy development. The research on early childhood development and child well-being that the report presents could inform policies and programs in Canada. It could also direct research to explore specific areas of the knowledge base on children in Canada. Careful and strategic consideration of these three roles is required when structuring the report, as is an understanding of their interconnected and fluid relationship with one another.

The Government of Canada child well-being report is an important piece of the growing research and knowledge base on child well-being in Canada. The report can lead future research on child well-being and early childhood development to address specific issues. The report should highlight significant knowledge and research data gaps in early childhood development and child well-being. The literature on societal influences on child well-being reveals complex inter-relationships between societal influences and the unique developmental experiences of each child as an important research area in early childhood development that requires further exploration. It showed that there are still a number of ECD research questions that are unanswered. Some relationships have been identified between certain societal influences and child outcomes, but much more research is required to fully understand how these relationships operate.

The report, as a research and knowledge tool, also works to strengthen links within the current knowledge base on children in Canada. The report brings together data

on twenty-nine child well-being indicators and research on early childhood development and child well-being in Canada from a wide range of sources. The report serves as a public document that is referenced by governments, policy analysts, researchers, and stakeholders. It brings together a diversity of groups and interests. It promotes linkages between organizations and knowledge. Bringing these groups and their knowledge together stimulates ideas, innovation, and further expands the research, knowledge and policy relationship.

The policy piece of the policy, research, and knowledge relationship depicted in Figure 1 has been weak in the 2002 and 2003 CCWB reports. Past Government of Canada well-being reports do not make clear links between child well-being indicators and children's policy. The 2005 CCWB report needs to explore what the indicators mean for children and what they mean for policy. The research and knowledge that is being produced in the child well-being reports is valuable for policy development and should be utilized.

The comparative analysis of the literature review, survey findings, and the reporting context reveals a reporting framework. The framework outlines a fluid relationship between knowledge, research and policy, and presents the CCWB as a powerful research, knowledge, and policy development tool. The framework places the CCWB report as an important piece of the knowledge and research base on ECD and child well-being. The framework also highlights the possible policy function of the CCWB. It suggests a stronger role for policy development in the report.

Figure 1: 2005 CCWB Report Framework

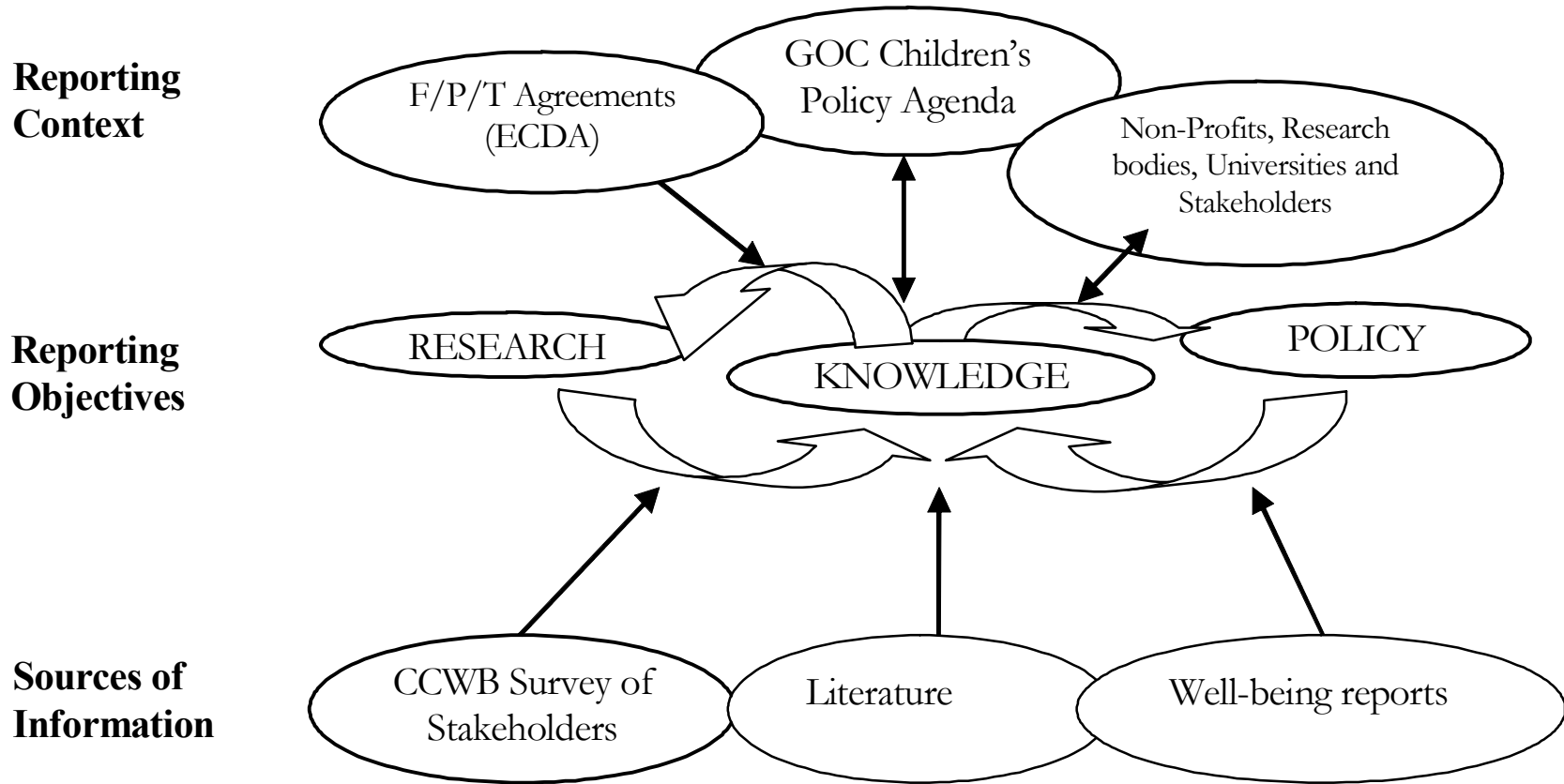


Table 3: Suggested Items for the 2005 Report	
Overarching structural goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ strategic consideration of the research, knowledge and policy function of the report ▪ create and disseminate knowledge on child well-being indicators ▪ build and strengthen networks in the knowledge, research and policy communities in Canada. ▪ policy development tool for the Government of Canada. ▪ holistic approach to performance measurement that is conscious of performance measurements pitfalls
Objective	Tracking indicators overtime
Section/Chapter	Content items
Background and Context	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 2000 Federal/Provincial/Territorial Agreement ▪ reporting commitment ▪ common set of 11 indicators ▪ expands upon 11 provides valuable info on physical health, safety and security, and early development ▪ Quebec footnote ▪ ECD A & E box ▪ background (ECD Agreement and National Children's Agenda) ▪ framework for monitoring child well-being: what it is, five domains, environmental influences, indicators ▪ box lists eleven common indicators ▪ outline format of report ▪ sources of data
Discussion of the indicators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ what do they mean? ▪ what data are they derived from? ▪ indicators are grouped in sections (i.e.: health, cognitive development, social development, etc) ▪ associated indicator research is discussed ▪ research on associations between indicators and societal influences ▪ tables or graphs are used to present data on all reporting years (2002, 2003, 2005) ▪ indicator data is presented for years prior to the first reporting year, if available (i.e.: the past decade) ▪ data from UEY and the NLSCY is used to develop additional indicators (i.e.: parenting, community, school readiness) ▪ the indicator on parental income is linked to data presented in the NCB report ▪ indicator results are compared with other comparable nations (i.e.: The United States, Sweden)
Aboriginal child well-being	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ data gaps ▪ potential data sources ▪ # children ▪ family structure ▪ family living arrangements ▪ family income status ▪ mortality, injury, disability ▪ breast feeding ▪ parental substance use
Children with disabilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ data gaps ▪ potential data sources ▪ rate of disability ▪ disability type ▪ family structure ▪ parental employment ▪ family income ▪ parental mental health

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪
Summary / Conclusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ summarize findings ▪ identify data gaps ▪ present ideas for future reporting

Section V: RECOMMENDATIONS

Seven recommendations are made for the framework of the Government of Canada 2005 child well-being report. These recommendations focus on both the theoretical pieces and the practical parts of the reporting framework. All of the recommendations are linked to findings in the literature, international and Canadian well-being reports, and in the survey data and are grounded in the reporting context.

- 1) The reporting framework should be constructed as a research, knowledge, and policy development tool (see Figure 1, p. 42). These roles should be considered fluid and interconnected. The report is valuable and influential in all three of these functions. Research and knowledge on child well-being that is presented in the report should support the children’s policy agenda, and the children’s policy agenda should be informed by research and knowledge located within the report.
- 2) The reporting framework should build and strengthen the networks in the knowledge, research and policy communities in Canada. Stakeholders, research bodies, non-profits and universities are a part of the reporting context, and are important contributors to the research, knowledge and policy development relationship (See Figure 1, p. 42). Researchers who specialize in early childhood development and/or child well-being should be invited to contribute their recent research findings (related to the child well-being indicators) to the report. The report should also make linkages to the National Child Benefit (NCB) report, and research initiatives like Understanding the Early Years (UEY), and the National

Longitudinal Survey on Children and Youth (NLSCY) or at least cross-reference them. Establishing these links creates greater awareness of research, policy and knowledge on child well-being.

- 3) The policy implications of research findings and knowledge on child well-being should be explored in the 2005 report. Past Government of Canada well-being reports do not make clear links between child well-being indicators and children's policy. The report needs to explore what the indicators mean for children and families and what they mean for policy. The research and knowledge that is being produced in the child well-being reports is valuable for policy development and should be utilized.
- 4) The reporting framework should be built around the creation and dissemination of knowledge on child well-being. The Government of Canada child well-being report is a central part of the knowledge base on early childhood development and child well-being in Canada. The report should serve as a vehicle leading research on child well-being indicators and important data gaps.
 - Table 3 provides a possible outline for the presentation of the indicators. It recommends that the indicator presentation include the following:
 - a clear explanation of the indicator and any associated research on the indicator;
 - several sections (i.e.: health, cognitive development, social development, etc). In these sections reviews of sophisticated (cause and effect) academic literature should be discussed;
 - tables and/or graphs used to present the indicator data on all of the reporting years (2002, 2003, and 2005); and
 - older data on the indicators (i.e.: the last decade), to paint a clearer picture of present and past child well-being in Canada.

- Table 3 provides a possible outline for the discussion on data gaps.

The discussion on data gaps dedicates two chapters of the report on Aboriginal children and on children with disabilities in Canada.

There is no new data on either child group for the 2005 child well-being report.

- 5) The report should incorporate the following specific recommendations taken from the participant survey. Respondents indicated the objective, the content, and the structure of the 2005 report should be a mixture of what was presented in the 2002 and 2003 reports. It should incorporate both the factual indicator based analysis, as well as the thematic research based focus. A number of themes such as parenting, family environment, parental health and socio-economic status should be considered as sources of information on child well-being.
- 6) The framework should enhance its collaborative approach to reporting. The Federal Advisory Committee on ECD Public Reporting has provided invaluable feedback on the reports. For the 2007 report, the Committee should be more involved in building the reporting framework. A face-to-face focus group meeting could be held with the committee members to enhance the quality of their feedback and recommendations. The Committee could also be expanded to include experts in ECD and child well-being from post secondary institutions in Canada. Their perspectives should be represented on the Committee and in the reporting framework.
- 7) The audience of the report should be expanded so that the report's impact and position within the knowledge base is increased, and the relationship between

knowledge, research and policy is strengthened. Producing and distributing a Child Well-Being Report summary document would ensure greater awareness of the report and its findings. The summary document would also reduce distribution costs of the report. Stakeholders should be sent a copy of the summary document and a reference to the web site where the full document is housed, instead of being mailed a copy of the entire report. The report should be released at a conference or media event. At this event, a short summary of key findings should be presented and the summary document distributed.

Section VI: CONCLUSION

In recent years, the Government of Canada, and the provinces and territories have made substantial contributions to policy, research, knowledge and evaluation on child wellbeing in Canada. They cooperatively developed a National Children's Agenda, an F/P/T agreement on early childhood development, and a common framework for reporting on child well-being. The framework is an extremely important tool for research, knowledge and children's policy at the national, provincial and community level. It has the potential to guide future policy for Canada's young children and to lead knowledge and research to a more comprehensive and clearer understanding of child well-being, how it works, and the factors that are involved in ensuring positive outcomes for children.

A child well-being reporting framework built upon best practices acknowledges that the report has three equally important functions; knowledge production and dissemination, research, and policy development. The framework positions the report as a leader in research and knowledge development. The report identifies data gaps and invites researchers and academics to contribute recent findings. The report connects

research, knowledge and indicator data to children's policy. It also acts as a vehicle for knowledge sharing and networking, working to further expand the knowledge base on early childhood development and child well-being.

This project has shed light on two notable gaps in the literature and research on child well-being reporting. It revealed a gap in literature on models for reporting on child well-being that fall outside of performance measurement. Performance measurement receives substantial criticism in the literature yet no other models are presented or explored. The unique developmental path of each child is highlighted in a number of research articles and yet none of the articles propose a way to capture child well-being from this perspective. Researchers need to start asking if child well-being can be measured in a different ways. Qualitative measures and community measures should be considered.

The second major gap identified is in the literature connecting research, knowledge and policy. Analysis of the literature, survey findings, and policy and reporting context for the well-being report reveals complicated and fluid relationships between these three roles in reporting. Research should explore how, in a reporting context, the strongest and most productive relationships can be built between these three roles and how they can best be managed.

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Section VIII: APPENDICES

Annex A: Federal/Provincial/Territorial common and optional sets of indicators of child well-being

F/P/T COMMON SET OF INDICATORS OF YOUNG CHILDREN’S WELL-BEING	
PHYSICAL HEALTH	Healthy birth weight
	Immunization (3 indicators): Invasive meningococcal disease Measles Haemophilus influenza b
	Infant mortality rate
EARLY DEVELOPMENT	Motor and social development
	Emotional health (2 indicators): Emotional problem - anxiety Hyperactivity – inattention
	Social knowledge and competence (2 indicators): Physical aggression – conduct problem Personal – social behavior
	Language skills
OPTIONAL SET OF INDICATORS OF CHILD WELL-BEING	
PHYSICAL HEALTH	Pre-term birthrate
	Breastfeeding
SAFETY AND SECURITY	Injury mortality rate
	Injury hospitalization
FAMILY	Parental education
	Level of income
	Parental health: parental depression
	Parental health: tobacco use during pregnancy
	Family functioning
	Positive parenting
	Reading by adult
COMMUNITY	Neighbourhood satisfaction, safety, and cohesion

Annex B: Email for Participation

RE: Best practices in Reporting on Child Well-being Survey EMAIL FOR PARTICIPATION

I am writing to invite you, as a member of the Federal Advisory Committee on Early Childhood Development Public Reporting, to share your expertise in a survey on best practices in reporting on child well-being. Your participation will contribute to the development of *The Well-Being of Canada's Children: The Government of Canada Report 2005*.

As you know, in September 2000, the Government of Canada, in partnership with provincial and territorial governments, reached an agreement to improve and expand the services and programs that they provide for children less than 6 years of age and their families. In the Federal/Provincial/Territorial (F/P/T) Early Childhood Development Agreement, Canada's First Minister's committed to help young children reach their potential, and to help families and the communities in which they live support their children. Under this agreement, governments committed to report regularly to Canadians on a common set of outcome indicators of young children's well-being, which provide valuable information on the physical health, and early development of young children in Canada. In addition, governments identified 12 other indicators that they could choose to report on. These 12 indicators provide additional information on child development as well as the family in which they are growing up. A list of all 23 indicators is attached as Annex A. In fulfillment of the commitment in the ECD agreement to report on child outcomes, the Government of Canada has released 2 reports, one in the Fall of 2002 entitled *The Well-Being of Canada's Children: The Government of Canada Report 2002* and one in Fall 2003 entitled *The Well-Being of Canada's Children: The Government of Canada Report 2003*. These reports can be found at the following url: <http://www.ecd-elcc.ca>.

The next round of F/P/T reporting on young children's well-being will occur this fall. To date, the Federal Advisory Committee on Early Childhood Development Public Reporting has been extremely helpful, providing advice and guidance for the development of the past two Government of Canada reports on the well-being of Canada's young children. The goal of the survey you are being asked to complete is to make the 2005 report as meaningful and useful as possible to researchers, stakeholders and to the public.

As you may have noted, the previous two well-being reports incorporate different structures. The 2002 report presents a factual analysis of indicator data, whereas, the 2003 report takes a thematic approach focusing specifically on family and environmental determinants of child well-being. Part of the purpose of this survey is to seek your advice and guidance on the content and structure of the 2005 report.

I am the primary researcher on this project. I am employed as a cooperative education student on the Early Learning and Child Care Task Force, and enrolled as a graduate

student in the department of Public Administration at the University of Victoria. This project will be used to both assist the Early Learning and Child Care Task Force in writing the 2005 report, and in meeting my thesis requirement for the Master of Public Administration Program.

A letter of consent and an electronic copy of the survey are attached to this email. It is anticipated that the survey will take less than one hour to complete. Please return the survey by email to Kelly.bestland@sdsc-dsc.gc.ca by **April 15th, 2005** and a copy of the consent form by regular mail to the address below. If you have any questions or concerns about the project, I can be contacted at the number below.

Yours truly,

Kelly Bestland

Early Learning and Child Care Task Force, Social Development Canada

335 River Road, Place Vanier, Tower B, 5th Floor

Vanier, Ontario K1A 0L1

Phone: (613) 957-4795

Fax: (613) 957-4444 Email: Kelly.Bestland@sdsc-dsc.gc.ca

Annex C: Participant Consent Form

**Social Development Canada
Early Learning and Child Care Task Force
Participant Consent Form
Best Practices in Child Well-Being Reporting**

You are invited to participate in a project that will explore the Best Practices in Child Well-Being Reporting that is being conducted by Kelly Bestland.

Kelly Bestland is a Graduate Student in the department of Public Administration at the University of Victoria and you may contact her if you have further questions by email kelly.bestland@sdc-dsc.gc.ca or phone (613) 957-4795.

As a Graduate student, I am required to conduct research as part of the requirements for a degree in Public Administration. It is being conducted under the academic supervision of Dr. Lynda Gagne. Dr. Gagne can be reached at (250) 721-8063.

This research is being supported by the Early Learning and Child Care Task Force, Social Development Canada. My supervisor on the Early Learning and Childcare Task Force is Laurie Goldmann. Laurie can be reached at (613) 957-4895.

This project will explore best practices in reporting on child well-being. The overall objective of the project is to provide the Early Learning and Child Care Task Force with a revised best practices framework for reporting on child well-being outcomes that can be used to meet their future reporting requirements. This framework will be based on a comparative analysis of relevant literature and stakeholder perspectives and will be used in future reporting generating comparable data year to year to allow for longitudinal analysis of child well-being outcomes to be reviewed from a national perspective.

You are being asked to participate in this study because of your membership on The Federal Advisory Committee on Early Childhood Development Public Reporting.

If you agree to voluntarily participate in this research, your participation will include completing a survey on best practices in child well-being reporting. This survey will be distributed to you by email and you will return it by email. It should take you less than one hour to complete. There are no known or anticipated risks to you by participating in this research. The potential benefits of your participation in this research include contributing to the design of a framework that will be used in future monitoring and reporting on child well-being in Canada.

Your participation in this research must be voluntary. If you do decide to participate, you may withdraw at any time without any consequences or any explanation. If you do withdraw from the study, your data will not be used. In terms of protecting your anonymity and confidentiality, all of the surveys will be coded. Kelly Bestland will be the only person that will have access to the identity of participants.

It is anticipated that the results of this study will be shared with others in the following ways; Kelly Bestland will present and defend the project as her thesis requirement at the University of Victoria, and the project will be used to guide future Federal reporting on child well-being.

In addition to being able to contact the researcher and her supervisors at the above phone numbers, you may verify the ethical approval of this study, or raise any concerns you might have, by contacting the Associate Vice-President, Research at the University of Victoria (250-472-4545).

Your signature below indicates that you understand the above conditions of participation in this study and that you have had the opportunity to have your questions answered by the researchers.

Name of Participant

Signature

Date

Please sign prior to completing the survey and mail a copy of this consent form to:
Kelly Bestland, Early Learning and Child Care Task Force, Social Development Canada,
355 North River Road, Place Vanier, Tower B, 5th Floor, Vanier, Ontario K1A 0L1

Annex D: Best Practices in Child Well-Being Reporting Survey

A.) GENERAL:

- 1.) Organization: _____
- 2.) Date completed: _____
- 3.) Contact information (If further information or clarification is required):
 - Name: _____
 - Phone: _____
 - Email: _____

B.) THE 2002 and 2003 WELL-BEING REPORTS:

This section asks specific questions about the content and structure of the 2002 and 2003 well-being reports. The reports are available at <http://www.ecd-elcc.ca>.

- 4). Please rate the 2002 and 2003 reports on a scale of 1 to 3 for the following characteristics where: 1 = very satisfied
 2 = satisfied
 3 = unsatisfied

Report characteristic		2002 Report	2003 Report
a.) Content	Information on child well-being		
	Information on aboriginal child well-being		
	Information on child well-being for children with disabilities		
	Discussion of the F/P/T ECD Agreement and context for the report		
	Reporting framework		
	Presentation and discussion of child well-being indicators		
b.) Child well-being indicators	Comprehensiveness of child well-being indicators to reflect the situation of young Canadian children.		
c.) Usefulness of the report	Contribution to the knowledge base on young children in Canada		
	Reference tool		
	For policy development		
d.) Structure and Format	Overall structure of the report		
	Appropriate for target audience (currently defined as informed public, stakeholders and policy makers)		
e.) Accessibility - Distribution of report	On the web		
	Hard copies of the report		
	Availability for persons with special needs (i.e.: alternative formats)		

f.) Overall satisfaction with the report		
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C.) FUTURE REPORTING:

This section asks for specific recommendations on the structure and content of the 2005 report on child well-being. Please note that while not all recommendations may be incorporated in the 2005 report, they will be retained for future reports, which are released biennially.

5.) Identify from the list below the objective(s) the 2005 Well-being Report could achieve and rank your chosen objectives in ascending order.

(1 = the most important, 2 = the second most important, and so on).

- Tracking of indicators over time to present a picture of how young children are doing
- Contributing to the knowledge base on young children in Canada
- Fulfilling the reporting commitment under the ECD agreement
- Identifying areas for future research
- Other _____

6.) Identify from the list below who you consider the target audience to be for the 2005 Well-Being Report and rank your chosen audience in ascending order.

(1 = the most important, 2 = the second most important, and so on).

- General public
- Informed public
- Governments / policy makers
- Stakeholders
- Other _____

7a.) Identify from the list below the content items that could be included in the 2005 Well-being Report. Rank your chosen content items in ascending order.

(1 = the most important, 2 = the second most important, and so on).

- Research on child development and the relationship between determinants and child outcomes
- Available research and data on specific groups of children
- Trend analysis of the indicator data from past reports (i.e: 2002 /2003)
- Other _____

7b.) If you agree that the report should examine available research and data on specific groups of children please identify from the list below which groups of children could be emphasized in the 2005 Child Well-Being Report. Rank your chosen groups in ascending order.

(1 = the most important, 2 = the second most important, and so on).

- Aboriginal children
- Children with disabilities
- Immigrant children
- Children living in poverty
- Children living in rural communities
- Other _____

7c.) If you agree that the report should examine the relationship between determinants and child outcomes, please identify from the list below themes on child well-being that could be explored in the 2005 Child Well-Being Report. Rank your chosen themes in ascending order.

(1 = the most important, 2 = the second most important, and so on).

- Maternal prenatal health
- Parental health (i.e.: use of tobacco, use of alcohol, mental health)
- Family environment (i.e.: interaction with siblings, extended family)
- Parenting (i.e.: parent / child interaction)
- Family socio-economic status (i.e.: poverty, nutrition, parental education, housing quality)
- Physical environment (the natural environment and the indoor environment)
- Community and Neighbourhood cohesion
- Other _____

8.) How should the 2005 report be structured? Please select one of the following options.

- Following the structure of the 2002 report, centered on the indicators of young children's well-being
- Following the structure of the 2003 report, research driven and organized around themes found in recent literature on child well-being
- A series of small fact sheets surveying current research and issues related to child well-being. Please indicate which research areas you would like included and provide suggested data sources
 - Parenting and family environment
 - Environmental influences (physical and natural)
 - Community and neighbourhood cohesion
 - Other _____
- Other _____

9.) Do you think that the Federal government should also produce a 2005 GOC Child Well-Being Report summary document (i.e.: a fact sheet or pamphlet)?

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

10.) The table below lists the 29 child well-being indicators used in the 2003 Federal Well-Being report. Please indicate whether you find the indicator useful and list alternative data sources if you are aware of any that would enhance the reporting. Please note: This information will help inform the Government of Canada position in discussions with provinces and territories when reviewing the common set of indicators of young children's well-being.

Indicators		Current Data Source	Useful Yes /No	Suggested alternative data sources
Healthy Birth weight		Vital Statistics		
Pre-term birth weight		Vital Statistics		
Immunization	Invasive meningococcal disease	NLSCY		
	measles	NLSCY		
	haemophilus influenza b	NLSCY		
Infant Mortality Rate		Vital Statistics		
Motor and social development		NLSCY		
Children diagnosed with asthma				
Emotional Health	Emotional Problem - Anxiety	NLSCY		
	Hyperactivity – Inattention	NLSCY		
Social Knowledge and Competence	Physical Aggression - Conduct Problem,	NLSCY		
	Personal - social behavior	NLSCY		
Language Skills		NLSCY		
Pre-term birth rate		Vital Statistics		
Breastfeeding		NLSCY		
Injury Mortality Rate		Vital Stats		
Injury Hospitalization		CIHI		
Parental Education		NLSCY		
Level of Income		Census		
Parental Health: Parental Depression		NLSCY		
Parental Health: Tobacco use during pregnancy		NLSCY		
Parental Health: Alcohol use during pregnancy		NLSCY		
Parental smoking		NLSCY		

Family Functioning	NLSCY		
Positive Parenting	NLSCY		
Reading by Adult	NLSCY		
Neighbourhood Satisfaction	NLSCY		
Neighbourhood Safety and Cohesion	NLSCY		
Children living in core housing need	Census		

11.) Do you think that there are other indicators that should be included in the Government of Canada Child Well-Being report? If yes, please list the indicator(s) and provide possible data sources.

Indicator	Possible data source

12.) Do you have any additional comments or recommendations that you would like to add?

Thank-you for taking the time to complete this survey. Please email your completed survey by April 15, 2005 to Kelly.Bestland@sdsc-dsc.gc.ca.

Annex E: Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat, Management, Resources, and Results Structure Policy

1. Title

Management, Resources and Results Structure Policy

2. Effective Date

This Policy replaces the *Planning, Reporting, and Accountability Structure* policy framework implemented in 1996 and is effective April 1st, 2005.^{[11](#)}

3. Application

This Policy applies to all "departments," as defined in section 2 of the *Financial Administration Act*.

Any Crown corporation seeking an appropriation from Parliament is required to discuss an appropriately modified application of this Policy with the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat (the Secretariat).

4. Policy Objective

The *Management, Resources and Results Structure Policy* supports the development of a common, government-wide approach to the collection, management, and reporting of financial and non-financial performance information. In providing a standard basis for reporting to citizens and Parliament on the alignment of resources, program activities and results, the policy reinforces the government's commitment to strengthen public sector management and accountability, consistent with the [Management Accountability Framework](#). The policy will provide departments with the flexibility and discretion they need to design and manage their programs in a manner that best achieves results for Canadians.

5. Definitions

See [Annex A](#).

6. Policy Statement

All departments as defined in section 3 of this Policy shall have a Management, Resources and Results Structure that is current and consistent with the way they manage diverse programs and related activities, and allocate resources to achieve expected results.

7. Policy Requirements

7.1 Management, Resources and Results Structure

The Management, Resources and Results Structure will have the following three elements:

I. Clearly defined and measurable Strategic Outcomes that:

(a) reflect the organization's mandate and vision and are linked to the government's priorities and intended results; and

(b) provide the basis for establishing horizontal linkages between departments with similar or natural groupings of strategic outcomes.

II. A Program Activity Architecture that is articulated at a sufficient level of materiality to reflect how a department allocates and manages the resources under its control to achieve intended results and that:

(a) groups related program activities and links them logically to the Strategic Outcomes they support;

(b) provides the framework by which planned resource allocations are linked to each activity at all levels and against which financial results are reported;

(c) provides the framework by which expected results and performance measures are linked to each activity at all levels and against which actual results are reported;

(d) provides the framework within which those responsible for activities at each level can commit to the results they intend to achieve with the resources they have been allocated and against which they can render account inside and outside the department;

(e) establishes the structure for Estimates display, Public Accounts, and parliamentary reporting;

(f) serves as the basis for resource allocation by Parliament, the Treasury Board, and departmental management; and

(g) forms the foundation for constructing any horizontal program activity architectures involving more than one department.

III. A description of the current governance structure, which outlines the decision-making mechanisms, responsibilities, and accountabilities of the department.

7.2 Treasury Board Consideration

Proposed Management, Resources and Results Structures will be submitted to the Treasury Board.

In considering the submission, the Treasury Board:

1. will approve the Program Activity Architecture level at which it will allocate and control resources, and the level for parliamentary displays in Estimates documents and Public Accounts. The level for Treasury Board allocation and control will remain at the departmental level, unless otherwise decided upon by the Treasury Board;
2. will note the remaining Program Activity Architecture levels for which the department has agreed to provide information to the Secretariat to populate the government's Expenditure Management Information System; and
3. may decide to enter into an accountability arrangement with a department respecting the expenditure of resources, including results achieved against results expected, for one or more activities within the Program Activity Architecture.

7.3 Changes to the Management, Resources and Results Structure

In accordance with section 7.2.1 above, changes contemplated to the following Program Activity Architecture levels shall be made only with further Treasury Board approval:

- (a) Level(s) previously approved by the Treasury Board for allocation and control purposes;
- (b) Level(s) previously approved by the Treasury Board to determine parliamentary displays in Estimates documents.

As per section 7.2.2 above, departments shall notify the Treasury Board Secretariat of any changes of material significance contemplated to the elements of the Management, Resources and Results Structure (as defined in section 7.1) previously noted by the Treasury Board for information purposes.

7.4 Management Information Systems and Reporting

The Management, Resources and Results Structure will be the basis to report to Parliament through the Estimates documents, Public Accounts, and any other parliamentary reporting documents in the manner and form defined by the Treasury Board or its Secretariat.

Departments should ensure that their information systems, performance measurement strategies, reporting, and governance structures are consistent with and support their

organization's Management, Resources and Results Structure and reflect the manner in which resources are actually managed and allocated in the organization.

7.5 Monitoring

The Secretariat will conduct an evaluation of the Policy within five years of the coming into force of the Policy.

8. References

Further Information

The Secretariat will maintain up-to-date information on its Web site (http://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/index_e.asp) on:

- its current strategy for implementing and making this Policy operational;
- background information; and
- guidance and examples of "good practice."

Legislation

This Policy is issued under the authority of paragraph 7(1)(c) of the [*Financial Administration Act*](#).

Related Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat Publications

[*Results for Canadians: A Management Framework for the Government of Canada*](#)

[*Management Accountability Framework*](#)

[*Strengthening Public Sector Management: An Overview of the Government Action Plan and Key Initiatives*](#)

Related Privy Council Office Publication

[*Guidance for Deputy Ministers*](#)

[*Governing Responsibly: A Guide For Ministers and Ministers of State*](#)

9. Enquiries

Enquiries about this Policy should be directed to your department or agency's Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat program sector analyst.

Annex A – Definitions

Activity (*Activité*) — An operation or work process internal to an organization, which uses inputs to produce outputs, e.g. training, research, construction, negotiation, investigation, etc.

Department (*Ministère*) — All "departments," as defined in section 2 of the *Financial Administration Act*.

Governance (*Gouvernance*) — The processes and structures through which decision-making authority is exercised: e.g. an effective governance structure ensures individuals or groups of individuals are responsible for setting policy directions, priorities, taking investment decisions, re-allocating resources, and designing programs.

Program (*Programme*) — A group of related activities that are designed and managed to meet a specific public need and often treated as a budgetary unit.

Program Activity Architecture (*Architecture des activités de programmes*) — An inventory of all the programs and activities undertaken by a department or agency. The programs and activities are depicted in their logical relationship to each other and to the Strategic Outcome(s) to which they contribute. The Program Activity Architecture is the initial document for the establishment of a Management, Resources and Results Structure.

Strategic Outcome (*Résultat stratégique*) — A long-term and enduring benefit to Canadians that stems from a department or agency's mandate and vision. It represents the difference a department or agency intends to make for Canadians and should be measurable and within the department's sphere of influence.

[\[1\]](#) The information requirements necessary to support the production of the 2005-2006 Annual Reference Level Update (ARLU) and Estimates are to be provided to the Secretariat in accordance with this Policy.