

eccdc

early childhood community development centre

Understanding the Early Years



Canada  The Understanding the Early Years initiative is funded by Human Resources and Social Development Canada. For further information, visit: www.hrsdc.gc.ca

Understanding the Early Years (UEY):

What is UEY?

A ***national initiative***, funded by Human Resources and Social Development Canada, that ***enables communities to better understand the needs of their young children and families*** so they can ***determine the best programs and services to meet them.***

Where is UEY?

- Over 30 communities across Canada
- Niagara Falls (2001-2007)
- Niagara Region (2005-2008)

Your local sponsor is the Early Childhood Community Development Centre (ECCDC) !!

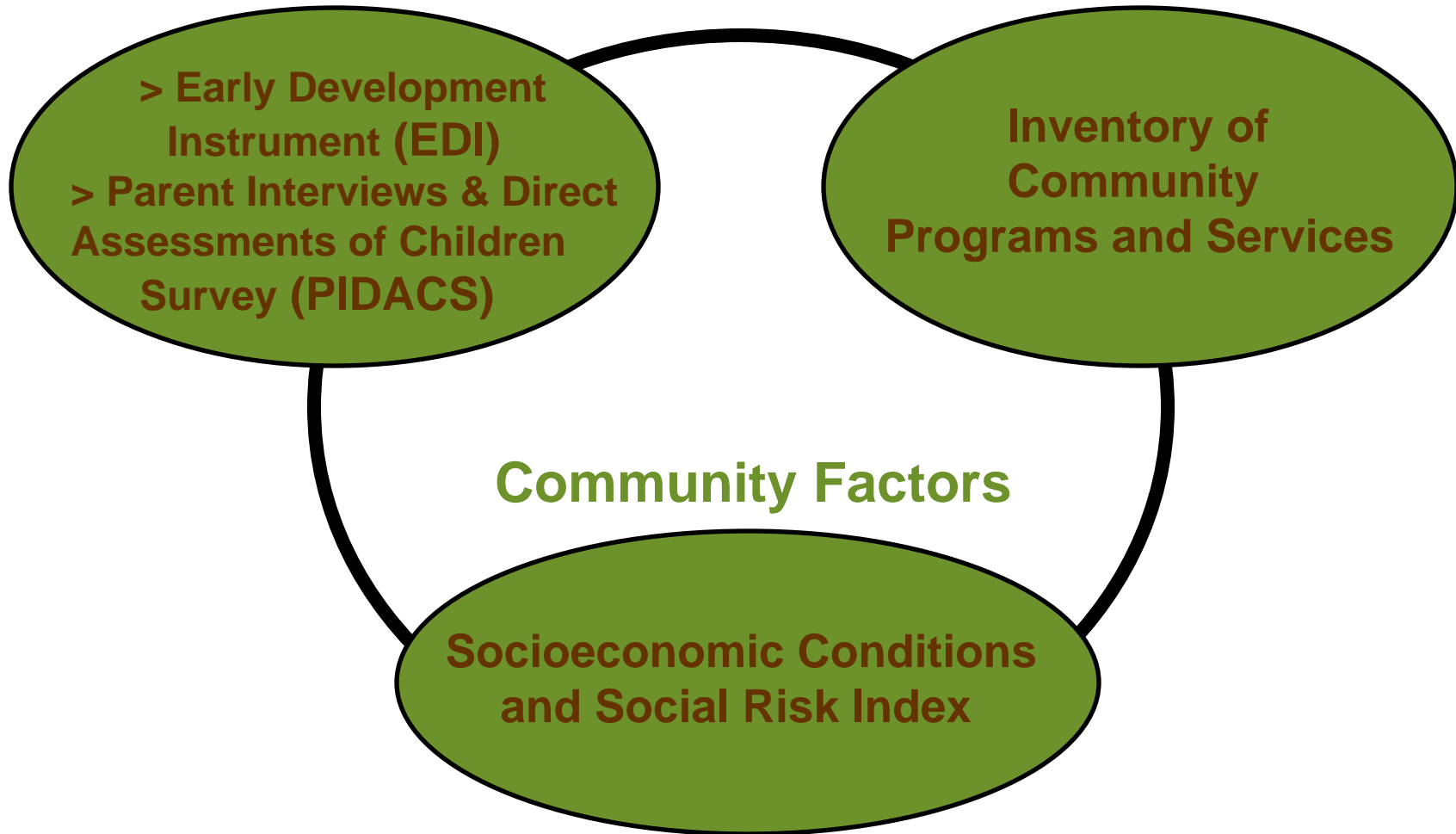
The UEY Objectives:

- 1. Strengthen the capacity of communities to use quality local research to help them make decisions to enhance children's lives; and**
- 2. Enable community members to work together to address the needs of children.**

The UEY Research:

**Children's Development, Family
& Community Experience**

Community Assets



Early Development Instrument (EDI):

Measures *readiness to learn at school*
which refers to the child's ability to meet the
task demands of school, such as:

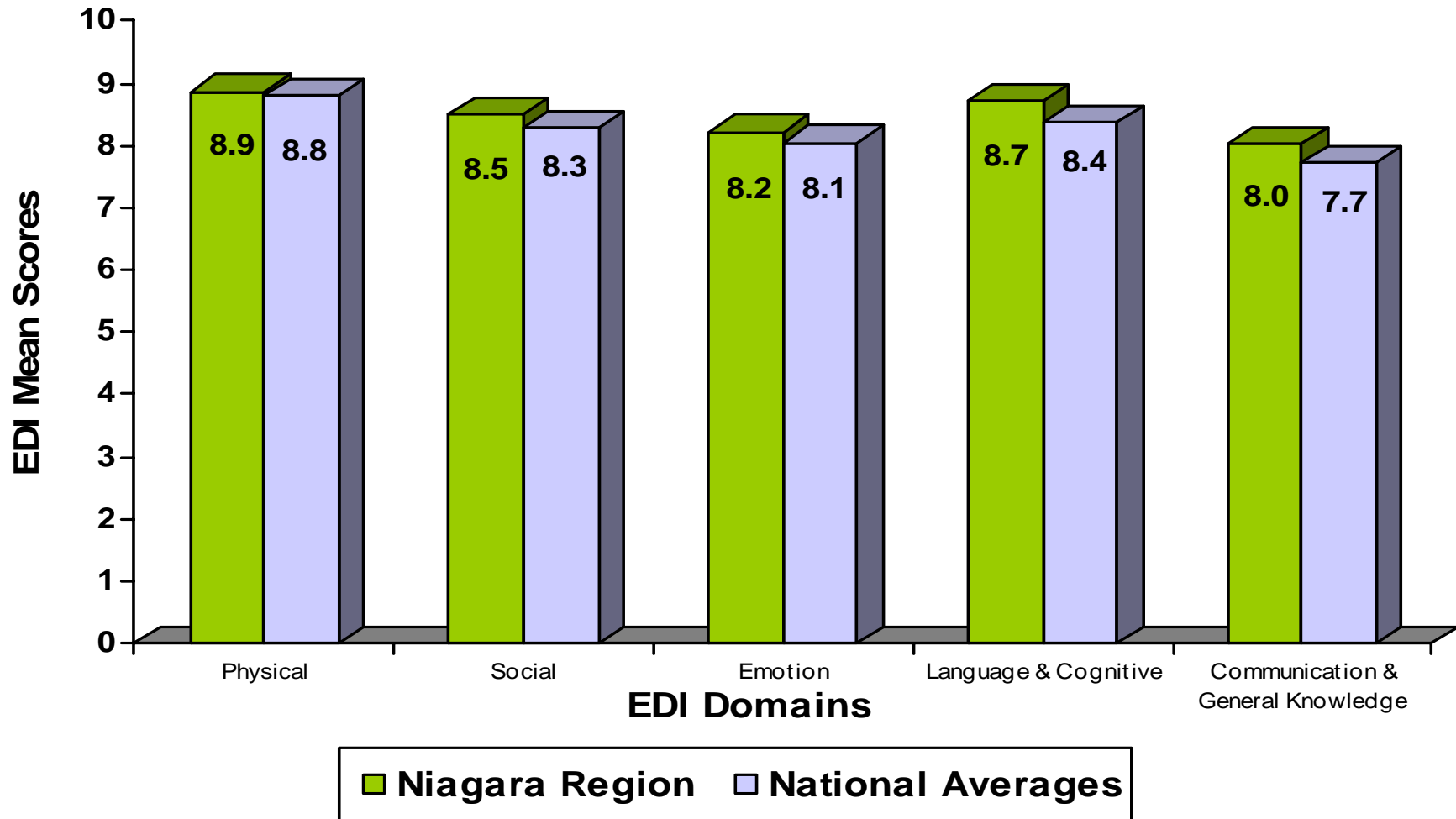
- **Being comfortable exploring and asking questions,**
- **Listening to the teacher,**
- **Playing and working with other children,**
- **Remembering and following rules, and**
- **Benefiting from the educational activities that are provided.**

Early Development Instrument **(EDI):**

Teacher recorded measure on *five domains of children's early development:*

- 1. Physical Health & Well-being**
- 2. Social Competence**
- 3. Emotional Maturity**
- 4. Language & Cognitive Development**
- 5. Communication Skills & General Knowledge**

Comparison of Children's Mean EDI Scores (2006) with National Average:



EDI Sub-domains:

- **Physical Health and Well-being**
 1. Physical readiness for school day
 2. Physical independence
 3. Gross and fine motor skills
- **Social Competence**
 4. Overall social competence
 5. Responsibility and respect
 6. Approaches to learning
 7. Readiness to explore new things

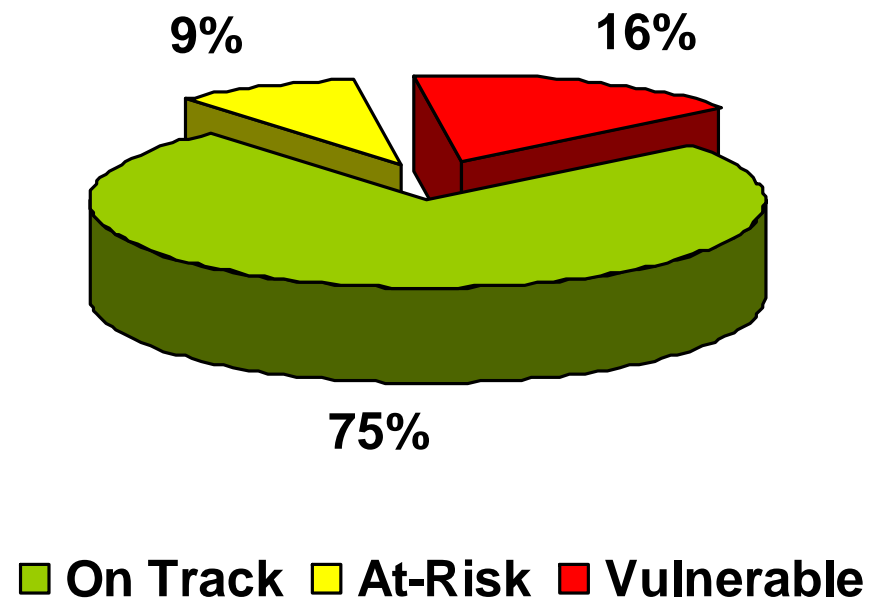
EDI Sub-domains

- **Emotional Maturity**
 8. Prosocial and helping behaviour
 9. Anxious and fearful behaviour
 10. Aggressive behaviour
 11. Hyperactivity and inattention
- **Language & Cognitive Development**
 12. Basic literacy
 13. Interest in literacy/numeracy and memory
 14. Advanced literacy
 15. Basic numeracy
- **Communication Skills & General Knowledge**
 16. Communication skills and general knowledge

EDI Results - Communication Skills & General Knowledge (Region 2006):

Among the 'at-risk and vulnerable' group, the areas of challenge in Communication & General Knowledge were:

- Having little general knowledge and difficulty with native language.
- Poor communication skills.
- Difficulty in being understood by their peers.
- Trouble participating in games involving the use of language.
- Difficulty with understanding their peers.



Parent Interviews & Direct Assessment of Children Survey (PIDACS):

Examines the relationship between children's development and various family and community factors that could influence that development:

- 1) Interviews are with the person most knowledgeable about the child, usually a parent or guardian, to obtain information on the family, the child's development and the child's experiences in the community.**
- 2) Three direct assessment activities are done with each child that measures children's receptive or hearing vocabulary, copying and printing skills related to early literacy, and number knowledge.**

2001 Results

- **Niagara Falls' risk factors:**
 - Low to medium socio-economic status
 - Low-income families in southern and central areas of the city
 - Scarce educational resources
 - High percentage of single parent families compared to provincial and national figures
- **Niagara Falls' protective factors**
 - Safe and stable neighbourhoods
 - High level of social support
 - Parents are engaged with children
 - positive parenting
 - maternal mental health
 - Parents make use of community resources

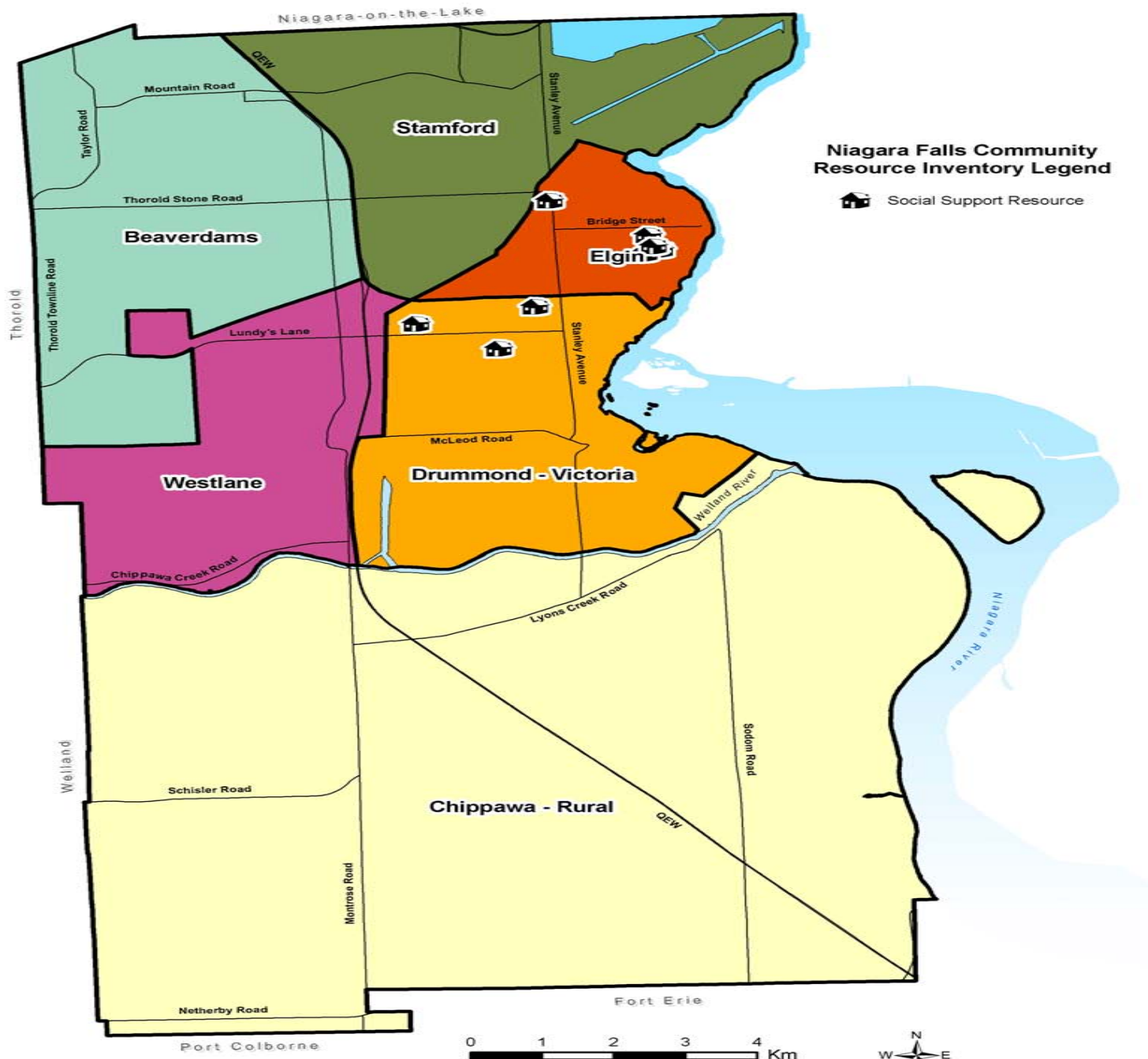
Community Mapping:

Why do we use maps?

They provide communities with a visual representation, at the neighbourhood level, of the context development is occurring within, and display:

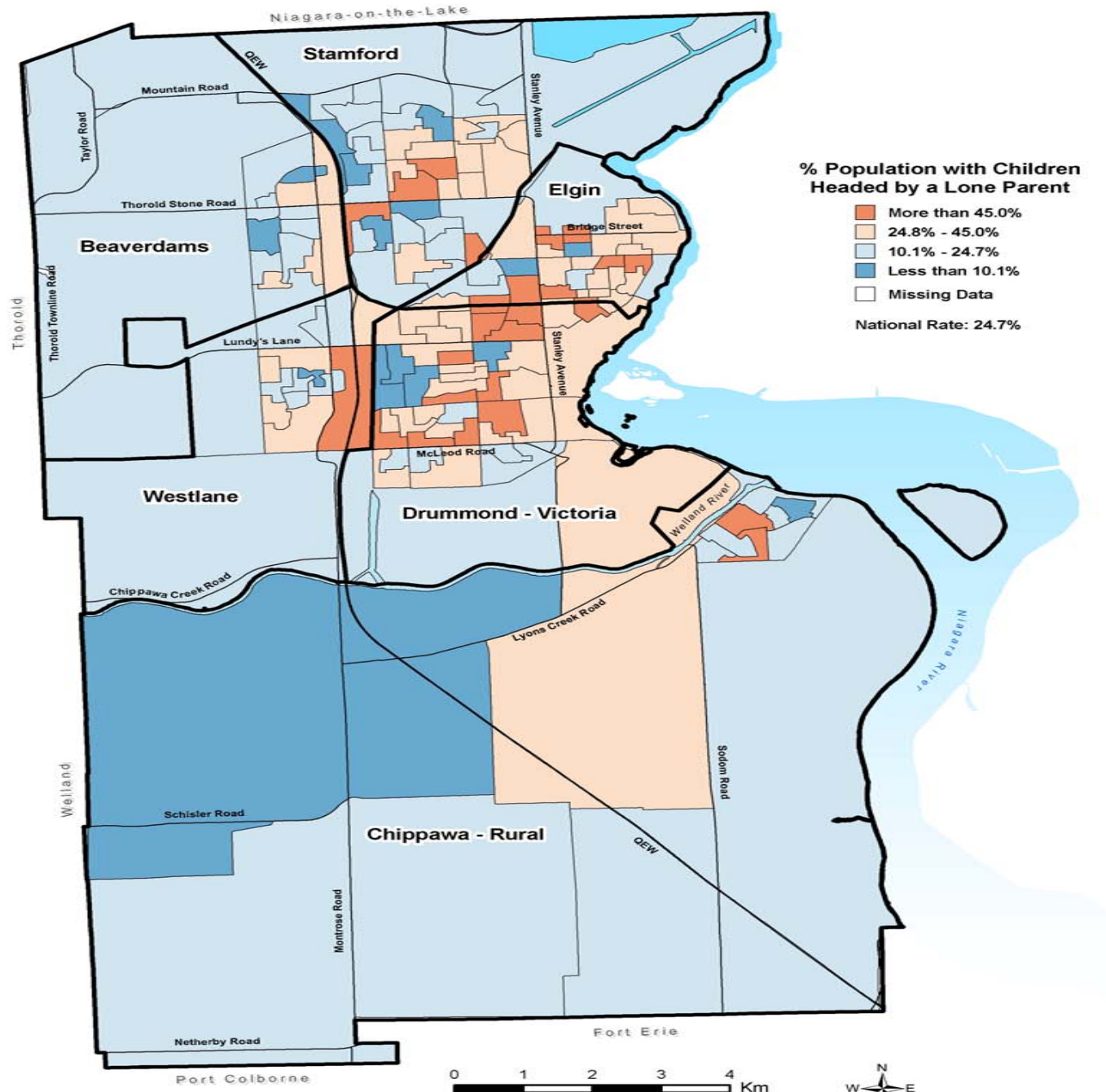
1. **Assets**
2. **Challenges**
3. **Relationships *between community factors, socioeconomic characteristics and children's readiness to learn at school***

Assets



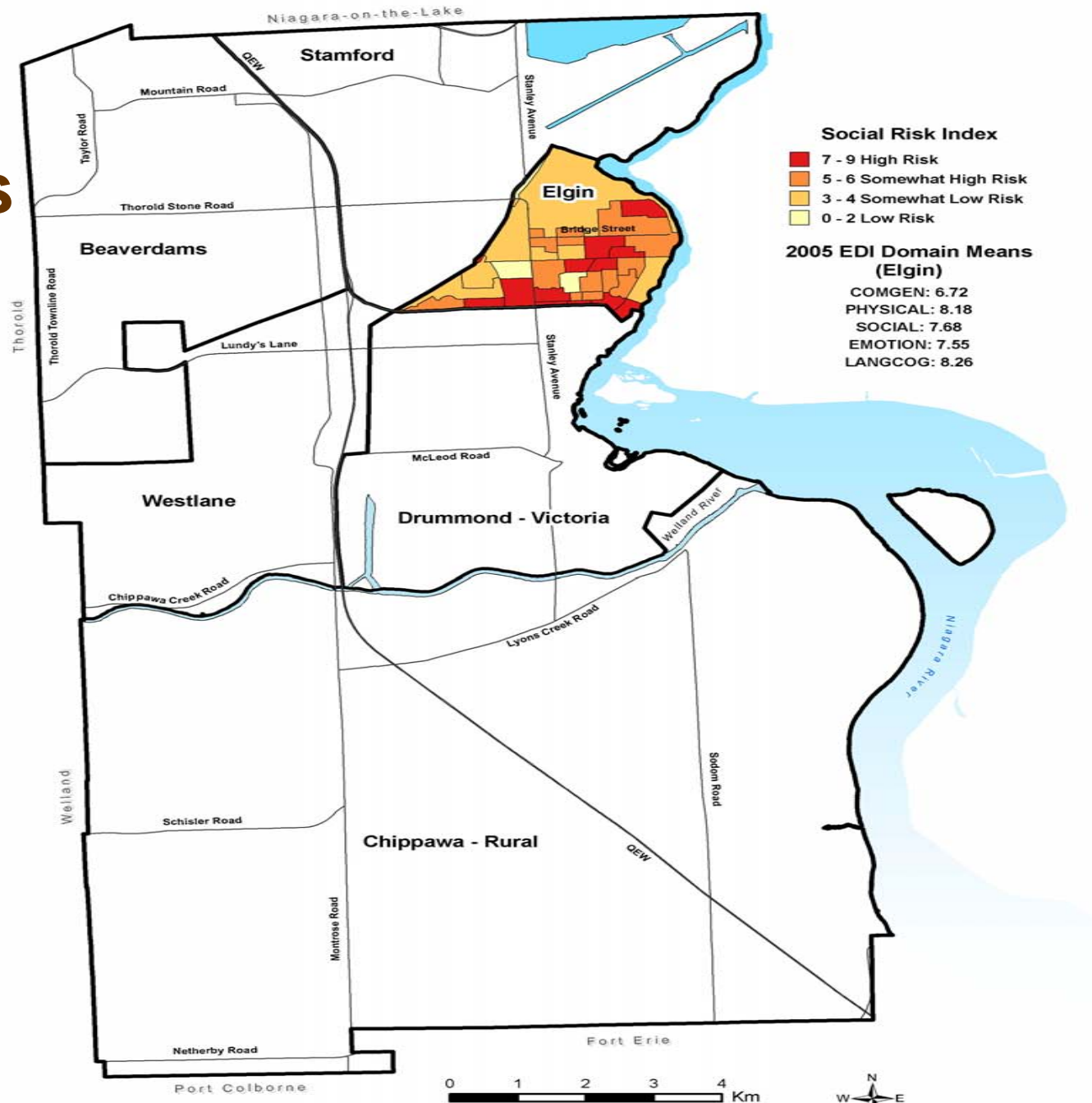
Data Sources: CRI (ECCDC), 2006.,
© 2006 - The Regional Municipality of Niagara.
Produced by: PREP Unit, Public Health, 2006.

Challenges



Data Sources: 2001 Census, [Dissemination Area]
 Statistics Canada. © 2006 - The Regional Municipality
 of Niagara. Produced by: PREP Unit, Public Health, 2006.

Relationships



Data Sources: 2001, Census [Dissemination Area]
 EDI Niagara Falls, (ECCDC), 2005.
 © 2006 - The Regional Municipality of Niagara.
 Produced by: PREP Unit, Public Health, 2006.

The UEY Reports:

- 1. Community Research Report**
- 2. Community Mapping Report**
- 3. Community Action Plan**
- 4. Range of communication products
(i.e. presentations and handouts,
community briefs)**

The UEY Impacts:

To-date, the data has been used to:

- 1. Identify program and service needs**
- 2. Plan and make decisions**
- 3. Allocate resources**
- 4. Write proposals**
- 5. Support professional development**

Some specifics...

Regional Municipality of Niagara Community and Children's Services Department:



***Used research to assist
with site planning and
selection***

Niagara Catholic District School Board (NCDSB):



Used UEY data, in conjunction with own research, for:

- > Programming and resource allocation purposes,*
- > Planning professional development,*
- > Justifying programs, and*

For example, the “Lion’s Quest” Social Skills Program

- > Target setting and evidence-based decision-making.*

For example, “Boys and Literacy Improvement Plan 2004-2008”

District School Board of Niagara (DSBN):



Used UEY findings to:

- > Increase educator awareness regarding the importance of the early years in setting trajectories for learning, health and behaviour,*
- > Provide direction for professional development activities, and*
- > To support decision-making concerning services and placement of child care programs within schools.*

Ontario Early Years Centers – Niagara Falls:



Used UEY data to:

- > Plan sites mobile resources and satellite services,***
- > Develop, adjust and resource programs,
For example, snacks for programs in high need areas***
- > Support successful proposals,
For example, the “Count Me In” Program***
- > Provide evidence for a community need, and
For example, the summer “School’s Cool” program***
- > Plan professional development for staff.***

Social Justice Committee - Trinity United Church, Grimsby:



Used UEY data such as:

***Children who attended part-time
preschool in Niagara Falls scored
significantly higher on Physical Health
& Well-Being and Communication Skills
& General Knowledge than children who
did not.***

***To motivate a public letter writing
campaign to MPs and MPPs concerning
early learning and care cuts.***

?? Dialogue Questions:

- 1. How might Early Childhood Educators and/or their Administrators use the UEY data to improve programs and services?***
- 2. How might the community use the UEY data to help in planning for the early years?***
- 3. Do you have any questions for us?***

Kindly complete an evaluation.

Thanks!

~ Marion & Glory