

Niagara Falls Understanding the Early Years Project

2007 ACTION PLAN

(Final)

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Niagara Falls Understanding the Early Years Project

Acknowledgements

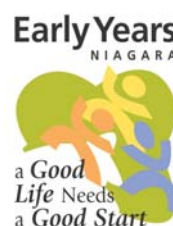
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Disclaimer

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The views and opinions of originators expressed herein do not necessarily state or reflect those of the ECCDC or any associate or partner thereof.

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Please Note

Throughout this document, several acronyms are used repeatedly. Refer to "APPENDIX 1: Acronyms" for a list of terms.

Niagara Falls Understanding the Early Years Project

Section 1: Overview

This report outlines suggested action strategies arising from the Understanding the Early Years (UEY) Niagara Falls project that are aimed at sustaining the community's capacity to use knowledge to improve outcomes for children 0-6 years. The document is intended for two key audiences: HRSDC (project funder); and community partners (comprised of project sponsor and staff, community coalition, advisory group, and various community agencies and members).

In creating this action plan, the authors incorporated activities already articulated and (in some cases) implemented, as well as additional steps that key partners of the UEY Niagara Falls project agree ought to be taken as the project sunsets (May 31, 2007).

Understanding the Early Years (UEY) is a national initiative, funded by Human Resources and Social Development Canada (HRSDC) 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 those needs. For more information, visit www.hrsdc.gc.ca. For more information on other UEY sites in Canada, please visit: http://www.hrsdc.gc.ca/en/hip/sd/UEYCFP2005/uey_communities.shtml.

UEY initiatives identify community factors that may influence children's development, readiness to learn in school, and family welfare (HRSDC, 2006) and are in response to the growing body of literature about how a child's first five years of development significantly affects learning, behaviour, and physical and emotional health across the lifespan (Henricsson & Rydell, 2006; Keating & Hertzman, 1999; McCain & Mustard, 1999; Schweinhart, 2005).

Researchers have provided evidence that demonstrates how social and economic context for children can have a powerful impact on long-term outcomes (Beauvais & Jenson, 2003; Brooks-Gunn, Duncan, Kelvanov, & Sealand, 1993; Connor & Brink, 1999; Kenny, 2006; McCain & Mustard, 1999; National Council of Welfare, 2004; Statistics Canada, 2001). A major component of UEY is to identify these community and neighbourhood social factors, conditions, and assets that may influence children's growth and development (HRSDC, 2006).

Data has been collected in Niagara Falls from 2001 to 2007 (UEY Niagara Falls; UEY Niagara Region & Ontario Early Years Niagara Region; 2001-2007). For a complete list of UEY Niagara Falls tools and data timelines, please see "Appendix 2: UEY Tools & Timeline". The intention of the UEY Niagara Falls project was to:

1. promote awareness and understanding concerning the importance of the early years,
2. examine the relationship between community factors and early learning and development outcomes in the city,
3. report on local and national findings, and
4. support evidence-based decision making and planning in the community (capacity building).

To that end, UEY Niagara Falls knowledge has been used in the following ways:

- local and national knowledge enhancement,
- identification of professional development and neighbourhood needs,
- program and service delivery planning,
- resource acquisitions and allocation decision-making,
- proposal, grant, and report writing,
- research and communication partnerships,
- media coverage and community action,
- sponsorship and/or collaboration on events, activities, and training, and
- inclusion in other plans and reports.

For more information on UEY Niagara Falls' reports, activities and impacts, please visit: www.uey.eccdc.org.

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Significant local collaboration and partnering occurred between UEY Niagara Falls and:

- The ECCDC
- Early Years Niagara and its Planning Council and Research Advisory Group
- Regional Municipality of Niagara's Public Health and Community Services, Children's Services' departments
- Ontario Early Years Centre – Niagara Falls and its Program Advisory Committee
- Ontario Early Years Niagara Region Data Analysis Coordinator
- Regional Municipality of Niagara, Public Health Department's PREP Unit and Healthy Babies, Healthy Children program
- District School Board of Niagara
- Niagara Catholic District School Board
- Brock University
- Niagara College
- Speech Services Niagara
- Niagara Falls Library
- Greater Niagara General Hospital
- City of Niagara Falls, Parks, Recreation & Culture

Additionally Early Years Niagara, its Research Advisory Group, and their members have made considerable progress on the suggested four key areas for action identified in the previous Niagara Falls Action Plan (2004):

1. sharing research information with community stakeholders,
2. supporting ongoing research,
3. sustaining a local research agenda, and
4. ongoing monitoring and evaluation.

As a result, the community has improved its ability to examine the conditions of children in Niagara Falls; building a base of knowledge and developing additional capacity for evidence-based planning.

Recommended strategies identified during a variety of UEY Niagara Falls activities seem to reflect a new level of suggested action, clustering around:

1. reducing barriers – especially for vulnerable groups,
2. ensuring appropriate, quality supports are located in strategic (evidence-based) locations,
3. improving community awareness and engagement, and
4. increasing collaboration and integration of services and communications.

The following statement summarizes recommendations to the community arising from this plan:

Focus on further increasing the effectiveness of services, communications, partnerships, and community mobilization for families with children 0-6 years, without sacrificing the positive relationships, plans, programs, and outcomes experienced in the past.

Section 2: UEY Niagara Falls Context

Picturesque Niagara Falls is located in the Niagara region of southeastern Ontario. Nestled along the Niagara River that divides Canada from the United States, it includes both urban and rural areas. Comprised of 212 square kilometres, the city is a huge tourist destination, resulting in high levels of seasonal, service-based employment. There is, however, a growing shortage of skilled tradespersons.

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Section 2: UEY Niagara Falls Context (continued)

There are 6 neighbourhoods and 28 elementary schools to serve a population of 78,815, with 6,025 children aged birth to six (Statistics Canada, 2001). Niagara Falls has been described as a safe and stable community with high levels of social support.

A large proportion (75%) of children in Niagara Falls are ready for learning in school, and are likely to adjust well and be academically successful (UEY & OEYNR, 2005)! Overall, senior kindergarten children in the city scored above the national averages on all five of the readiness to learn domains (UEY & OEYNR, 2005). Three out of five of the domains were found to be statistically significantly higher than the national averages; Language & Cognitive Development, Social Competence, and Emotional Maturity (UEY & OEYNR, 2005).

Niagara Falls had particular developmental strengths and challenges. Overall, Physical Health & Well-being, Social Competence, and Language & Cognitive Development were strengths because more children were ready for school in these domains (UEY & OEYNR, 2005), whereas, Emotional Maturity and Communication Skills & General Knowledge appeared to be areas of developmental challenge because fewer children were ready for school in these two domains (UEY & OEYNR, 2005).

It should be noted that information being collected through the Early Development Instrument has certain limitations concerning data specific to special needs, Francophone, and Aboriginal children.

Niagara Falls is not experiencing the degree of cultural diversity that larger urban centres experience in Canada (Statistics Canada, 2001). However, there are concentrated pockets in various neighbourhoods that have higher proportions of immigrant families with young children who may face barriers in accessing the city's resources. Also, the percentage of children who spoke languages other than English or French as their first language(s) doubled, up from 5% initially to 10% in 2005. The data also suggests that there is a significant relationship between mothers' birthplaces (born in Canada vs. other countries) and various children's outcomes (HRSDC analysis of Statistics Canada Communities Survey/NLSCY, 2002 and 2005).

There are also some neighbourhoods in Niagara Falls that seem to be experiencing more socioeconomic risk and this appears to result in higher proportions of their children being vulnerable in terms of their readiness to learn in school (UEY & OEYNR, 2005). The employment situation of parents is significantly related to Niagara Falls children's cognitive and behavioural development. Family income was also found to be associated with cognitive outcomes (HRSDC analysis of Statistics Canada Communities Survey/NLSCY, 2005).

The city is largely comprised of families with medium-to low household incomes, as measured by average household income and rate of reliance on government transfer payments (Statistics Canada, 2001). Lone parents head a disproportionate percentage of families and a large percentage of the residents over 20 years of age do not have high school diplomas (Statistics Canada, 2001). Despite these challenges, Niagara Falls compared favourably with the national averages on the social indicators of mobility and employment (Statistics Canada, 2001).

For more information on Niagara Falls neighbourhood level results, please visit:
www.uey.eccdc.org/niagarafalls.php.

Results from the 2002 and 2005 Communities Surveys confirmed the role of positive parenting in children's emotional development and provided some evidence on its importance in reducing children's attention deficit problems. Additionally, results from both years indicate that consistent parenting (parents who set clear and consistent rules for their children) was strongly related to better behavioural outcomes in the children (HRSDC analysis of Statistics Canada Communities Survey/NLSCY, 2002 and 2005).

Additionally the data indicates that the vast majority of Niagara Falls parents had been actively engaged in providing for their children a home environment filled with stimulating learning activities. Around nine in ten

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parents in Niagara Falls read to their child, taught their child numbers and words, and encouraged their child to use numbers, either daily or at least a few times a week (HRSDC analysis of Statistics Canada Communities Survey/NLSCY, 2002 and 2005).

Both Community Surveys also appeared to confirm a positive relationship between the level of community resource use and children's developmental outcomes. However, less than one in five children in Niagara Falls used educational programs and services in the community on a weekly or monthly basis. The rates of utilization of recreational facilities were the highest: around 70% of Niagara Falls children played in parks or play spaces at least weekly. Many parents reported in the community survey that they had difficulties accessing community programs or services. The three most common reasons, cited by parents in both years, were 'not enough time', 'costs of the programs' and 'programs offered at inconvenient times' (HRSDC analysis of Statistics Canada Communities Survey/NLSCY, 2002 and 2005).

According to parents in Niagara Falls, the proportion of children receiving child care has been increasing: initially 44.5% of their children were in a variety of non-parental child care arrangements; in 2005, the same figure was up by 23%, reaching a total of 54.8%. On the whole, compared to the previous figures, 2005 saw a drop in the use of non-relative care and an increase in the use of daycare centres and before/after school programs; however, the overall use of relatives to take care of young children remained fairly steady during the period (HRSDC analysis of Statistics Canada Communities Survey/NLSCY, 2002 and 2005).

The vast majority of Niagara Falls children continued to enjoy good health in 2005, despite the fact that one in four of them had a long-term condition. Children in the city showed some improvement over the period on measures of emotional development and social behaviours, except for physical aggression. The prevalence of hyperactive children used to be very high in Niagara Falls, with one in five children showing signs of short attention span. This prevalence declined considerably and by 2005, only 7% of children in Niagara Falls were found to have signs of inattention problems (HRSDC analysis of Statistics Canada Communities Survey/NLSCY, 2002 and 2005).

In 2005, 35% of parents (mostly mothers) reported they had a chronic health condition. Although more than one-third of parents suffered from a long-term health condition, the vast majority of them (over 90%) rated themselves as having generally good to excellent health. The data also confirmed that the mother's health was related to children's emotional development and aggressive behaviours. In addition, the 2005 results also provided some evidence further confirming that the mother's poor health could be related to children's vocabulary learning and hyperactivity (HRSDC analysis of Statistics Canada Communities Survey/NLSCY, 2005).

Identifying challenges is in no way meant to diminish the strengths and positive outcomes being experienced in Niagara Falls. On the contrary, the community challenge (think potential opportunity!) may be in maintaining the positive momentum and results generated by the existing assets; in fact, using and building on these strengths in order to improve outcomes for the children who are experiencing difficulties.

Some of these strengths are outlined in the next section on Previous Action Planning Successes.

Section 3: Previous Action Planning Successes

2004 Action Plan Update

In 2004, the Centre for Research and Education in Human Services (CREHS), in partnership with the UEY Niagara Falls Coordinator (Lori Walker), prepared an action plan to be utilized by the Early Years Niagara Research Action Group (EYNRAG) entitled, "Understanding the Early Years Niagara Falls Project's ACTION PLAN" (2004-2005). The lessons taken from the UEY Niagara Falls project, as reported in that document,

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Section 3: Previous Action Planning Successes (continued)

clustered around a single theme:

“We can’t improve the health of young children, families, and the communities where they live until we take an honest and thorough look at the current situation.”

The plan suggested four (4) key areas for further action:

1. sharing research information with community stakeholders,
2. supporting ongoing research,
3. sustaining a local research agenda, and
4. ongoing monitoring and evaluation.

In addition to the use of UEY information outlined in the previous section, EYNRAG and the wider community has made great progress on the above in many regards. Information of various sorts has been widely shared and a number of local research initiatives have been supported. Efforts of particular note in the community include:

- Under the leadership of co-chairs Margaret Andrewes and Dr. Robin Williams, the Early Years Niagara Planning Council’s ongoing efforts and its approval of a 2008 community report to be developed by EYNRAG;
- The Best Start Network’s, Early Years Niagara Planning Council’s, and the Regional Municipality of Niagara – Children’s Services Department’s development of their respective Community Plans;
- The ongoing research efforts and evidence-based planning of both the Niagara Catholic District School Board and the District School Board of Niagara;
- The development of Off To School Calendars, the Niagara Region Early Years Research Inventory and Community Snapshot, under the leadership of the Early Years Niagara Research Advisory Group;
- The Niagara Children’s Rights Charter, under the leadership of Pat Heidebrecht, Director of Regional Municipality of Niagara, Community Services, Children’s Services Department;
- The Regional Municipality of Niagara – Public Health Department’s Healthy Babies, Healthy Children’s joint community initiative with Speech Services Niagara on the 18 Month Baby Wellness Project;
- Successful funding bid for Literacy services, under the leadership of Jackie Van Lankveld, Manager, Speech Services Niagara;
- The Parenting Strategies Initiative, under the leadership of EYN and Linda Langston, Niagara Child and Youth Services; and
- Quality Child Care Niagara’s continuing activities, under the leadership of Janice Horner, Manager – Regional Municipality of Niagara, Community Services, Children’s Services Department.

An additional recommendation arising out of the 2004 Niagara Falls Action Plan concerned the changing nature and role of the community coalition and steering committee. In 2003, the existing coalition for the project, the Early Years Action Group - Niagara Region (EYAG-NR), was dissolved and a new coordinating body for early years services was established; Early Years Niagara (EYN), which also became the new coalition for UEY Niagara Falls. The Steering Committee of UEY Niagara Falls also decided to re-define and extend their mandate and became the Early Years Niagara Research Advisory Group (EYNRAG).

The intention was that the Early Years Niagara Coordinator would liaise between these two bodies and there would be a number of "advisory groups" to feed information into this overall structure. EYNRAG would then report on activities and knowledge to the community coalition (“Understanding the Early Years (UEY) Niagara Falls Project ACTION PLAN”, 2004, p. 8 and 9).

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Through these activities, it was anticipated that EYNRAG would grow to become an umbrella for early years research initiatives across the Niagara Region and that the UEY Niagara Falls project would be just one component of their larger mandate. While this has generally occurred, changes in governments, funding, and transitions in EYNRAG membership and leadership have complicated and slowed this process.

EYNRAG has, in fact, broadened its overall focus and expanded its meeting agenda items to include regular updates from members, and sharing research report summaries and project opportunities. It is also currently working on a collaborative project to develop and release a community report (anticipated November 2008).

However; time, energy, and (in some cases) resources continued to be challenges for EYNRAG as it completed the Early Years Research Inventory, Community Snapshot, and Off To School Calendar projects. At the same time, EYNRAG is attempting to move towards furthering a regional research agenda and looking at strategies for gathering and disseminating knowledge for mobilizing the community.

Also, in 2007 EYN integrated with the Niagara Children's Planning Council to become Early Years Niagara Planning Council. EYN also continues to provide significant support to the Niagara Region Best Start Network and, through EYNRAG, the Understanding the Early Years Niagara Region project.

The community has made significant progress in examining the conditions of children in Niagara Falls; building a base of knowledge and developing additional capacity for evidence-based planning.

UEY Niagara Falls Planning Implementation

The project has been using a 'Participatory Action-based Research' model whereby:

- plans are developed, based on the project mandate and deliverables,
- action is taken in conjunction with EYN/EYNRAG and community partners,
- feedback on activities is gathered and reflected upon, and
- revisions are made, as appropriate, to planned activities and/or products.

Therefore, written and verbal feedback on how the Niagara Falls UEY knowledge has been, or might be, used by the community was collected through evaluation surveys and facilitated dialogues, EYNRAG decisions and member feedback, and communication with other community partners. In total, responses were received from over 125 individuals representing a wide range of key stakeholders.

UEY Niagara Falls addressed all inquiries and implemented a variety of recommendations put forward by the community, including:

- School Board administrators, elected officials, and EYNRAG members were first to be briefed on outcomes.
- Data and/or presentations were provided to a wide variety of partners, for planning purposes.
- Key partners were invited to presentations and/or were sent reports (Libraries; Municipal representatives; Regional, Provincial, and Federal government representatives and departments; local School Boards; OEYCs; Ministry of Children and Youth Services; Special Needs Teams; AECEO; AFSSN; GNGH; Healthy From The Start; Public Health department, etc...).
- Website improvements and launch suggestions were put in place.
- Revisions were made to reports and/or communication products.
- Collaborated with Ontario Early Years Niagara Region DAC in order to link research, coordinate dissemination, and generally support community understanding and planning.
- Partnered on a variety of community events, as well as on other research and the development and distribution of communication products.
- Regularly reported (monthly) on upcoming plans, in order to ensure maximum integration and coordination, and avoid duplication.
- Ensured that reports were widely accessible; available electronically and also distributed through the ECCDC, EYNRAG, and EYN.

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Section 3: Previous Action Planning Successes (continued)

- Media coverage was arranged, in order to promote community understanding and awareness.
- Copied all Niagara Falls maps onto acetate transparencies and made available for community borrowing through the ECCDC's Resource Library (i.e. overlay maps on overhead projector to compare key data).
- Targeted efforts to reach more parents.
- Additional information on the demographics of children in Niagara Falls was included in the published 2007 Niagara Falls Community Mapping Study report and separately provided to several service providers.
- Niagara Falls EDI scores, over time, were provided to the OEYC (Ontario Early Years Centre) Niagara Falls Coordinator.
- Community capacity building occurred, through providing or partnering on presentations, professional development workshops, and resources.
- Supported proposal and grant writing in the community.
- Held community meetings.
- Developed and provided more detailed and/or specific information, upon request.
- Provided information specifically tailored to ECEs and JK/SK teachers.

By implementing input from the community, UEY Niagara Falls attempted to support the efforts of partners to improve outcomes for children and further the aims of the previous Action Plan, while still meeting its own deliverables and timelines.

Niagara Falls is in an extremely advantageous situation, in that Human Resources and Social Development Canada has funded another UEY project which has a region-wide focus (UEY Niagara Region; present – September, 2008). This will provide yet another full set of mapped information for the community (2006 EDI, 2007 Community Inventory Resource, 2001 Census) and provide additional knowledge dissemination, community engagement, communications, and planning support opportunities.

Ongoing data collection is also being undertaken by a variety of EYNRAG members (i.e. both school boards, OEYNR Data Analysis Coordinator, Regional Municipality of Niagara, Brock University, Quality Child Care Niagara, etc...) all of which will assist greatly with efforts towards supporting ongoing research, sharing information with community stakeholders, sustaining a local research agenda, and ongoing monitoring and evaluation. Finally, there is an effective structure and reporting process in place to ensure that community knowledge reaches the hands of key planners and other interested community members.

Where do we go from here? To answer this, UEY Niagara Falls turned to the community.

Section 4: Data-driven Input from the Community

While the UEY Niagara Falls project has no authority to mandate recommendations, it can share the suggested strategies provided for consideration by the community.

UEY Niagara Falls partnered with the OEYC – Niagara Falls, the NCDSB, the Niagara Falls Library, and other service providers to deliver community forums, presentations, and action planning meetings. As part of these activities and communications, additional action planning ideas were generated. General recommendations included:

- Barriers to accessing resources (transportation and cost) must be addressed
- Economic and social conditions for immigrant and lone parent families must be addressed
- Quality supports for both stay at home and working parents are needed (i.e. changing care needs re: before/after school, weekends, school breaks, and accessible community programs)

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- Increased awareness that early development begins at conception and early learning begins at birth is required
- Optimal location of services needs to be confirmed and monitored (i.e. in areas of most need)
- Re-location and/or partnering opportunities should be explored
- Difficult to effectively reach parents and build community awareness of programs and services
- Integrated and effective flow of information is needed
- Further work around building a sense of community pride/attachment in Niagara Falls seems needed
- Must respond to pressures from other nearby urban centres (i.e. economic, cultural, and recreational competition)
- Ensure that promotion and referrals come from all community partners and collaborations/partnerships are effective
- Family-friendly business practices should be promoted and corporate sponsorships pursued
- Conduct further investigation into areas of weakness and strength (i.e. predictor analysis) and continue to monitor outcomes and conditions
- Partner to gather and/or obtain additional knowledge concerning developmental outcomes and school readiness among Francophone, Aboriginal children, as well as those with special needs
- Increase involvement of politicians
- Provide incentives/motivation for community involvement
- Library branches, OEYCs, Project Share, and schools are important vehicles for community attachment, service delivery, and communication

The following strategies were also identified:

- Integrate and support more school involvement
- Finding resources for ESL and lone parent supports required
- Advise employers, physicians/pediatricians and pharmacists, of results of data
- Provide free programs in areas of high need - services (based on outcomes on 5 domains of EDI) in Elgin, Westlane, and Drummond/Victoria during evenings and afternoons
- Address low Communication and General Knowledge scores and examine vis a vis increase in 'screen viewing' time (i.e. TV, computer)
- Use facilities that are already available in evenings (i.e. schools, churches, halls) and volunteer groups to provide free services
- Use local knowledge to develop criteria for target group(s), service(s), and location of Community Health Centre
- Bring in parents and include what they want/need (i.e. parent surveying, Parent Councils, community events, parent meetings)
- Provide YMCA a bus like Project Share has
- Explore a low-cost OEYC bus system (i.e. .25 cents/ride, bus passes)
- Provide unified messaging through key community vehicles (i.e. Parent Councils, 211, media, Recreation Guides, and Transition to School materials) delivered at strategic, developmentally-based points (i.e. prenatal classes, 18 month wellness visits, etc...)
- Provide supports for environmental improvements in targeted areas (ex. Parks, playgrounds, community gardens, etc...) through corporate sponsorship (i.e. Casino)

Recommended strategies seemed to cluster around:

1. reducing barriers,
2. ensuring appropriate, quality supports are located in strategic (evidence-based) locations,
3. improving community awareness and engagement, and
4. increasing collaboration and integration of services and communications.

While no specific community champions, or agencies assuming responsibility, were identified in the process of gathering the above feedback, there are a variety of community partners who are already engaged in various aspects.

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Section 4: Data-driven Input from the Community (continued)

Given this, UEY Niagara Falls recommends that EYN, EYNRAG, the ECCDC (UEY), and other community partners:

Focus on further increasing the effectiveness of services, communications, partnerships, and community mobilization for families with children 0-6 years, without sacrificing the positive relationships, plans, programs, and outcomes experienced in the past.

Section 5: Conclusion

Niagara Falls is in an extremely advantageous situation, in that Human Resources and Social Development Canada has funded another UEY project which has a region-wide focus (UEY Niagara Region; present – September, 2008). This will provide another full set of mapped information for the community (2006 EDI, 2007 Community Inventory Resource, 2001 Census) and provide additional knowledge dissemination, community engagement, communications and planning support opportunities.

Ongoing data collection is also being undertaken by a variety of EYNRAG members (i.e. both school boards, OEYNR Data Analysis Coordinator, Regional Municipality of Niagara, Quality Child Care Niagara, Brock University, etc...) all of which will assist greatly with efforts towards supporting ongoing research, sharing information with community stakeholders, sustaining a local research agenda, and ongoing monitoring and evaluation. Finally, there is an effective structure and reporting process in place to ensure that community knowledge reaches the hands of key planners and other interested community members.

Strategies for future Niagara Falls efforts and planning, recommended by the community, seemed to cluster around:

1. reducing barriers,
2. ensuring appropriate, quality supports are located in strategic (evidence-based) locations,
3. improving community awareness and engagement, and
4. increasing collaboration and integration of services and communications.

Given the range of resources, initiatives, and key partners committed to Understanding the Early Years and improving local outcomes, UEY Niagara Falls suggests that, in the future, community activities:

Focus on further increasing the effectiveness of services, communications, partnerships, and community mobilization for families with children 0-6 years, without sacrificing the positive relationships, plans, programs, and outcomes experienced in the past.

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Appendix 1: Acronyms

AECEO	Association of Early Childhood Educators of Ontario
AFSSN	Adolescent's Family Support Services of Niagara
BEC	Business Education Council
CMS	Community Mapping Study
DAC	Data Analysis Coordinator (Local community research position funded by the Ontario Early Years initiative)
DSBN	District School Board of Niagara
ECCDC	Early Childhood Community Development Centre (Sponsor and host of the Understanding the Early Years Niagara Falls Project)
ECE	Early Childhood Educator
EDI	Early Development Instrument
EYAG-NR	Early Years Action Group – Niagara Region (Previous community coalition for UEY Niagara Falls 2001-2003)
EYN	Early Years Niagara (Sponsor of the Understanding the Early Years Niagara Falls Project; cross-sectoral coalition addressing early years issues in Niagara Region)
EYNRAG	Early Years Niagara Research Advisory Group (Advisory body of the Understanding the Early Years Niagara Falls Project)
HRSDC	Human Resources and Social Development Canada (Funder of Understanding the Early Years)
JK	Junior Kindergarten (Currently neither mandatory nor specifically funded)
NLSCY	National Longitudinal Survey of Children and Youth
NCDSD	Niagara Catholic District School Board
OEY	Ontario Early Years (A set of provincially funded early years programs and services)
OEYCs	Ontario Early Years Centres
OEYNR	Ontario Early Years Niagara Region (Program area of DAC)
PAC	Program Advisory Committee (Attached to the Ontario Early Years Centres)
PREP Unit	Planning, Research, Evaluation and Policy Unit, Regional Municipality of Niagara Public Health Department
QCCN	Quality Child Care Niagara
RMN	Regional Municipality of Niagara
SK	Senior Kindergarten (Currently mandatory but not specifically funded)
UEY	Understanding the Early Years (A federal research and development project that looks at community impacts on child development)

2007 Action Plan

Appendix 2: UEY Tools & Timeline

UEY Tools

- Children's Development, Family & Community Experience
- Early Development Instrument (EDI)
- Parent Interviews and Direct Assessment of Children (formerly Community Study components of NLSCY)
- Community Assets
- Community Resource Inventory
- Community Factors
- Socioeconomic Conditions and Social Risk Index (Census data)

UEY Timeline

2001	Early Development Instrument (EDI) - UEY Niagara Falls Census Data – Statistics Canada
2002	National Longitudinal Study of Children & Youth (NLSCY) - Statistics Canada EDI – UEY Niagara Falls/Ontario Early Years Niagara Region
2003	EDI – UEY Niagara Falls Community Resources Inventory Survey – Ontario Early Years Niagara Region/UEY Niagara Falls
2005	EDI - UEY Niagara Falls/Ontario Early Years Niagara Region National Longitudinal Study of Children & Youth (NLSCY) - Statistics Canada
2006	EDI – UEY Niagara Region Community Resources Inventory Survey – UEY Niagara Region
2007	Parent Interviews and Direct Assessment of Children Survey (PIDACS) – UEY Niagara Region, HRSDC, and R.A. Malatest & Associates, Inc. Community Resources Inventory Survey (updates) – UEY Niagara Region

