



"READY OR NOT"

EARLY DEVELOPMENT INSTRUMENT

TEACHER NEWSLETTER

THE IMPORTANCE OF READINESS TO LEARN

Recently, school readiness has been the topic of much research. Studies have shown that readiness to learn at age six can predict a child's ability to benefit from the opportunities school has to offer, both academically, and socially. On the other hand, lack of readiness may make it difficult for children to adjust to school; to succeed academically; and to be accepted by their peers.

School readiness is often thought of in terms of chronological age and the possession of certain academic skills (i.e. the ability to identify numbers and letters), and cognitive skills (i.e. the ability to memorize and retain information).

However, understanding the transition-to-school process and children's early experiences in school requires moving beyond traditional academic and cognitive definitions of readiness to include components of child development that are less obviously related to academic success. This holistic approach to readiness to learn 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

EARLY DEVELOPMENT INSTRUMENT

The Early Development Instrument (EDI) was developed by the late Dr. Dan Offord & Dr. Magdalena Janus at the Offord Centre for Child Studies, McMaster University. It is a research tool that provides a snapshot of how ready the children in a community are to take advantage of the many learning opportunities school presents. The EDI is based on your observations, as kindergarten teachers, of the children in your class. The EDI examines developmental outcomes, grouping them into five domains:

- Physical Health and Well-being
- Emotional Maturity
- Social Competence
- Language and Cognitive Development
- Communication Skills and General Knowledge

The purpose of the EDI is to:

- Report on populations of children in communities
- Monitor populations of children over time
- Predict how children will do in elementary school

The EDI is:

- A population measure
- A teacher completed checklist with students in mind
- An observation of behaviour in kindergarten
- There is no direct assessment
- Results are interpreted on a group/school level

The EDI is not:

- A diagnostic tool
- A measure of school or teacher performance

ORGANIZATIONAL ISSUES

- ◆ **TEACHER DEMOGRAPHIC FORM** - Each teacher has been assigned a unique 9 digit identifier. Please fill out one form for *each class* you teach. The form is not used for evaluation of any kind, rather it provides general characteristics of the population of teachers and helps keep things organized.
- ◆ **EDI GUIDE** - The Guide is intended to facilitate the completion of the EDI. It should be reviewed before completing, but consulted only in doubt while completing. If you have any further comments regarding the Guide, please send them to the Offord Centre for Child Studies.
- ◆ **CLASS LIST** - There are two class lists for each class. The first includes school name, teacher name, child's unique EDI identifier, child's local identifier, date of birth and gender. The second list consists of child's first and last names and local identifier. The local identifier acts as the common variable between the two lists and will help to determine which EDI applies to which child. *Once completed, please shred the class list containing the child's personal information.*
- ◆ **EDI COMPLETION** - Before you start completing the EDI questionnaires, please read through the entire Guide. Even if you have done the EDI in the past, take some time to review, as there might be changes from past questionnaires and it will also serve as a refresher. Initially, it should take 20 minutes to complete each EDI, however, once you are familiar with the questions, it should take approximately 10 minutes per questionnaire. *Please return completed EDIs to: Kathy Thompson.*



TIMELINE

Feb. 23rd – Teacher Training - You can begin completing & 25th EDIs for kids with permission
 Feb. 25th – Parent Permission Forms returned
 March 25th – Last day to return final EDIs

PAYMENT

You will be paid \$11 per completed EDI. Once all questionnaires are returned, you will be contacted at school for your home address, where the cheques will be sent.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

❶ Why is the EDI being done again?

Additional data is needed to substantiate previous results and provide added confidence when planning. Additionally, programs/services and businesses can benefit from EDI information to assist in planning and promote family friendly initiatives.

❷ What if I don't have enough EDIs?

Each envelop has an extra EDI questionnaire. However, if you need more than one extra, please feel free to photocopy the blank EDI questionnaire. When completing the blank questionnaire for a child, please fill in the following information, where appropriate:

- Data of birth
- Gender
- Postal code
- Teacher ID #

❸ What if the EDI label is incorrect?

Before filling out each EDI questionnaire, please note that the following information is correct:

- Child's data of birth
- Gender
- Class assignment

❹ Who has access to the information?

As part of the data agreement signed by each school board, only the Understanding the Early Years Coordinator and the Offord Centre at McMaster University has access to the data. This is in addition to each school board having data on their schools.

◆ Additional Questions/Concerns ◆

If you have any questions or concerns regarding the EDI, please do not hesitate to contact:
 Angela Di Nello, 905-646-7311, ueyniagara@eccdc.org

HIGHLIGHTS OF NIAGARA REGION EDI SUCCESS STORIES

FEDERAL, PROVINCIAL AND REGIONAL PARTNERSHIP

- Contributed to national data collection, community research on child development
- Ministry of Community, Family and Children's Services reviewed findings when planning for relocation of a critical program/service.

COMMUNITIES & PROGRAMS

- Ontario Early Years Centre (OEYC) used findings:
 - To planned sites for mobile resources and satellite services;
 - To purchase resources and develop programming
 - In a successful numeracy and social/emotional development program bid
- Findings framed the development of information forums, community conferences and communication materials to increase general public knowledge of the importance of the Early Years.

SCHOOLS

- NCDSB used findings in conjunction with own research for programming purposes and resource allocation and to plan professional development for principals.
- DSNB cited findings to support a successful program proposal to the Ontario Government

ACADEMIC RESEARCH

- University of Guelph student used data for applied Geographic Information Systems research.
- Brock Graduate student analyzed Niagara Regional EDI data.