



Why do the early years matter?

Research shows that what happens in early childhood plays a big role in lifelong health, well-being, and learning. From birth to the start of kindergarten, more brain connections are made than between kindergarten and adulthood. Positive experiences during this time can help the brain develop in healthy ways.

What is the Early Development Instrument (EDI)?

The EDI is a questionnaire that measures five general areas of child development: Physical Health & Well-Being; Social Competence; Emotional Maturity; Language & Cognitive Development; and Communication Skills & General Knowledge. Research has shown that these areas of child development are related to adult health, education and social outcomes. The summary of the five areas of the EDI questionnaire, and the types of questions asked are on the following page.



The EDI at a glance

- Canadian-made research questionnaire developed at the Offord Centre for Child Studies at McMaster University.
- Completed by kindergarten teachers for children in their classrooms in February in the school year.
- Designed to help us understand trends in children's development at a population level.
- Never used as an individual assessment of a child and no child's EDI results are individually reported. Instead, a child's EDI data are included in summary data only, showing trends at a group level, such as school district or neighbourhood.
- Participation by individual schools, teachers and parents and/or caregivers is completely voluntary.

What are we learning from the EDI?

EDI data and research can provide insight into how kindergarten children are doing and facilitate discussions about the factors affecting children's early development in neighbourhoods across the province. With over 20 years of EDI data in BC, clear trends and patterns in children's development are emerging. Based on data collected during Wave 8 (2019-21), 32.9% of BC kindergarten children are vulnerable in one or more aspects of their development. Vulnerable children are children who, without additional support and care, may experience future challenges in school and society.

Do you want to learn more?

- [Parent/Caregiver Information](#)
- [Reports summarizing EDI data at the provincial and community-level](#)

Check out our EDI Dashboard!

The EDI Data Dashboard is an online, interactive tool for exploring patterns and trends in EDI data across all waves and several geographic boundaries, including the community and neighbourhood level, along with other BC ministry boundaries, such as health authorities.

You can find your EDI community data on the EDI dashboard here: <https://dashboard.earlylearning.ubc.ca/>



EDI areas of child development



Physical Health & Well-Being

Questions regarding children's gross and fine motor skills, physical independence and readiness for the school day. E.g., Can the child hold a pencil? Is the child able to manipulate objects? Is the child on time for school?



Social Competence

Questions regarding children's overall social competencies, capacity for respect and responsibility, approaches to learning, and readiness to explore new things. E.g., Is the child able to follow class routines? Is the child self-confident? Is the child eager to read a new book?



Emotional Maturity

Questions regarding children's prosocial and helping behaviours, as well as hyperactivity and inattention, and aggressive, anxious and fearful behaviour. E.g., Does the child appear fearful or anxious? Is the child impulsive, acts without thinking?



Language & Cognitive Development

Questions regarding children's basic and advanced literacy skills, numeracy skills, interest in math and reading, and memory. E.g., Is the child interested in reading and writing? Can the child count and recognize numbers? Is the child able to read simple sentences?



Communication Skills & General Knowledge

Questions regarding children's English language skills and general knowledge. E.g., Can the child tell a story? Can the child communicate with adults and children? Can the child take part in imaginative play?

The Human Early Learning Partnership

The Human Early Learning Partnership (HELP) is a research institute based at the University of British Columbia. For over 20 years HELP has worked in partnership with schools and school districts across British Columbia to gather population-health data related to healthy child development. The EDI is one of a family of tools that can be used as part of HELP's child monitoring system. The information collected is shared with schools and communities to support children and their families. Please visit earlylearning.ubc.ca to learn more about HELP.

If you have any questions about this project, please contact the EDI Project team:

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Kindergarten 

CHEQ
Childhood Experiences
Questionnaire
Parent & Caregiver Questionnaire

Kindergarten 

EDi
Early Development
Instrument
Teacher Questionnaire

Grades 4-8 

MDi
Middle Years Development
Instrument
Student Questionnaire

HUMAN
EARLY LEARNING
PARTNERSHIP

