Learning as we grow: Comparing approaches to creating and implementing integrated children's centres across Canada

Jessie-Lee McIsaac, Jane Bertrand, Brenda Poon, Sara Kirk

PUBLIC HEALTH 2017

Session objectives

By the end of the session, participants should be able to:

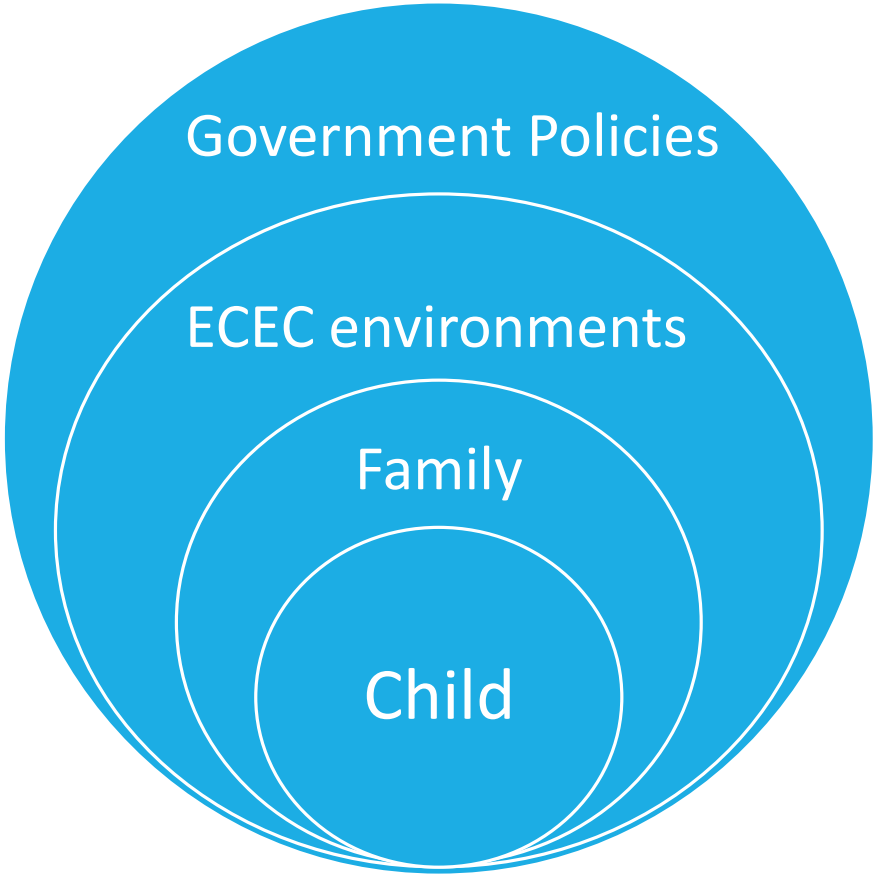
- Appreciate the importance of investing in early childhood development as a means to improve public health
- Distinguish the strengths and challenges of the models presented as they relate to regional resources, geography, relational culture, and local values and beliefs influencing early child care and education.
- Identify approaches that address known challenges influencing the establishment of optimal care and learning environments for young children and their families.

Session overview

- Introductions and setting the context
- Examples of integrated approaches
  - Toronto First Duty – Jane Bertrand
  - BC Early Years Centres – Brenda Poon
  - NS Early Years Centres – Sara Kirk
- Discussion and engagement – opportunities and challenges
- Wrap-up

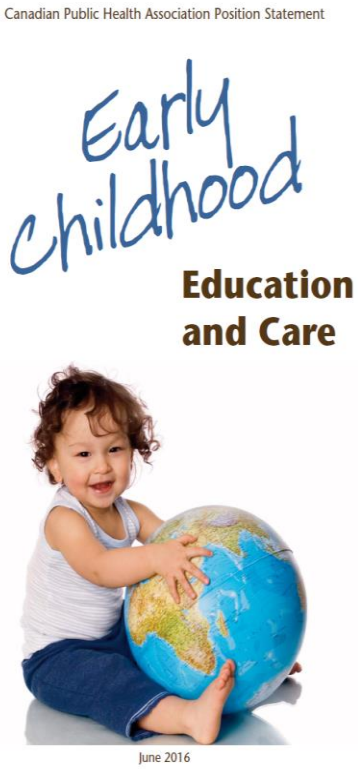
Early childhood development

- Critical period for supporting lifelong health and learning
- Families are a key determinant of child well-being
- Physical and social environments of early childhood education and care (ECEC) environments also shape a child's development and well-being



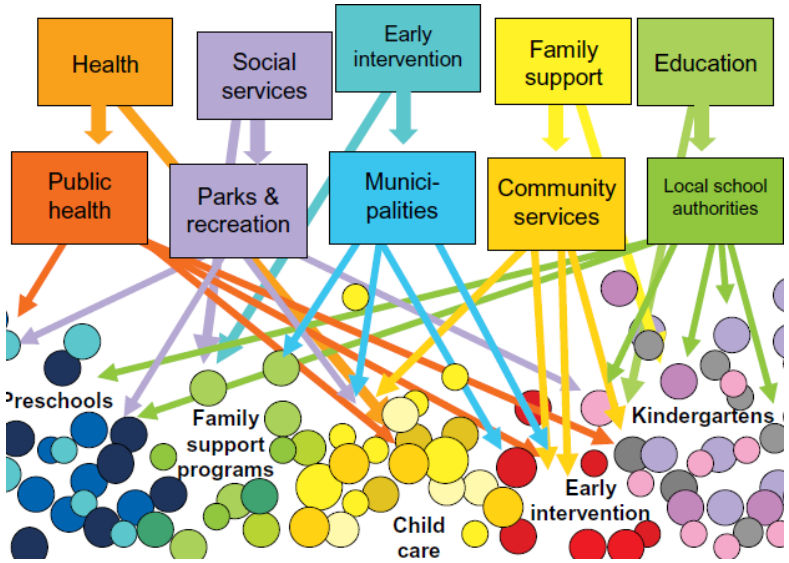
CPHA Position Statement

- Calls on Federal government to work with provinces and territories to establish a pan-Canadian strategy
  - Stimulating learning and physical environments, attention to the needs of children from vulnerable groups;
  - Universal access to ECEC services, affordable and proportionate fees;
  - Targeted federal funding to support program development, provider education, delivery and performance evaluation;
  - Increased provincial and territorial oversight of ECEC providers.



Challenges during early childhood

- Clear socio-economic gradient in early childhood
- Families needs are diverse and changing
- Navigating the complex system of programs and services can be challenging



'Chaos' described in Early Years Study 2 (McCain, Mustard and Shanker, 2007)

Opportunities for integration

- Efforts to integrate programs and services sectors are underway
- Universal nature of programs important to ensure support for all families experiencing vulnerabilities
- Important to better understand and build upon early successes of integrated approaches across the country

Case models

TORONTO
FIRST
DUTY
Early Learning and Care
For Every Child

BRITISH
COLUMBIA
Early Years
Centre
Home of StrongStartBC

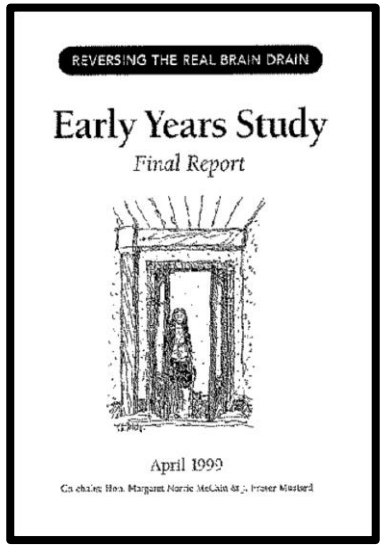
NOVA SCOTIA CANADA
Education & Early Childhood Development

Toronto First Duty

Fraser Mustard and Margaret McCain told us why early education is a must for every child. Toronto First Duty showed us how it can be accomplished.

JANE BERTRAND

HALIFAX, JUNE 7, 2017

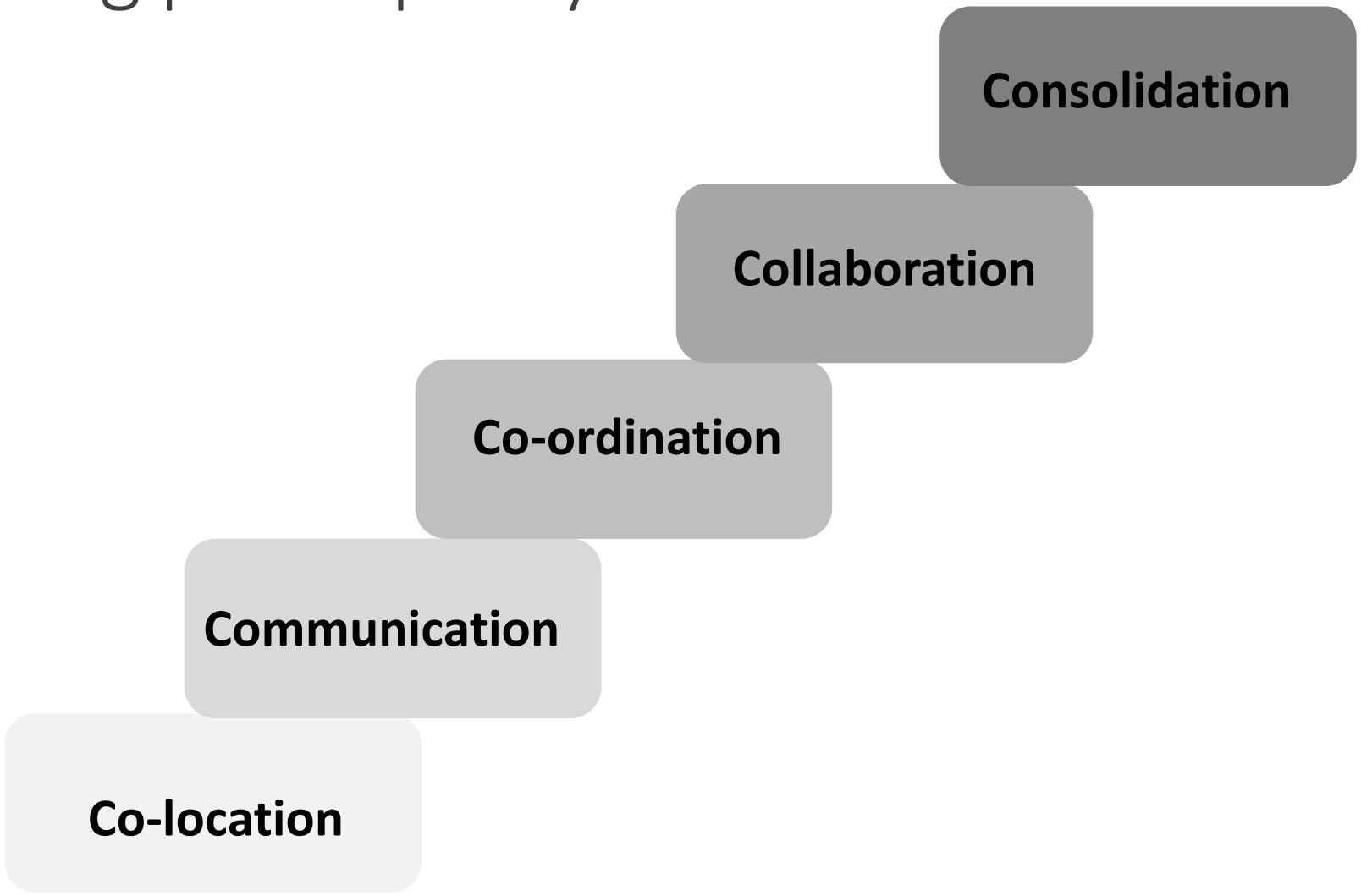


1999 - A system of ECD centres for all children & their families

TORONTO FIRST DUTY

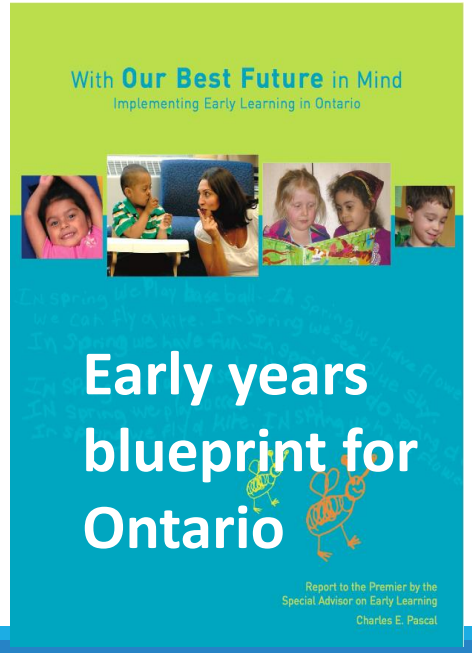
2000 - Early learning for every child

Test-driving public policy…….



Moving to system integration

New Brunswick Early Child Development Centres



Lessons learned two decades on..

Consolidation of early learning continuum (from 0 to 8 years) essential

Public education is the anchor - to catch vulnerable children, catch all of the children

Platform for coherent coordination with public health, early intervention, child welfare and family resources

Effective early childhood workforce is the ‘active ingredient’ to effective delivery that makes a difference

For more information: http://www1.toronto.ca/wps/portal/contentonly?vgnextoid=3cfad25ed83ae310VgnVCM10000071d60f89RCRD

Integrating Early Years Service Delivery in BC

Studies of Early Years Service Systems and Collaborative Planning Structures

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS:
INSTITUTE FOR HEALTH SYSTEM TRANSFORMATION & SUSTAINABILITY AND BC PROVINCIAL OFFICE FOR THE EARLY YEARS

BRENDA POON, PhD
ASSISTANT PROFESSOR, PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR
HELP (brenda.poon@ubc.ca)

HUMAN EARLY LEARNING PARTNERSHIP

Institute for Health System Transformation & Sustainability

BRITISH COLUMBIA

OUR RESEARCH TEAM

- **Principal Investigator**:
- Brenda Poon, HELP, School of Population & Public Health, University of British Columbia;

- **Project team members**: Pippa Rowcliffe, Michele Biferie, Maryam Matean, Samara Mayer, Amanda Kwan, Chris Atchison

Advisory Group

- Betty Brown
  - Community Health Facilitator Promotion & Prevention, BC Interior Health
- Anne Cooper
  - Former Superintendent of Schools, Revelstoke
- Dr. John Millar
  - Executive Director, Population Health Surveillance & Disease Control Planning, Provincial Health Services Authority
- Institute for Health System Transformation and Sustainability
- BC Provincial Office for the Early Years

Background:
BC Context for Early Years Planning and Coordination

Early Development Instrument (EDI)

Communication Skills

Physical Health & Well-being

Emotional Maturity

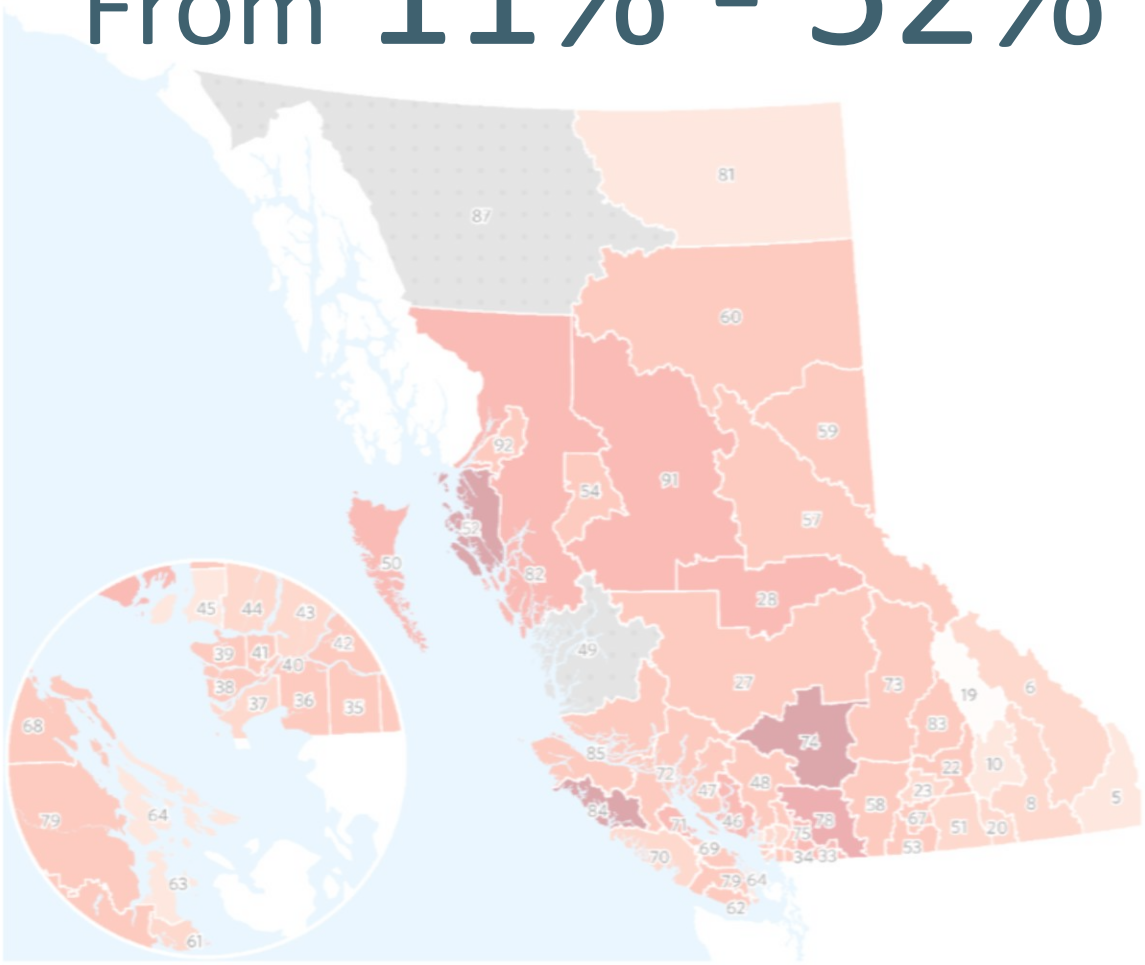
Language & Cognitive Development

Social Competence

EDI Wave 5 British Columbia

HUMAN EARLY LEARNING PARTNERSHIP

From 11% - 52%



Vulnerability on One or More Scales

Percent of children vulnerable on one or more scales of the EDI.

% VULNERABLE

100%
45%
40%
35%
30%
25%
20%
15%
0%

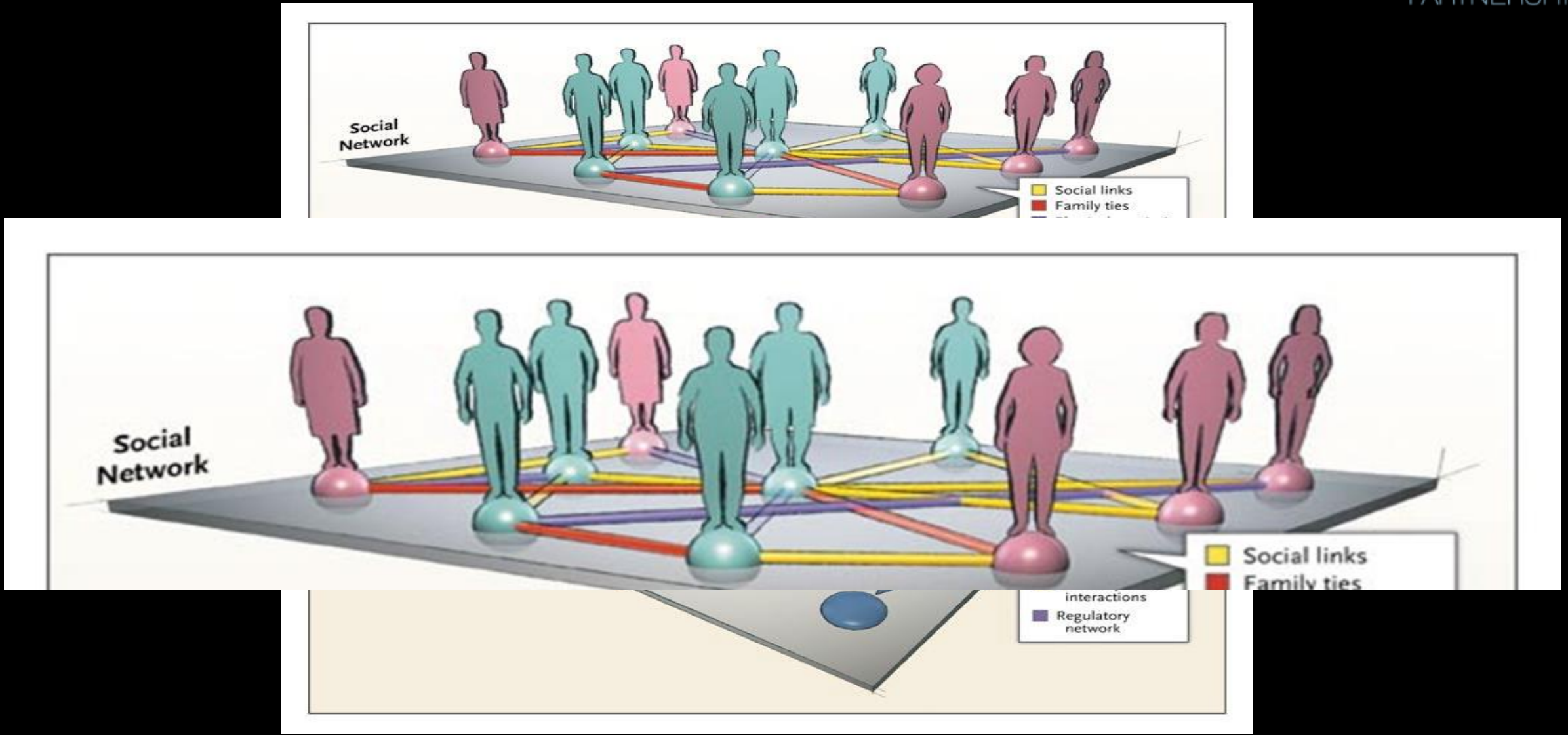
No Data/ Suppressed

Provincial Vulnerability Rate: 32.5%

Produced by:
Human Early Learning Partnership
August 2013

For more information please visit:
earlylearning.ubc.ca/maps

Complex Networks of Direct Relevance to Network Medicine.



Barabási A. N Engl J Med 2007;357:404-407.

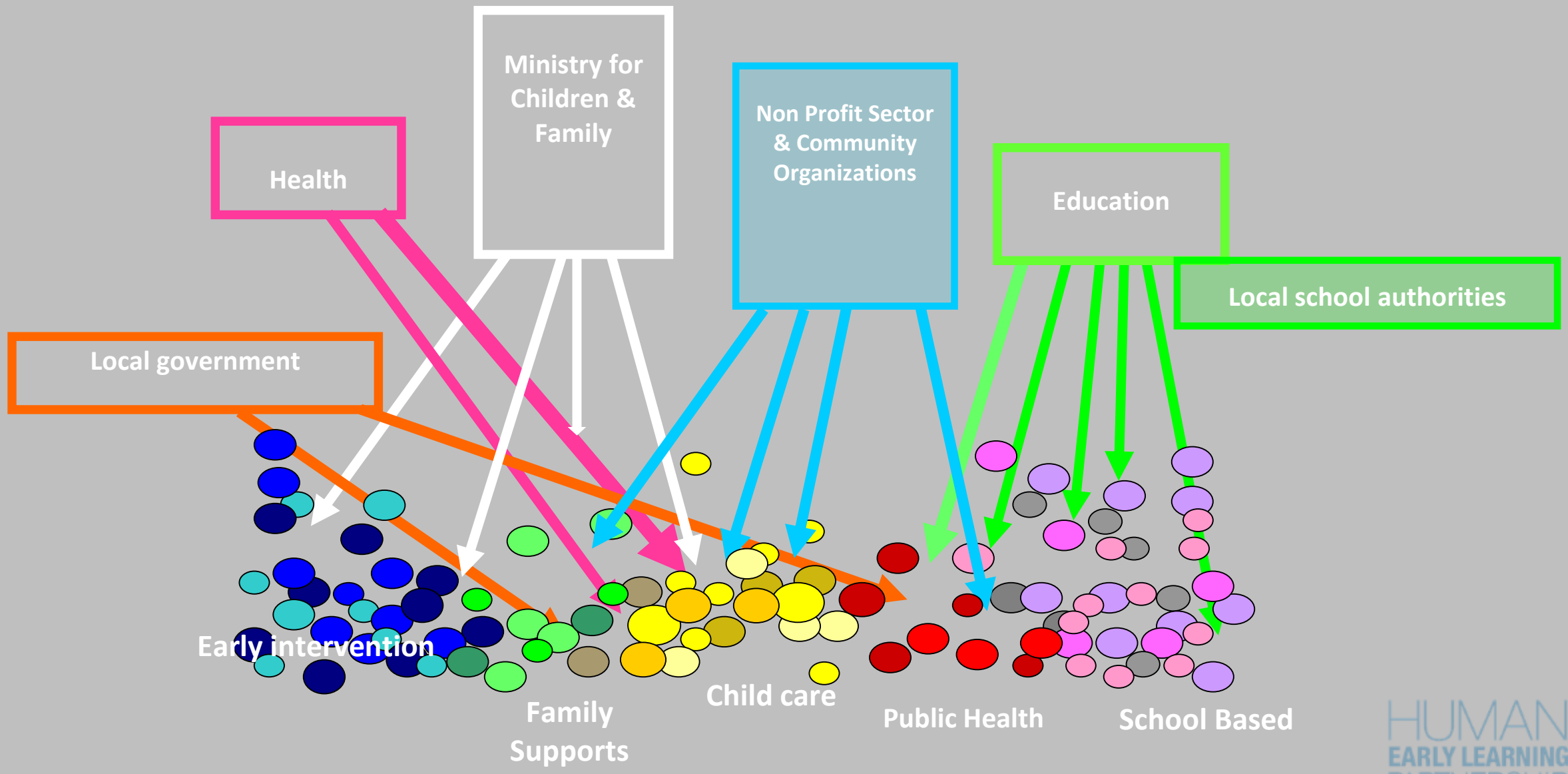
HUMAN
EARLY LEARNING
PARTNERSHIP

The NEW ENGLAND
JOURNAL of MEDICINE

UNDERSTANDING COMPLEXITY IN COMMUNITIES

WHAT COMMUNITY-LEVEL FACTORS MIGHT BE CONTRIBUTING TO DIFFERENT RATES OF DEVELOPMENTAL VULNERABILITY?

Fragmentation



HUMAN EARLY LEARNING PARTNERSHIP

Our Research Focus: Understanding systems for promoting network effectiveness

Structures – Who?

Processes – How?

Outcomes - What were the results?

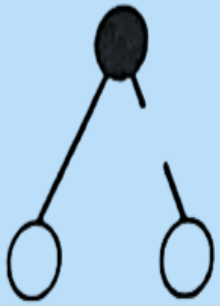
Context – Under what circumstances?

A Service Integration Continuum

HUMAN
EARLY LEARNING
PARTNERSHIP

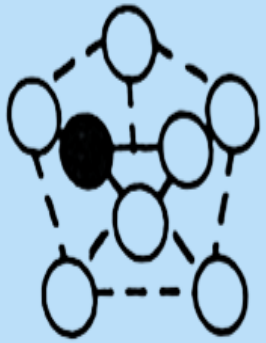
Service System Models & Collective Leadership

HUMAN EARLY LEARNING PARTNERSHIP



Single program

Network of programs beginning to coordinate



Loosely coupled

Strongly coupled

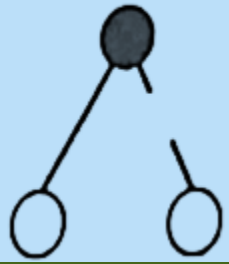
Comprehensive System for All

Harbin et al., 2000

A Service Integration Continuum

HUMAN EARLY LEARNING PARTNERSHIP

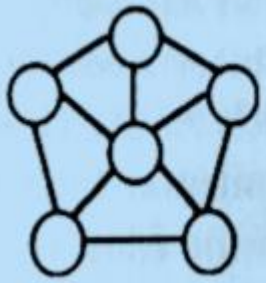
Co-existence of separate services	Coordinated service delivery	Joint service delivery	Integrated service delivery



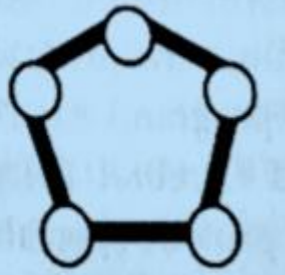
Single program

Network of programs beginning to coordinate

Loosely coupled



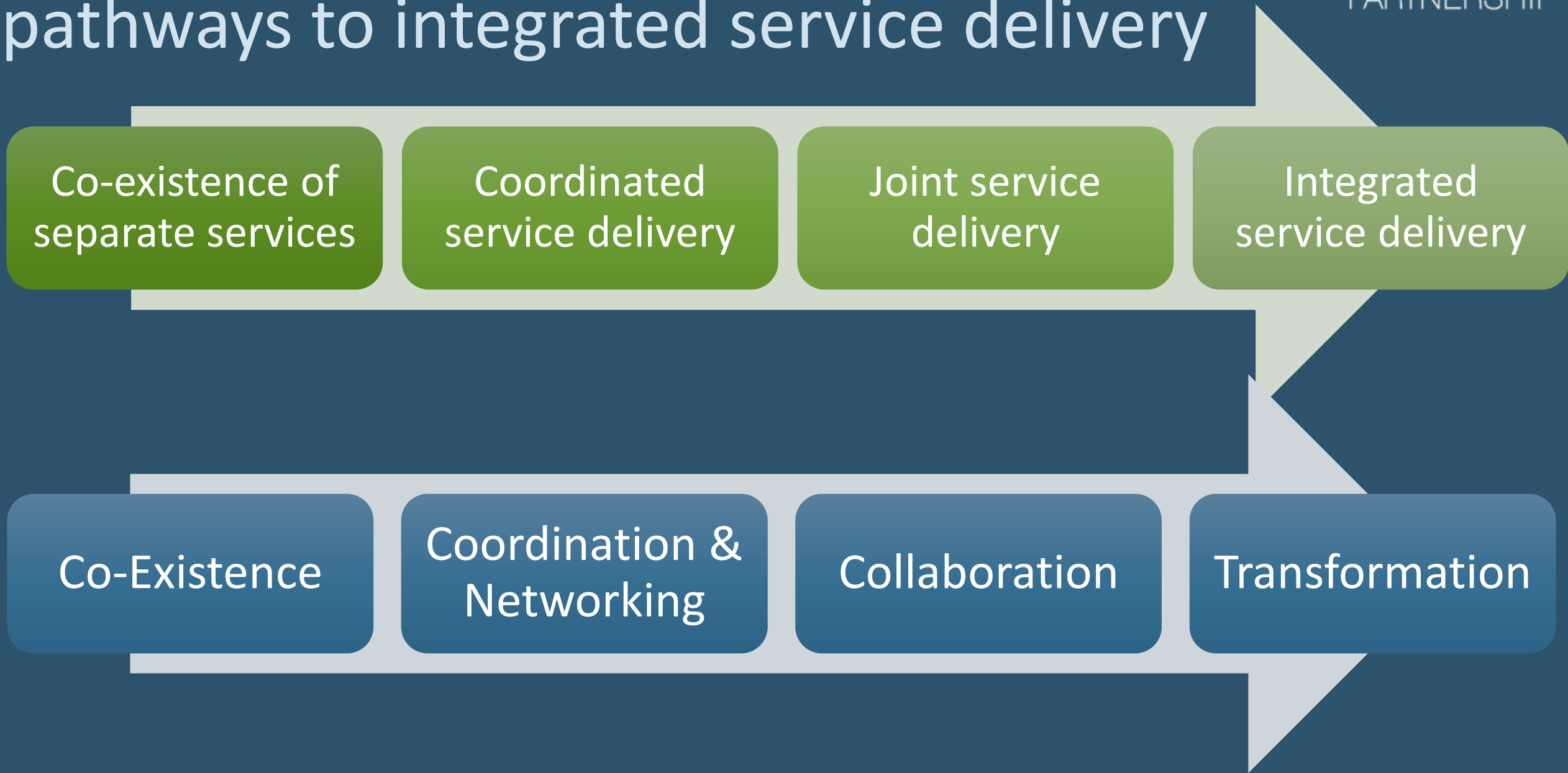
Strongly coupled



Comprehensive System for All

Transformative collaborative practices as pathways to integrated service delivery

HUMAN EARLY LEARNING PARTNERSHIP



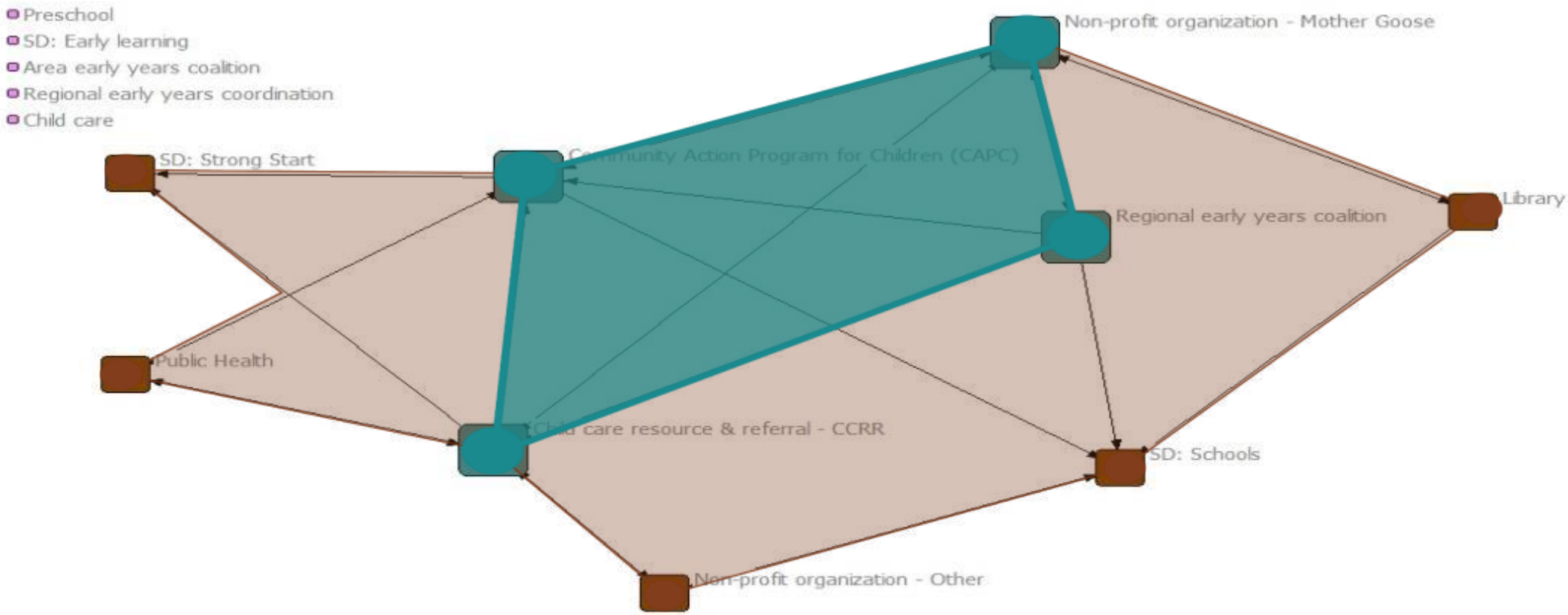
HUMAN EARLY LEARNING PARTNERSHIP

Ways of Working Together: Measures of Cohesion

Type of Network Tie	Density Community 1	Density Community 2	Number of Ties Community 1	Number of Ties Community 2	Average Degree Community 1	Average Degree Community 2
Information sharing	0.57	0.52	103	140	7.36	8.24
Joint programs	0.21	0.13	38	35	2.71	2.06
Case coordination	0.13	0.02	24	5	1.71	0.29

Functions of collaboration:
Case Coordination

COMMUNITY 1

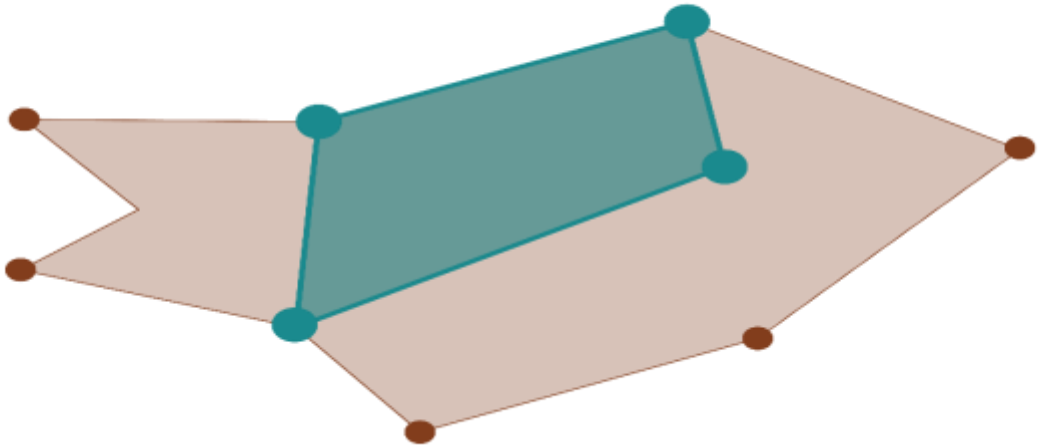


Functions of collaboration:
Case Coordination

COMMUNITY 2

- Citizen
- Service organization
- Local business advocacy organization
- City
- SD: Early learning
- Public health speech & language
- Library
- Financial institution
- SD: Schools
- Religious organization
- Community Action Program for Children (CAPC)
- Preschool
- Regional early years coordination

Functions of collaboration:
Case Coordination



COMMUNITY 1

COMMUNITY 2

Gathering under a common brand: What are the strategies?

For families…

- Developing an inventory of existing services in the community
- Community calendar of services
- Common branding
- Common language to communicate with families
- Common intake form

Among early years partners…

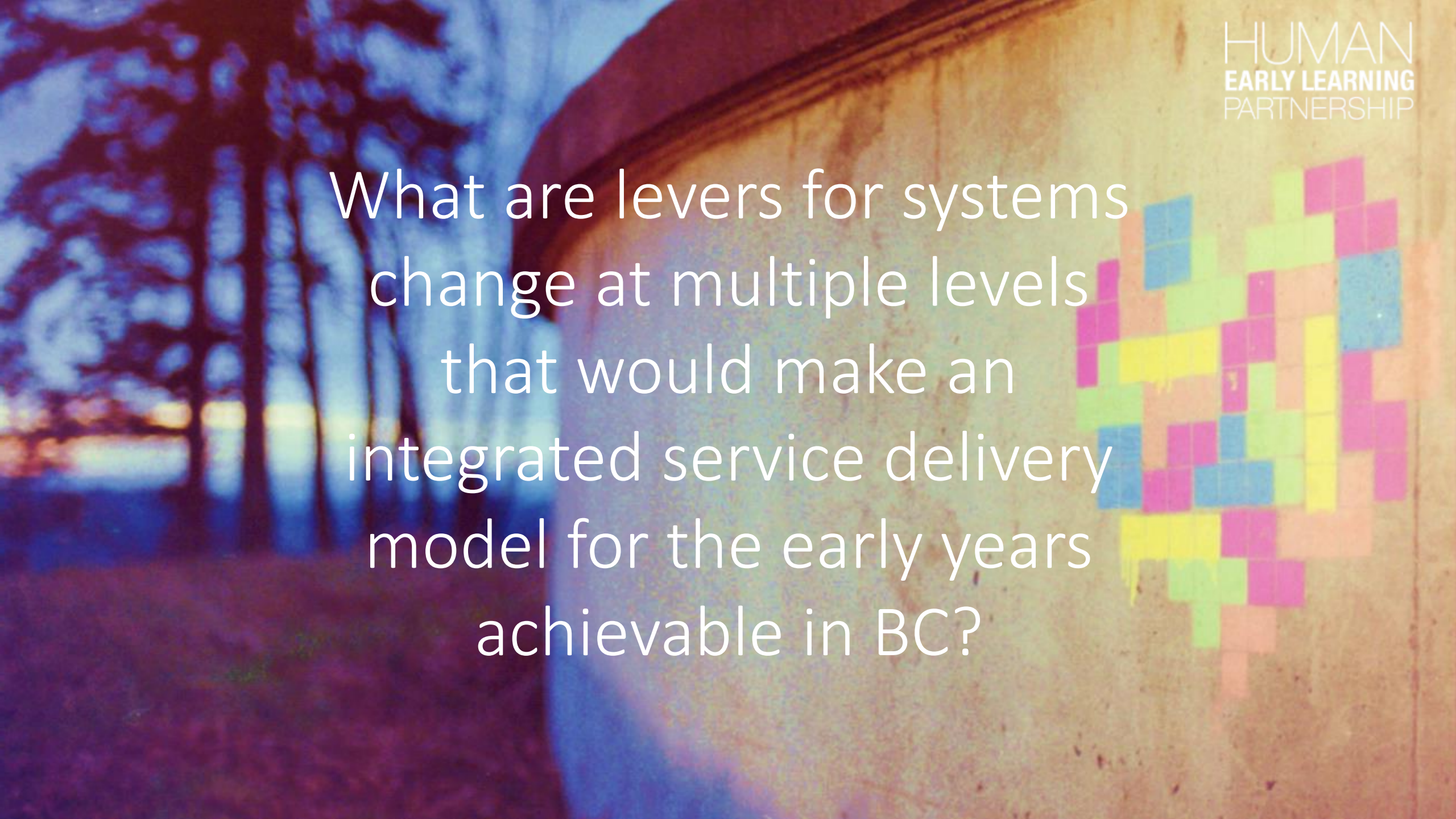
- Shared contribution of resources
- Sense of ownership and responsibility built into strategic plans
- Transitioning from ad hoc to more pre-planned partnership building

HUMAN EARLY LEARNING PARTNERSHIP

The complexity of other integration strategies: tougher nuts to crack

The need for systems level change at multiple levels:

- Community
- Regional
- Provincial


HUMAN
EARLY LEARNING
PARTNERSHIP
What are levers for systems change at multiple levels that would make an integrated service delivery model for the early years achievable in BC?

Identifying Levers for Change & Enhancement: Next Steps for our Research (2017-2021)

K.S. Louis, 2006

Digging into the complexity of systems change

Lingering questions and uncertainties….

- How can there be an integrated model of service delivery involving joint governance among organizations unless there's very top-down level change?
- Working toward a collective vision is important but challenging with contract restrictions associated with certain programs that don't leave a lot of flexibility
- Is integration about amalgamation? Or if we want to maintain autonomy, then is joint service delivery the objective?

THANK YOU!

HUMAN EARLY LEARNING PARTNERSHIP

- We are grateful to the participants at all the BC early years sites who contributed their time and reflections with us.

- My e-mail: brenda.poon@ubc.ca

HELP's Website: www.earlylearning.ubc.ca

Learning as we grow: The Early Years Centre Initiative in Nova Scotia

Presenter: Sara Kirk[1]

Evaluation Team: Jessie-Lee McIsaac[1], Jackie Nguyen[1] Stephanie Heath[2], Joan Turner[3]

[1]Healthy Populations Institute, Dalhousie University, [2]Research Power Inc., [3]Mount St. Vincent University

PUBLIC HEALTH 2017

Disclosure Statement

Disclosure of Relationship	**Company/Organization(s)**	If you think this might be perceived as biasing your presentation or a conflict of interest, identify how you will address this in your presentation.
I have ownership interest or other financial interest in the company (i.e. stocks, stock options or other ownership interest, excluding diversified mutual funds)	N/A	
I am a member of an Advisory Board or similar committee	N/A	
I am a member of a Speaker's Bureau	N/A	
I am involved in research grants and funding from industry	N/A	
I am currently participating in or have participated in a clinical trial within the past two years	N/A	
I have received honorarium, consulting fees, salary, royalty, grant-in-aid or other monetary support received from or expected from the company	N/A	
I have ownership in a patent for a product referred to in the presentation or marketed by the company	N/A	
I am involved in the design of clinical studies concerning the use of products manufactured by the company	N/A	
My spouse or close family member(s) have commercial affiliation(s)	N/A	

- First 4 NS EYCs launched in 2014
- Located in schools, providing support for children aged 4 years and under and their families
- Site selection based on community need
- Each EYC is tailored to support community needs, guided by a Site Management Team with representation from school, EYC and other partners

Early Years Centre Core Services

- A no fee, play based Early Learning Program (ELP) for 4 year olds
- Family supports and resources
- Regulated child care responsive to the needs of families and communities

Jubilee Elementary, Cape Breton-Victoria Regional School Board
East Antigonish Education Centre, Strait Regional School Board
West Highlands Elementary School, Chignecto Central Regional School Board
Ecole Beau-port, Conseil scolaire acadien provincial
Clark Rutherford School, Annapolis Valley Regional School Board
Rockingstone Heights School, Halifax Regional School Board
New Germany Elementary, South Shore Regional School Board
Yarmouth Central, Tri-County Regional School Board
Opened in 2015/16
Opened in 2016/17

Evaluation

Funded by the Margaret and Wallace McCain Family Foundation

Participatory 4-year evaluation led by core evaluation team, supported by steering and research advisory committees

Process and outcome evaluation design guided by a program logic model and evaluation framework

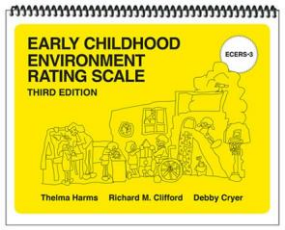
Process Data Collection (Yrs. 1 and 2)

Document Review

Key Contact Interviews

Partner Interviews

Outcome Data Collection (Yrs. 1 and 2)



Indicator of Change
Progress Measurement Tool

EARLY DEVELOPMENT INSTRUMENT
a population-based measure for communities

Program Quality

System and Service Integration

Early Child Development

EYC Administrative Data (intake, participation, registration data) also collected

Outcome Data Collection (yr. 2)

Family focus groups and survey

Team survey

‘Story Sharing’

Key accomplishments (Yrs. 1 and 2)

Building trust and relationships

Strengthening partnerships and community linkages

Building awareness and understanding, linking families

"… the tremendous positive response we've gotten from other service providers around sharing the space, being part of the program, promoting the program and the engagement to work at something together."

Key enablers

School and school board commitment

History of partnership and collaboration

Willingness, commitment and shared vision

Flexibility

“I think as we meet and as we get to know each other better, and get to know what people are doing, it’s amazing to see what people want to do, and how much they want to give, and support and be there”

Key challenges

Linking to regulated childcare

Lack of clarity on EYC model

Challenges with integration across key systems, e.g., education, community services, health

Urban vs. rural differences

Labour relations (Yr. 2)

"… people sort of hadn't really clear information around what exactly was the role of the Early Years Centre. As soon as you hear the word centre, you start thinking about childcare."

Key learnings for the evaluation team

Understanding of the EYC model is variable:

- need for continuous communication across partners to convey vision and values

Systems are not designed for integration to be fully realized:

- Ensure policies are in place to support integration across different systems
- Be mindful of shifting political and community context

System capacity to support early childhood development and education is limited:

- Define/clarify expectations and roles of partners
- Written policies and common ways of working help ensure continuity

Concept of play based learning is poorly understood:

- Support Early Childhood Educators in school settings

Question for Discussion

How do we achieve system integration across systems that were not necessarily designed to work together, given shifting political and socio-cultural contexts?

Thank you to the Margaret and Wallace McCain Family Foundation for their funding and support and all families and partners from the EYCs in NS for their ongoing participation in the evaluation.

Sara Kirk, PhD

Healthy Populations Institute, Dalhousie University

Sara.Kirk@dal.ca

@sflkirk

Discussion

- What role does public health play in supporting the integration of early childhood programs and services? What are your experiences?
- What are some of the similarities in the implementation of integrated approaches across the country? What are the differences?
- What are the opportunities to enhance implementation to support child development and well-being?

Thank you for your participation in the session

Jessie-Lee McIsaac Postdoctoral Fellow Healthy Populations Institute, Dalhousie University Email: Jessie-Lee.McIsaac@dal.ca	**Jane Bertrand** Program Director Margaret and Wallace McCain Family Foundation Email: janebertrand@rogers.com
Brenda Poon Assistant Professor Human Early Learning Partnership University of British Columbia Brenda.Poon@ubc.ca	**Sara Kirk** Professor and Scientific Director Healthy Populations Institute, Dalhousie University Email: Sara.Kirk@dal.ca