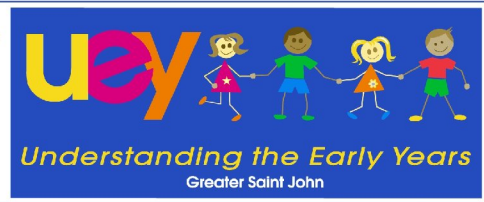


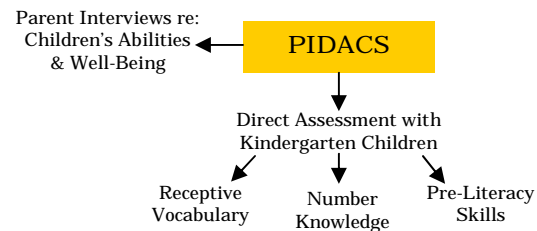
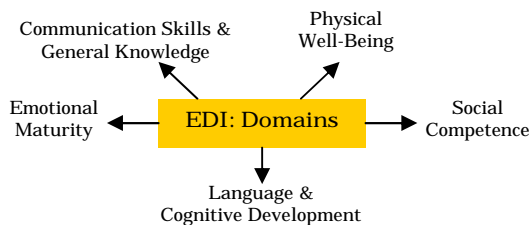
Parenting Brief



Understanding the Early Years (UEY) is a 3-year national research initiative which allows communities to gather data around 3 important questions: 1) Are our children ready for school? 2) What family & community factors influence our children's development? 3) Are current programs & services properly supporting young families in our area?

Kindergarten teachers completed a "readiness to learn" survey called the Early Development Instrument (EDI) for each student in the class .

Parent Interviews and Direct Assessments of Children Survey (or PIDACS): parents of kindergarten children were interviewed, while their children were directly tested in the classroom.



This brief reports on UEY research conducted with children, parents and teachers in the Greater Saint John area, concentrating on issues related to parenting.

Parents in Greater Saint John: How we compare...

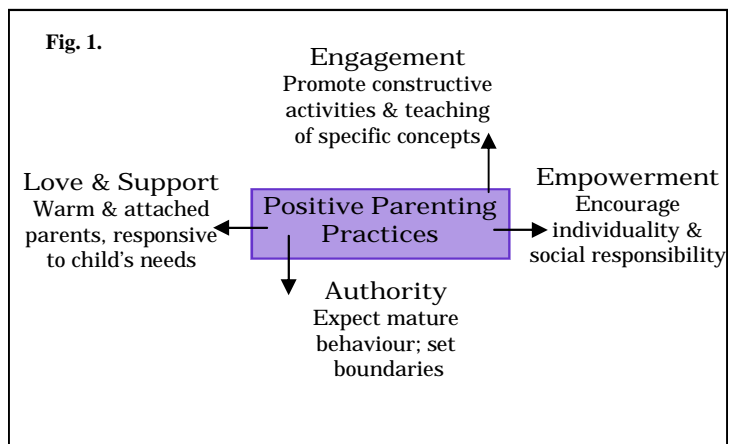
In Greater Saint John, 509 parents of kindergarten-age children completed the 2007 PIDACS Parent Interview. The "person most knowledgeable" (PMK) of the child responded to the interview — 91% of the time, this was the female parent or guardian. The results? Compared to a national sample, parents of kindergarten-age children in Greater Saint John face unique challenges:

- Single-parent families make up 27% of our sample (the national average is 12%).
- 30% of families in the sample live in low-income households (total under \$30 000)... despite high levels of employment and relatively high levels of education—only 6% mothers and 8% fathers did not complete secondary school education.

As parents, we can impact our young children in many ways.

- ♥ Engage in positive parenting practices—be affectionate, authoritative, involved and empowering (see Fig.1.)

The PIDACS results showed that parents of 5-year-olds in Greater Saint John reported levels of positive parenting practices similar to the national average — except for one area...



Parenting Brief



Positive parenting practices: Encouraging healthy child development...

Fig. 2. Positive Parenting in Greater Saint John

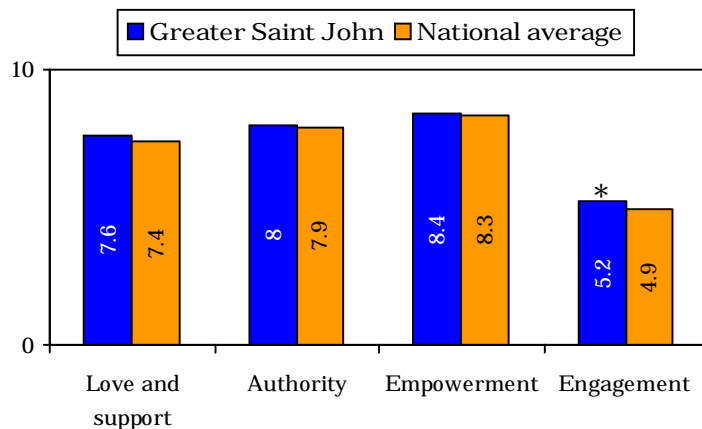


Fig. 2 shows results on positive parenting practices from the 2007 PIDACS interview.

Parents in Greater Saint John performed comparable to the national average on 'love & support', 'authority', and 'empowerment'.

However, our parents also had significantly higher levels of "engagement" with their children: spending time with them and taking part in play and learning activities.

Also: compared to the national sample, the families who responded...

- ...exhibited comparable levels of poor family functioning (9% having poor functioning)
- ...had a similar number of mothers reporting depression (13% of participants)

Parents of kindergarten-age children in Greater Saint John have unique challenges: significantly more of our parents live in low-income households and are single parents to their children. However, our families function as well as others in Canada, and we exhibit similar levels of positive parenting practices toward our children.

So, how can you be a "positive parent"?

- ♥ Be loving and supportive of your children, and encourage their individuality.
- ♥ Set boundaries and consistently, yet gently, reinforce appropriate behaviours.
- ♥ Give your children opportunities to develop a sense of responsibility toward others.
- ♥ Spend time with children in activities of their choosing, such as physical exercise and reading.

Take advantage of the little moments with your children!

- Invest in Kids: www.investinkids.ca/ContentPage.aspx?name=Parents_Positive_Parenting
- Family Resource Centre SJ: <http://frc-crf.com/saint-john/programs.cfm>

For more information, visit www.uey-sj.org!



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