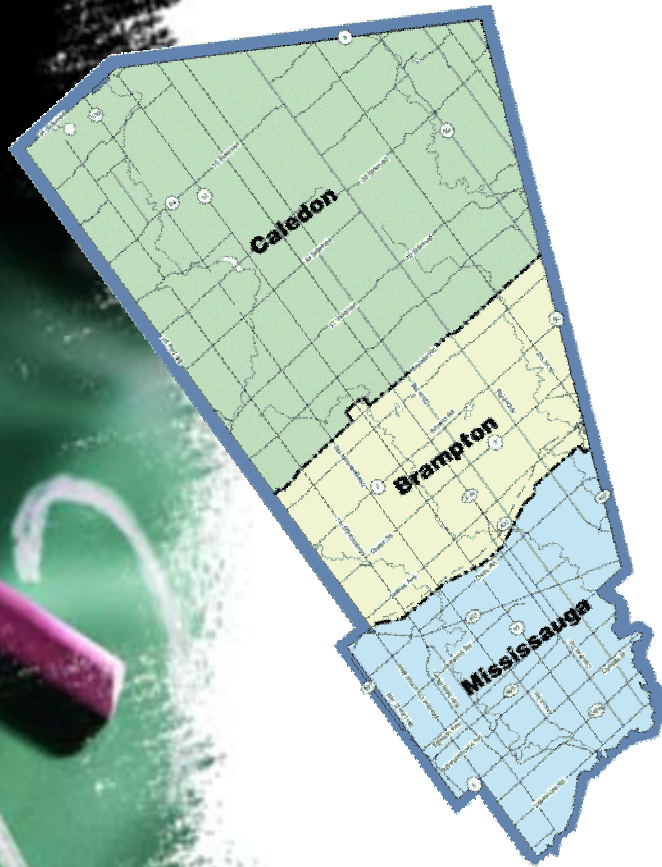


The background of the slide is a green chalkboard. In the lower-left quadrant, two pink chalk sticks are positioned diagonally. The chalkboard has several faint, white chalk drawings, including a large 'V' shape and some curved lines. The text is centered in the upper half of the slide.

Use of the Early Development Instrument (EDI) in School Boards

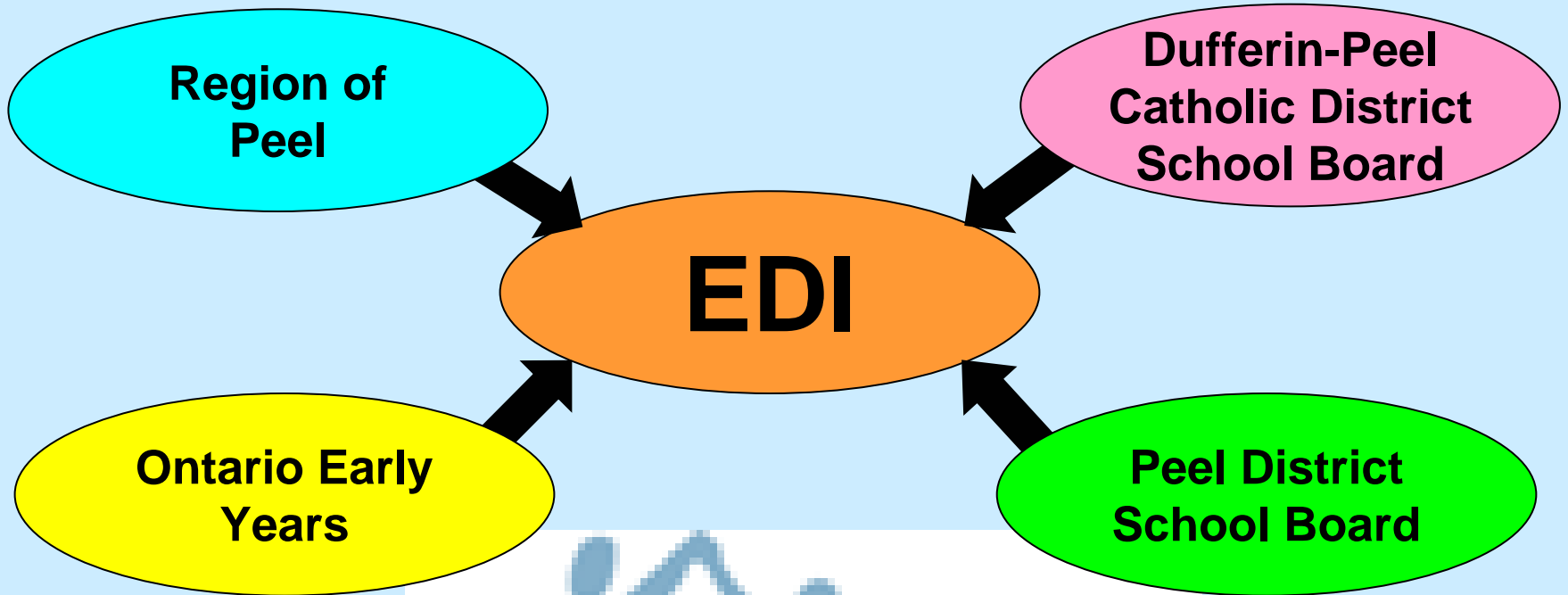
**Jim Grieve
Director of Education
Peel District School Board**

Peel Region - Ontario



- Over 93 different ethnic groups – more than 60 different languages
- 43% of residents in Peel are immigrants
- One in four kindergarten children are ESL students
- One in five children live in poverty

EDI Partnerships



Importance of the Early Years

- Participation in high quality early childhood education programs has been linked to improvements in children's:
 - school readiness skills
 - language development, early literacy, and numeracy skills
 - self-esteem and social behaviour skills



Importance of the Early Years

- Positive benefits often continue into primary school, with improved scores on achievement tests, and lower rates of grade retention and special education placement



What is the EDI?



- Teacher-rating scale
- Community-based measure; measures groups or populations of children
- Assesses the readiness to learn at school of young children before they enter grade 1
- “School readiness” in the EDI approach refers to the whole child’s developmental health

What is the EDI?

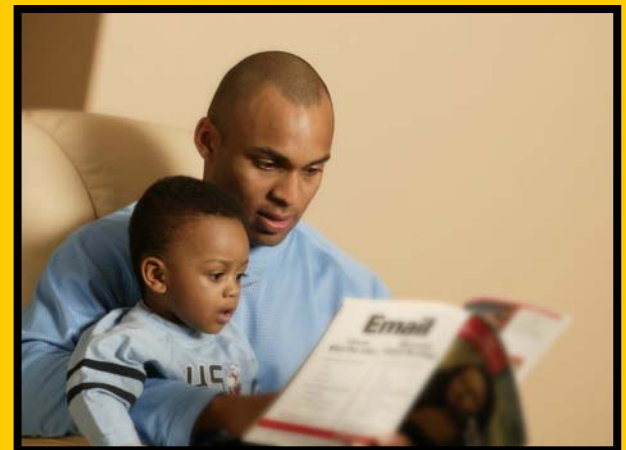
- Developed by Janus and Offord (1997); Offord Centre for Child Studies, McMaster University
 - *www.offordcentre.com*
- **NOT** an assessment of individual children or teachers
- To be conducted in February or March
- Excellent test-retest reliability



Factors Which Can Influence Readiness to Learn

Family Variables

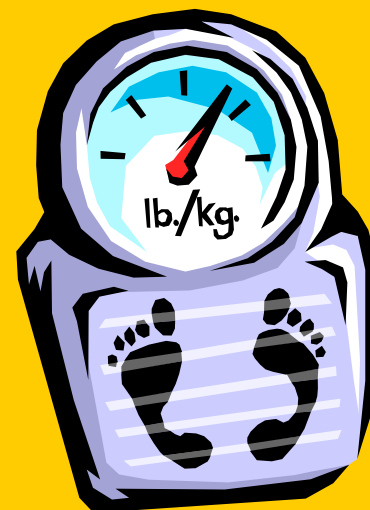
- Family income (i.e., low income)
- Lone parent family status
- English as a Second Language (ESL) status
- Family mobility within the previous 5 years
- Parent education level
- Parenting style
- Daily reading with children
- Parental smoking



Factors Which Can Influence Readiness to Learn

Child Variables

- Preschool or kindergarten attendance
- Age
- Gender (i.e., boys are often less ready for school)
- Childhood health (e.g., low birth weight)



Factors Which Can Influence Readiness to Learn

Neighbourhood Variables

- Availability of community services (e.g., libraries, sports and recreation programs, health services, parks, arts and cultural programs, family resource centres, etc.)
- Neighbourhood safety and cohesion
- Availability of high quality early learning and child care settings



Uses of the EDI

- Reports on populations of children in different communities over time
- Identifies strengths and where the needs are greatest
- One predictor of how children will do in elementary school
- Provides picture of what early learning looks like at the community level
- Identifies gaps in programs and services



Uses of the EDI

- Assists in planning and implementation of community resources
- Program development in areas of need
- Incentives for partnership building
- Raises awareness of the importance of the early years



Who Was Assessed in Ontario in 2007?



- All Year 2/Senior kindergarten students in Peel region (14,237 SK students)
- In Ontario - Peel and Waterloo

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What did we learn about the children in our community?

- 3 out of 10 children were not ready to learn at school.
- Significant variation between communities in the % of children not ready to learn.
- Children scored highest in Physical health & well-being, and Emotional maturity.
- Children scored lowest in Communication & general knowledge, and Language & cognitive development.
- High social risk areas have larger proportions of students not ready for school.
- Girls were more ready for school than boys.
- Attending structured preschool programs improved school readiness.
- Students who do not speak English as a first language are less ready to learn than their English-speaking peers.



Why is the EDI important to your school?

- Identify areas of need for children entering your school
- Adapt and implement programs and resources to support children's school readiness
- Mobilize your community to work together to support school readiness
- Important piece of data for school success planning



Pre- and Post-Implementation Process

- Researchers at the Peel District School Board (PDSB) trained all 750 teachers in Peel in 2004 and 2007 (both Catholic and public boards)
- Profiles created by PDSB research department for: (1) board, (2) individual schools, (3) family of schools
- Workshops provided by PDSB research department to help administrators and teachers interpret their school's information

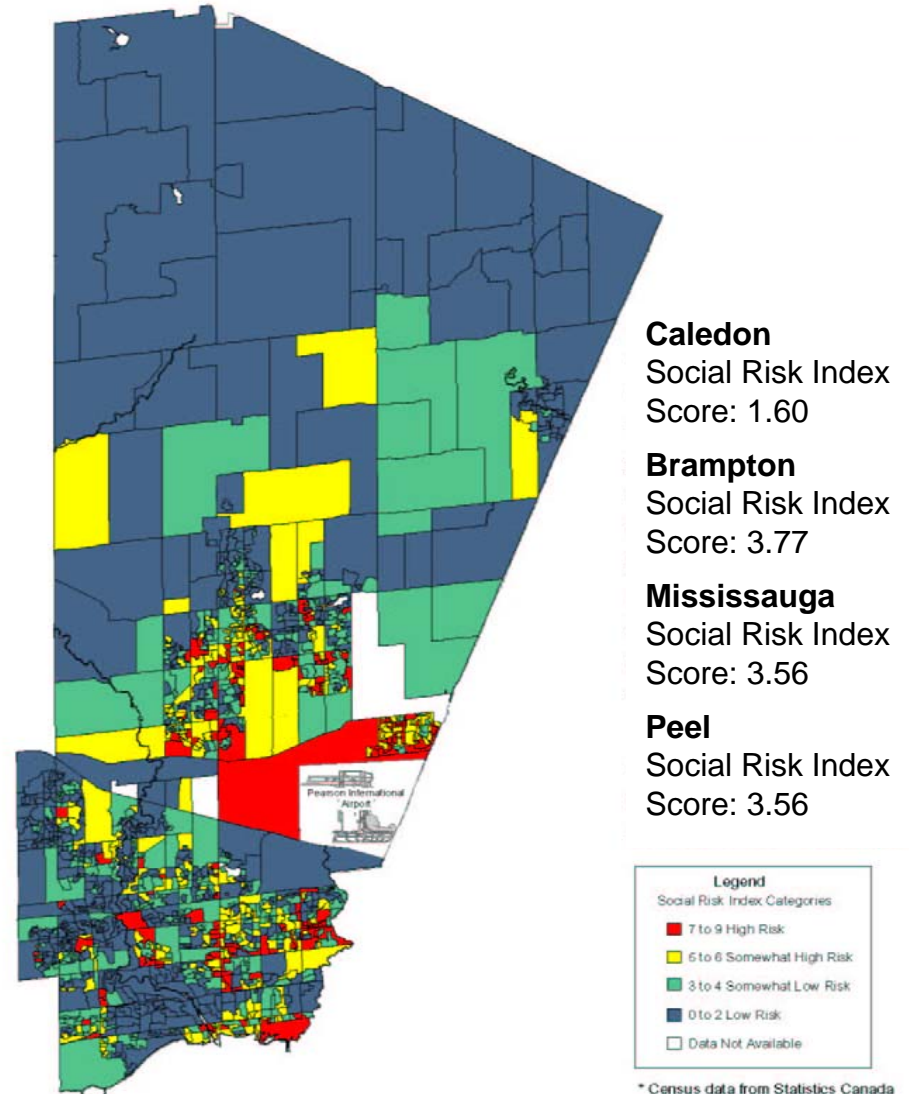
Five Developmental Domains of the EDI

1. Physical Health and Well-being
2. Social Competence
3. Emotional Maturity
4. Language and Cognitive Development
5. Communication Skills and General Knowledge

Taking Stock: A Case Study of the Peel District School Board

EDI ignited development of a social risk index for all Peel communities.

Where are the vulnerable communities in Peel?

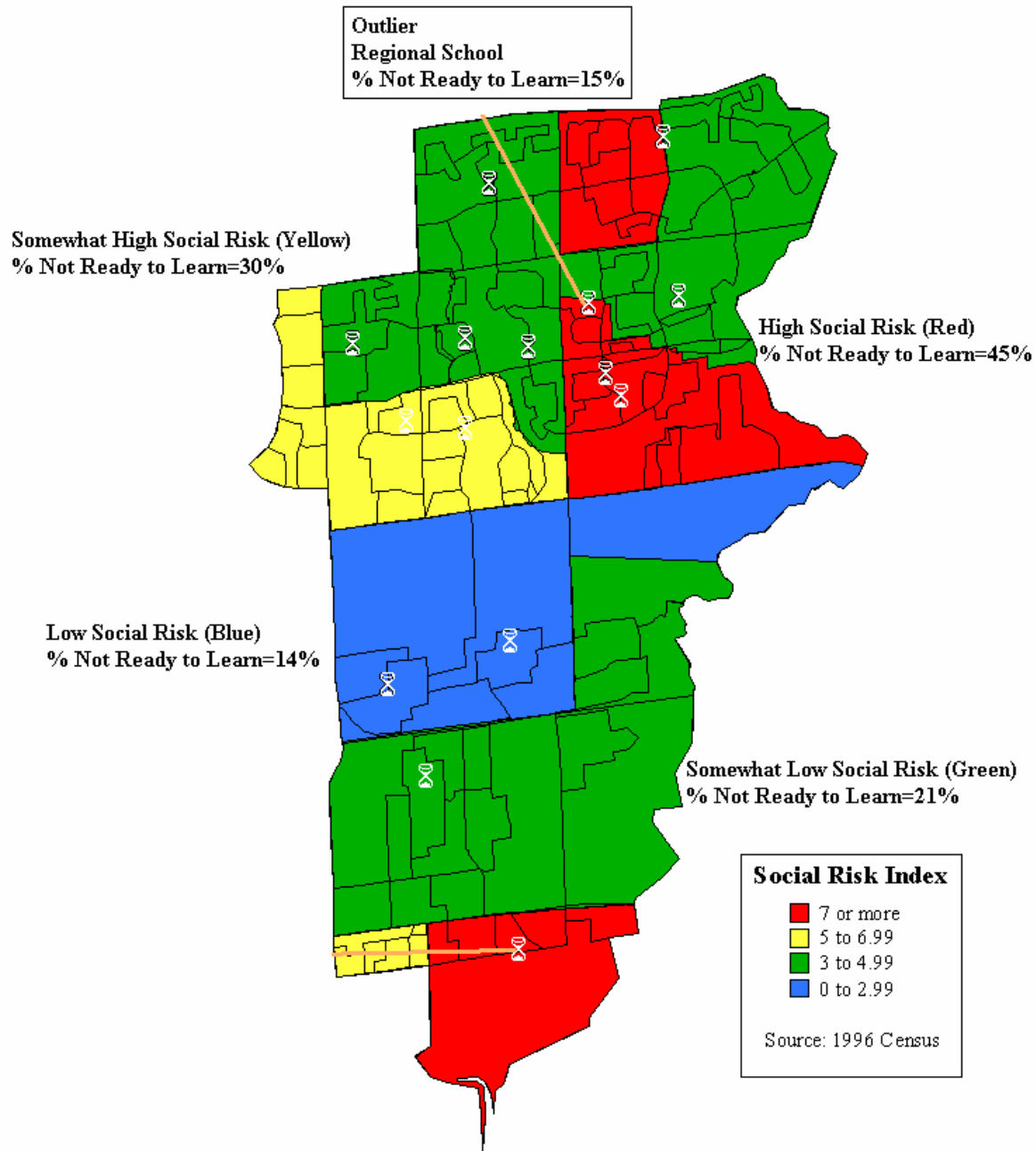


* Census data from Statistics Canada

Social Risk Index Variables

- Average household income
- Unemployment rate
- Proportion of residents 15 years and older who lacked a high school diploma
- Proportion of owner-occupied dwellings
- Mobility over one year
- Knowledge of Canada's official languages
- Proportion of recent immigrants
- Lone parent families
- Reliance upon government transfer payments

Relationship Between EDI and Social Risk Index

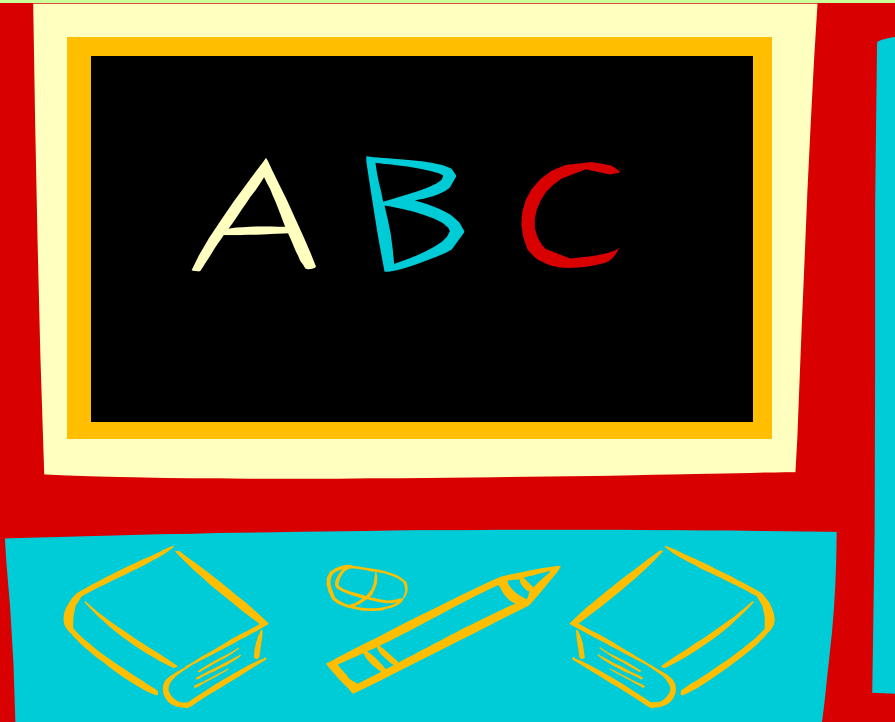


What can parents/caregivers do?



- Be a positive role model
- Read, write, count, sort, play games, do activities
- Select topics, materials, and activities the children find interesting
- Engage children in learning activities as early as possible

What can schools do?



- Early identification of at-risk students
- Communicate clearly with parents regarding school expectations
- Provide support where needed: academic, social, emotional, behavioural, physical

What Did We Do For the Children in Our Community?

- 4 early years hubs and 10 readiness centres
- 2 Best Start locations
- 3 Parenting and Family Literacy Centres
- Kindergarten Intervention Program (KIP)
- Kindergarten Support Programs



Best Start
Integrating. Motivating. Educating.

What Did We Do For the Children in Our Community?

- Early literacy teachers and coaches; Reading Recovery
- Understanding the Early Years Malton project
- Region of Peel Family Literacy Program
- Welcome to Kindergarten bags (The Learning Partnership)
- Learning In Our Neighbourhoods (LIONS – 3 in Peel Region)



Understanding
the Early Years
Malton



What can communities do?

Provide:

- quality child care and early learning programs
- universal sports/recreation programs and arts/cultural programs
- services where they are needed most
- opportunities for grassroots participation in service planning



What can governments do?

- Assist communities in becoming environments that support readiness for school
- Fund child/family/community services and early identification programs
- Create innovative child and family friendly policies
- Change social policy



- **Questions?**
- **Feedback?**
- **Comments?**



Thank you!