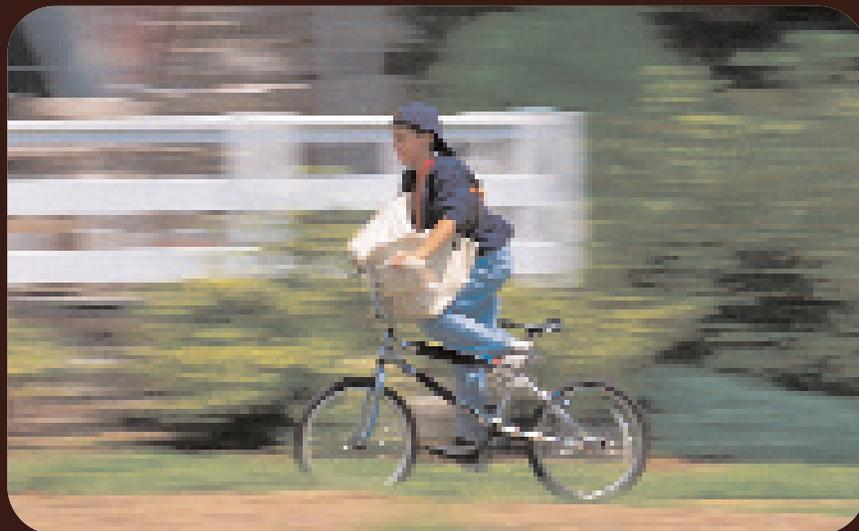


From Knowledge to Action

Annual Report 2007/08

Community-University Partnership for the
Study of Children, Youth, and Families



CUP's Mission

The Community-University Partnership for the Study of Children, Youth, and Families (CUP) is committed to improving the development of children, youth, families, and communities by:

- Generating, sharing, and mobilizing new knowledge about child and family development,
- Identifying and promoting the use of evidence-based policies and practices for optimizing child and family development, and
- Nurturing a culture, both in the community and the University, in which rigorous research, evaluation, and practice are valued highly as critical components in efforts to understand and optimize development.

About CUP

CUP is a joint creation of the University of Alberta and many community agencies and organizations in and around Edmonton, Alberta. CUP engages in a number of activities to fulfill its mission:

- CUP develops opportunities for researchers, service providers, and policymakers to collaborate on research projects that advance knowledge and improve policies and practices;
- CUP contributes to networks so that knowledge and expertise can be shared; and
- CUP creates learning opportunities both on campus and in the community to build research capacity in areas related to the development of children, youth, and families.

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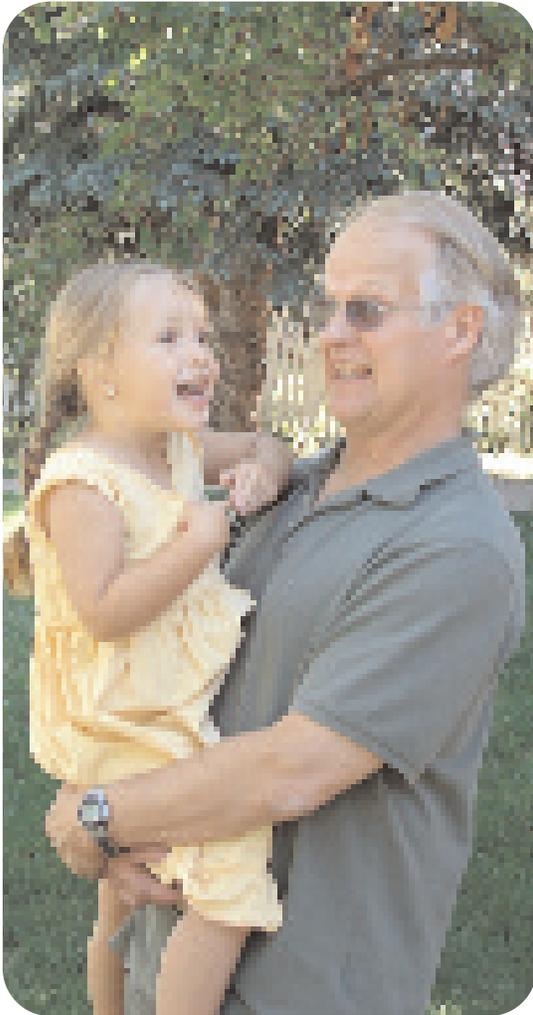
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From Knowledge to Action

Research has always been and will continue to be central to CUP's work, but over the past year, CUP has expanded significantly its activities in the areas of lifelong learning and knowledge mobilization. Members of the Mobilizing Knowledge About Development project have been designing and implementing community-based research workshops and developing a knowledge-mobilization framework for supporting the development and well-being of children, youth, and families. In addition, the Early Childhood Measurement and Evaluation Resource Centre has been consulting with and creating resources for researchers, service providers, and policymakers on the assessment, evaluation, and screening needs of the early childhood community. These activities supplement CUP's work by strengthening the impact of research and by promoting lifelong learning and knowledge sharing.

This annual report provides details on a selection of CUP's activities related to our continuing work on turning knowledge into action between April 1, 2007 to March 31, 2008.

Letter From the Director



As we crash through life we face different “developmental tasks” along the way. As I write this letter, I am thinking of my 3.5-year-old granddaughter, Diana. At the moment she is in a new environment, one in which most people are unfamiliar and speak a different language. As she interacts with children in her childcare centre and with the various adults who surround her, she is acquiring the social skills she needs to be comfortable with everyone and her English is improving dramatically. These improvements bring challenges, however. She now finds that people are telling her more and more, and using increasingly complex ideas and sentences as they do so. In effect, they are placing new developmental tasks in front of her. As she careens along her developmental course, Diana’s solutions to one set of tasks take her to a space in which she has to deal with another, previously unrecognized set of tasks. This process will, of course, repeat itself indefinitely.

The situation is not all that different for organizations, and for CUP in particular. When CUP was in its planning stages a decade ago, the immediate task was to figure out how such an organization could exist within the Edmonton community and the University of Alberta. Once that problem was solved, a new set of tasks emerged. Could CUP find ways of getting people from the community and university to collaborate, over the long run, in doing research, sharing ideas and knowledge, and educating each other in ways that would be useful for all involved?

As you read through the pages of this Annual Report, you will get a sense for how CUP has addressed its developmental tasks. You will read about the Mobilizing Knowledge About Development (MKAD) project, a multi-partner collaboration designed to build capacity for community-based research and knowledge sharing. You also will read about CUP’s Early Childhood Measurement and Evaluation Resource Centre (ECMERC), which is engaged in numerous projects in support of young children and the people who work with young children. MKAD and ECMERC were both supported originally with temporary federal grants, but these two projects have become so central that CUP has decided to incorporate their functions permanently.



You also will read about Families First Edmonton (FFE), CUP's largest and most complicated involvement in research. FFE was designed to test alternative models for delivering health and social services to low-income families. In the process, it has become a remarkable laboratory for generating innovative, community-based research, for maintaining important collaborations, and for learning how to use research to influence policy and practice.

You can judge for yourself CUP's level of success in addressing its developmental tasks. External validation is important, which is why everyone at CUP was so pleased to receive the first-ever "Dare to Discover" Achievement Award, Overall Category, from University of Alberta President Indira Samarasekera (see p. 4). Not only is this award a testament to CUP's progress on its developmental tasks, but it also signals a not-so-subtle and pervasive change in the university environment. With the help of President Samarasekera's leadership, the University is becoming increasingly aware of the need to be productively integrated with its many communities. CUP and other units around campus provide models for doing so. I find it interesting, and an affirmation of CUP's original mission, that CUP did not have to change itself to fit the award; rather, the University has moved to the point at which it readily recognizes the value of units, such as CUP, that are focused on community engagement.

CUP's achievements to date have led, inevitably, to a new set of developmental tasks. One of these new tasks was made perfectly obvious at CUP's retreat in June 2007. The retreat included CUP's Steering Committee and Secretariat, plus a number of helpful and wise people recruited especially for the purpose of CUP-analysis. The overwhelming consensus was that CUP needs to continue its work in research, lifelong learning, and knowledge sharing, but that it now has to deal with a developmental task that has been emerging over the past few years, namely, finding an administrative structure that will sustain CUP's work over the long run.

The Health Sciences Council (HSC) has been a supportive and gracious host for CUP within the University; we could not have had a better incubator. As CUP has grown, however, the limits of the current arrangement have become increasingly apparent to both CUP and the HSC. At the same time, the University's Faculty of Extension has been reconsidering its role and is working toward becoming an interdisciplinary centre focused on community engagement and research, just the sorts of activities in which CUP excels. Extension can provide CUP with resources that only a university faculty can provide, and the result would be an increased level of sustainability for CUP's work. CUP can provide Extension with expertise and experience in community-based research and knowledge sharing that could be useful as Extension redefines and expands its activities. The fit is promising, and we now are working to develop an affiliation with the Faculty of Extension. In our next annual report we should be able to recount CUP's progress in dealing with this new and critical developmental task.

Back to Diana. As she works on her tasks, I notice that she builds on her strengths but also is very curious, exploring all sorts of nooks and crannies of personal relationships and language. When she does not know how to do something, she keeps the problem in mind and works on it at the next opportunity. She always pushes the envelope of her current knowledge. She does not worry much about making mistakes, but she pounces on opportunities to correct them. I am not convinced that CUP's environment is so forgiving, but we can learn a great deal from children like Diana. Clearly, those we work to help sometimes can be our best teachers.

Jeff Bisanz, Spring 2008.

Reflection and Recognition

For our 7th year, CUP designated significant time to reviewing our work and planning for the future. During this period, CUP also received the inaugural President's Achievement Award.



History Document

In spring 2007, CUP worked with McCaffrey Consulting to document the partnership's history since its launch in July 2000.

Although CUP is a relatively young organization (we are now in our 8th year of operation), many individuals and organizations were involved in creating CUP and guiding its projects. By documenting our history, we hope that we will not lose sight of the initial impetus for the creation of CUP nor forget those who played key roles in the formation of the partnership.

The *History Document* is available for download at www.cup.ualberta.ca under the Documents tab.

President's Achievement Award

CUP was proud to be the recipient of the inaugural President's Achievement Award, "Dare to Discover", in the "Overall Achievement" category in September 2007.

"This award was designed to recognize those who embrace the spirit of our vision and mission, and who set high standards for achievement in learning, discovery, and citizenship within our vibrant and supportive learning environment. The President's Achievement Award is also a team award designed to inspire and engage members of the campus community and profile achievements in support of the University's goals."

~ President Indira Samarasekera

Steering Committee Retreat

In June 2007, CUP's Steering Committee, Secretariat, and other guests came together for a day to reflect on CUP's activities since the partnership's launch and to consider CUP's future directions. As a result of this retreat, we began reviewing our governance structure, considered strategies to increase our public profile, and renewed our efforts in seeking opportunities for long-term sustainability. This work continues.

Research, Lifelong Learning, & Knowledge Sharing: Three Areas of Focus

Snapshot: Research

CUP is committed to advancing knowledge about children, youth, and families, and collaborative research is a major focus of CUP's work. Below is a sample of CUP's research projects. More detailed information about CUP's research can be found on pp. 13 to 21 and at www.cup.ualberta.ca under the CUP Projects tab.

Families First Edmonton

A pervasive concern in contemporary society is how to provide support in ways that are most useful to families. With this concern in mind, CUP manages the research component of Families First Edmonton, a large-scale, community-based research project (for more information, see p. 20). Through this work, we hope to increase our understanding of how best to connect low-income families to existing services, and how partnerships and collaborations among researchers, service providers, and policymakers can be managed effectively.

Knowledge-Mobilization Conceptual Framework

Nearly everyone recognizes that linking research and evaluation with policy and practice is very difficult. Part of the problem is that the connections among research, policy, and practice are not well understood. As part of CUP's Mobilizing Knowledge About Development (MKAD) project, not only are we evaluating knowledge-mobilization activities, we are developing a conceptual framework that will inform future research on and evaluations of efforts to mobilize knowledge. For more information about MKAD, see pp. 14-16.

Preschool Developmental Screening Evaluation

Albertans are becoming increasingly concerned about whether we are identifying young children with various kinds of problems early enough to intervene effectively. CUP's Early Childhood Measurement and Evaluation Resource Centre, in partnership with Capital Health, is evaluating a new developmental screening initiative in the Edmonton area. For more information, see p. 18.



Snapshot: Lifelong Learning

Part of our ongoing commitment at CUP is to contribute to the development of knowledge about research so that, as a community and a university, we all become more skilled at doing and understanding research that can affect policies and practices. A snapshot of CUP's work in this area are provided below.

Students and Interns

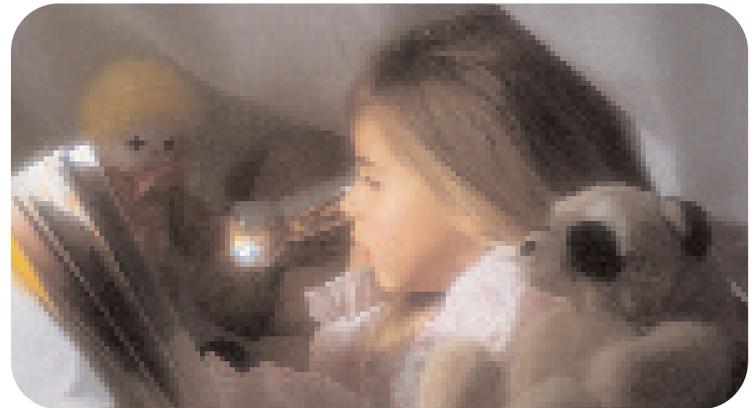
Over the years CUP has involved undergraduates, graduate students, and recent graduates in its projects as a means of nurturing a new generation of researchers who engage in community-based work.

This year, CUP hosted an undergraduate intern from the Department of Psychology, a graduate student (also from Psychology) enrolled in a community research practicum course, and a graduate research assistant from the Faculty of Rehabilitation Medicine. Also, two practicum students from Concordia University College of Alberta were involved with Families First Edmonton.

CUP benefits from the insight and knowledge of these students, and will continue to involve them in our work in the future. For more about the students who worked with us in 2007-08, see p. 10.

Community-Based Research (CBR) Workshop Series

In May 2007, CUP initiated its CBR Workshop Series, seminars designed to introduce community members and university students to the fundamentals of CBR. As of March 2008, five workshops have been offered, with over 120 participants from all levels of government, community organizations, and university departments. The Series continues to evolve as more topics are added to the curriculum. For more information, see p. 14.



Graduate Certificate Program in CBR

In response to growing demand on and off campus, CUP is developing an interdisciplinary graduate certificate program in community-based research and evaluation. This program will provide unique opportunities for graduate students to develop the skills they need to work effectively in community-university collaborations. For more information, see p. 15.

Snapshot: Knowledge Sharing

In addition to the Mobilizing Knowledge About Development project (see pp. 14 to 16), CUP was also involved in a number of other knowledge-sharing activities in 2007/08.

Early Childhood Measurement and Evaluation Resource Centre Symposium

On February 13, 2008, CUP's Early Childhood Measurement and Evaluation Resource Centre (ECMERC) held an open symposium entitled "Measuring Early Childhood Development for Prevention and Intervention." The symposium was a resounding success with over 200 people in attendance. For more information, see p. 17.



Knowledge - Sharing Handbook

A Handbook on Knowledge Sharing: Strategies and Recommendations for Researchers, Policymakers, and Service Providers, a CUP booklet summarizing the current state of evidence-based practices in knowledge sharing that was created in 2006, continues to be a popular resource downloaded from CUP's website.

In January 2008, the Canadian Health Services Research Foundation featured the handbook in issue 28 of *Insight and Action*, "a digest linking those who practice knowledge exchange with evidence-informed resources."

This handbook is available for download at www.cup.ualberta.ca under the Documents tab.

Tool Reviews

Between April 2007 and March 2008, CUP produced 22 *Tool Reviews*, summaries of assessment, evaluation, and screening tools used by the local early childhood development community. These reviews are some of the most commonly downloaded resources from CUP's website. Please visit the ECMERC portal at www.cup.ualberta.ca and follow the Documents tab to access these reviews.



Consulting, Brokering, & Leadership: How CUP Works

CUP engages in research, lifelong learning, and knowledge-sharing activities by consulting with researchers, service providers, and policymakers; brokering relationships and collaborations among them; and taking a leadership role in specific projects.

Consulting

At CUP, staff members typically spend a great deal of time consulting with program planners, service providers, policymakers, and researchers on issues such as evaluation planning, grant writing, or community-based research design. CUP provides these services free of charge. For example, new researchers to the University of Alberta who are interested in working with the community often approach CUP to learn about opportunities for collaboration.

Brokering

CUP provides brokering (or matchmaking) services linking researchers with the community in areas of shared interest.

Agency - Student Matching

EDPY 612: *Research Practicum in Psychological Studies in Education* is a doctoral level practicum in which students have the opportunity to acquire community-research experience. CUP works with the Department of Educational Psychology to facilitate the placement of students with community agencies, where they spend eight hours per week for eight months collaborating on research and evaluation issues.

Leadership

CUP takes on leadership roles in projects when resources are available. The three major initiatives described in this annual report (Mobilizing Knowledge About Development, Early Childhood Measurement and Evaluation Resource Centre, and Families First Edmonton) represent a significant portion of the work in which CUP has taken the lead. We also try to lead initiatives where our expertise is of significant help to a partnership. For example, since 2005, at the request of the Regional Early Childhood Development Advisory Committee, CUP began to manage the Innovative Research Grants (IRG) program in conjunction with Early Childhood Development Support Services (ECDSS) in Region 6. CUP is responsible for the adjudication process, including the selection of the adjudication sub-committee and overseeing proposal reviews.

People

People involved with CUP, from members of the Steering Committee to students, come from a diversity of backgrounds. Together, they work toward fulfilling CUP's mission in supporting the healthy development of children, youth, and families through their engagement in research, lifelong learning, and knowledge-sharing activities.

Steering Committee

Critical to CUP's work is the guidance and direction of the Steering Committee. Members contribute exceptional insights and experience based on their work in a wide range of university units, government agencies, and community organizations.



Steering Committee Members 2007/08

Gloria Chalmers (Co-Chair)	Edmonton Public Schools
Jane Drummond (Co-Chair)	Nursing & Health Sciences Council, U of A
Al Cook	Rehabilitation Medicine, U of A
Michelle Craig	Capital Health
Barbara Dart	United Way of the Alberta Capital Region
Lionel Dibden	Pediatrics, U of A/Stollery Children's Hospital
Michael Farris	E4C
Martin Garber-Conrad	Edmonton Community Foundation
Jane Hewes	Early Childhood Development, Grant MacEwan College
Susan Lynch	Child Study Centre, U of A
Mike Mahon	Physical Education and Recreation, U of A
Marni Pearce	Alberta Children and Youth Initiative, Alberta Education
Linda Phillips	Canadian Centre for Research on Literacy, U of A
Dale Sobkovich	Alberta Children's Services
Carol Watson	Community Services, City of Edmonton
Deanna Williamson	Human Ecology, U of A
Brenda Willis & Don Delaney	Edmonton Catholic Schools
Doug Wilson	Public Health Sciences, U of A
Wendy Yewman	Edmonton & Area Child and Family Services, Region 6

Secretariat

The day-to-day work of CUP is conducted by CUP's Secretariat, and includes the leadership team, project staff, support staff, and students. More information is available through at www.cup.ualberta.ca under the People tab.

Leadership Team

Members of the leadership team direct the activities of CUP, under the guidance of the Steering Committee and project advisory committees.

The leadership team consists of **Jeff Bisanz**, Director; **Laurie Schnirer**, Assistant Director; **Susan Lynch**, Policy Associate; **Rebecca Gokiart**, Director of the Early Childhood Measurement and Evaluation Resource Centre (ECMERC); and **Sherry Ann Chapman**, Project Manager of the Mobilizing Knowledge About Development (MKAD) project.

Students

In 2007/08, CUP provided a number of student opportunities: MKAD hosted **Elizabeth Huebert**, Graduate Research Assistant and **Katrina Fong**, Project Assistant; ECMERC hosted **Jaya Nagpal**, graduate student, for the 8-month practicum component of EDPY 612, *Research Practicum in Psychological Studies in Education*; and Families First Edmonton hosted 2 students, **Sherri Lees** & **Michael Walters** from the Concordia University College of Alberta.



Project Staff

Project staff are attached to specific initiatives within CUP, with the exception of the Project Development Coordinator, who works on different initiatives as needed.

Project staff include **Lisa Tews** (ended Spring 2008), ECMERC Resource Assistant; **Winnie Chow**, Project Manager and **Betsabeh Parsa**, Research Assistant, both for the Preschool Developmental Screening Evaluation; and **Kelly Shaw**, Project Development Coordinator. **Maria Mayan**, Research Associate, **Birdie McLean**, Administrator, **Sanchia Lo** and **Sylvia So**, Research Coordinators and numerous Research Assistants, Data Collectors, and Interpreters are attached to the Families First Edmonton project.

Support Staff

Miranda Diakiw (through fall 2007) and **Marilyn Hawirko**, Centre Administrators, and **Lily Tsui**, Communications Coordinator, provide administrative and communications support.

Partners

In addition to individuals that work within CUP, another important segment of people involved are CUP's partner organizations on various projects and activities. Three examples are described below.

Alberta Centre for Child, Family and Community Research

The Alberta Centre for Child, Family and Community Research (ACCFRC) is both a partner and funder of the Mobilizing Knowledge About Development project (for more, see pp. 14-16).

In 2007/08, ACCFRC also provided support for the ECMERC symposium on early childhood measurement.



Government & Community Partners, Families First Edmonton

CUP is also working with partner organizations involved in the Families First Edmonton project, and at the same time studying the collaboration itself to better understand how community-based research partnerships function (for a full list of partners and more about the project, see pp. 20-21).



Capital Health and Multicultural Health Brokers

The Early Childhood Measurement and Evaluation Resource Centre has is partnering with Capital Health to evaluate the Edmonton and area preschool developmental screening initiative, as well as the Multicultural Health Brokers Cooperative to explore the cultural validity of a developmental screening tool when used with immigrant and refugee families (for more, see p. 18).



We would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge and thank these and other organizations with whom we have worked in partnership and collaboration.

Hellos and Goodbyes



Miranda Diakiw, Centre Administrator since 2001, left CUP in fall 2007 for another position within the University of Alberta at the Development Office. Miranda's administrative and communications support to CUP during her time with us was invaluable.

Lisa Tews, ECMERC Resource Coordinator since 2006, left us in spring 2008 for a position at the Glenrose Rehabilitation Hospital. Her contributions to CUP and ECMERC included leadership in the planning and execution of the ECMERC symposium, as well as significant insight and dedication to all of ECMERC's activities.

Rhonda Breitzkreuz, Assistant Director from January to August 2007, is now an Assistant Professor at the Department of Human Ecology. Rhonda provided exceptional leadership to the Mobilizing Knowledge About Development project and played a huge role in how CUP evolved over the past year.

Katrina Fong joined CUP in May 2007 for a 16-month student internship as Project Assistant on the Mobilizing Knowledge About Development project. She is an undergraduate student completing her studies with a specialization in Psychology.

Elizabeth Huebert joined CUP in September 2007 as a part-time Graduate Research Assistant on the Mobilizing Knowledge About Development project. She is a graduate student completing a Masters in Speech Pathology.

Jaya Nagpal joined CUP as a research assistant with the Early Childhood Measurement and Evaluation Resource Centre in September 2007 for an 8-month part-time student placement through EDPY 612: *Research Practicum in Psychological Studies in Education*. She is a graduate student from the Department of Psychology, supervised by Elena Nicoladis.

Marilyn Hawirko joined CUP in October 2007 as Centre Administrator. She brought with her over 18 years of experience with the University of Alberta, most recently as an Administrative Secretary at the Child Study Centre.

Winnie Chow joined CUP in November 2007 as Project Manager for the Preschool Developmental Screening Evaluation and the Early Childhood Screening in Immigrant and Refugee Populations projects. She was the Executive Director of Anti-dote: A Multiracial Girls and Women's Network in Victoria and southern Vancouver Island.

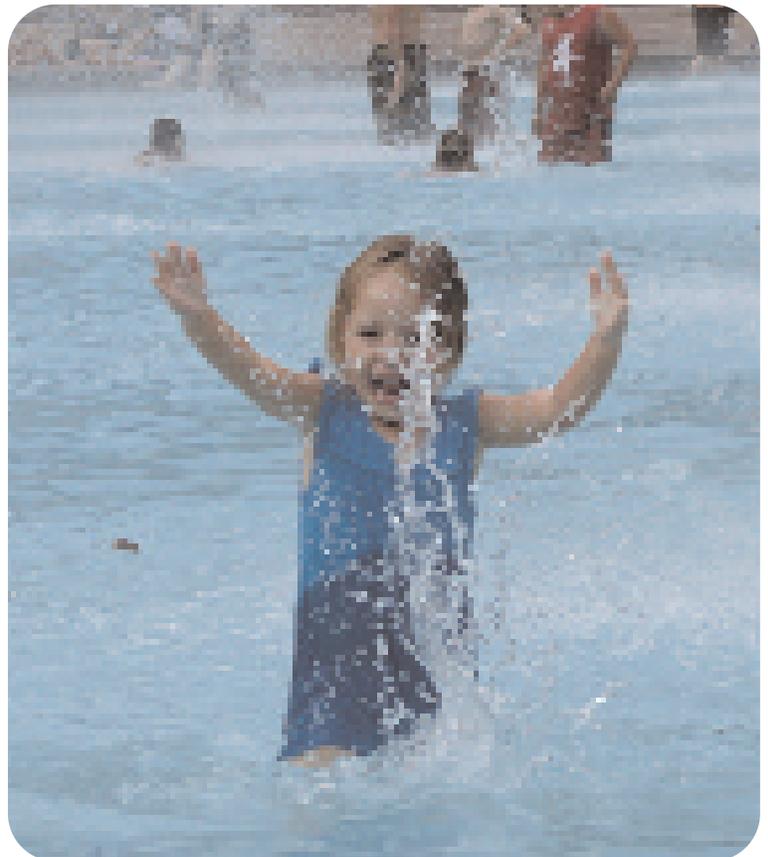
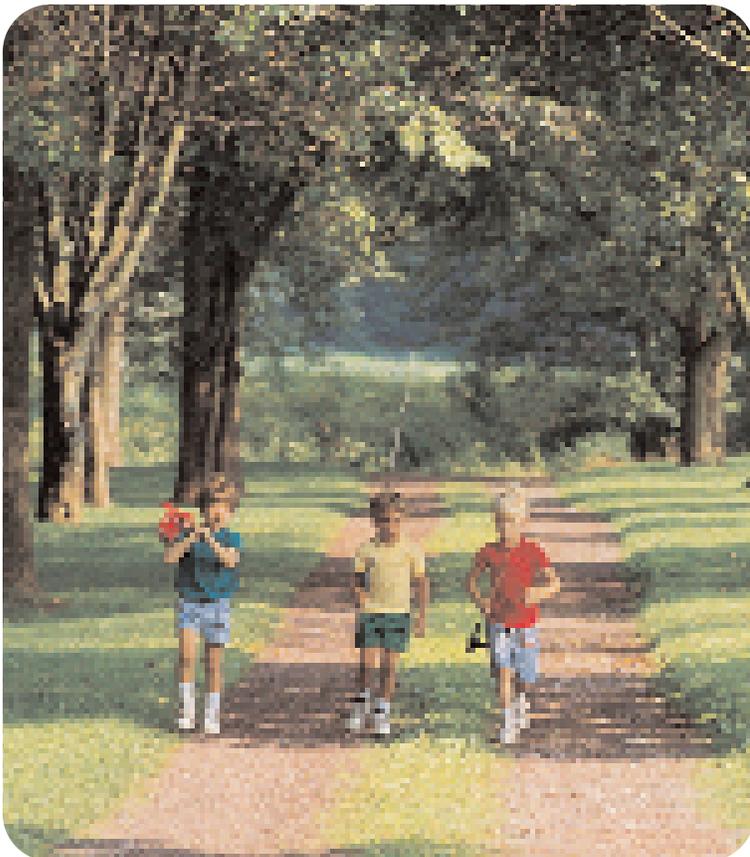
Betsabeh Parsa joined CUP full-time in February 2008 as Research Assistant for the Preschool Developmental Screening Evaluation and the Early Childhood Screening in Immigrant and Refugee Populations projects. She holds a Masters of Education with a specialization in Educational Planning from the University of Tehran, Iran.

Projects

Major Projects

CUP has now grown to the point where an exhaustive description of each and every activity is no longer possible. Instead, in the following pages, we provide details about three of CUP's major projects:

- 1) Mobilizing Knowledge About Development, a project focused on lifelong learning and knowledge mobilization (pp. 14-16);
- 2) Early Childhood Measurement and Evaluation Resource Centre, a unit within CUP focused on providing resources and building capacity in relation to early childhood measurement issues (pp. 17-19); and
- 3) Families First Edmonton, a large-scale collaborative research project focused on increasing effectiveness of service delivery to families with low incomes (pp. 20-21).



Mobilizing Knowledge About Development

Within the Mobilizing Knowledge About Development (MKAD) project, CUP staff have been developing and providing learning opportunities and studying knowledge-sharing practices since September 2006. CUP, in partnership with the Alberta Centre for Child, Family and Community Research (ACCFRCR), seeks to promote knowledge mobilization through two initiatives: the Community-Based Research (CBR) Capacity-Building initiative and the Research & Evaluation initiative.

CBR Capacity-Building

Through the CBR Capacity-Building initiative, MKAD partners are building connections among members of the University and the community. We are supporting the development of understanding about CBR so that researchers, service providers, and policymakers can work together to support the development of children, youth, and families. Within this initiative, there are two components: the CBR Workshop Series and a graduate-level certificate program in CBR.



CBR Workshop Series

The CBR Workshop Series was launched in spring 2007. The series consists of six workshops designed to provide the knowledge base needed to introduce and implement CBR, with a particular focus on supporting service providers and policymakers who work with and for children, youth, and families.

By the end of March 2008, Workshop #1, *Evaluations and Beyond: An Introduction to Community-Based Research and Evaluation* had been offered three times and Workshop #2, *Doing CBR Well: Ethically and With Rigour* had been offered twice.

The workshops have been consistently filled to capacity with over 150 students, researchers, policymakers, and service providers from the University of Alberta, Edmonton, and Alberta in attendance.

In 2008/09, Workshops #3 - 6 will be offered:
Workshop #3, *Building CBR Partnerships*
Workshop #4, *Developing CBR Projects: The "How"*
Workshop #5, *Program Evaluation with a CBR Approach*
Workshop #6, *Making a Difference with CBR: Mobilizing Knowledge to Inform Policy & Practice*

For a list of all the agencies represented by participants in the workshops, please visit www.cup.ualberta.ca and follow the Documents tab to access MKAD documents.

Certificate Program in Community-Based Research & Evaluation

CUP is working with the University of Alberta to develop a certificate program in CBR & E for graduate students. The goal of this program is to increase on-campus and in-community capacity to participate in and lead CBR & E projects about the development of children, youth, and families to support the mobilization of findings in policy, practice, and research.

INT-D: Introduction to Community-Based Research and Evaluation, the core course for the program, will be launched in January 2009.



Research & Evaluation

CUP's many partners are becoming increasingly aware that activities designed to share knowledge, such as symposia and printed documents, do not always have the desired effect. We need to understand what makes these activities more or less successful. As part of the MKAD project, we are systematically studying various knowledge-sharing initiatives by CUP and the Alberta Centre for Child, Family and Community Research (ACCFCR) so that we can identify the factors that contribute to successful knowledge sharing and mobilization.

From April 2007 to March 2008, we have studied:

- The impact of the CBR Workshop Series;
- Experiences of participants in a graduate-level practicum course in CBR;
- ACCFCR symposia;
- CUP and ACCFCR written documents; and
- The ECMERC symposium.

To inform this work, we are developing a conceptual framework for understanding knowledge mobilization. This framework will be useful for researchers, service providers, and policymakers who share knowledge and expertise with one another, and also for CUP and ACCFCR in the future.





The Future of MKAD

The MKAD project represents significant expansion in the scope of CUP's work, especially in the areas of knowledge sharing and lifelong learning. MKAD's staff members are currently engaged in planning for integrating MKAD's initiatives into core activities at CUP and ACCFCR, after the three-year pilot funding expires in September 2009.



MKAD Funders

MKAD is funded by the Knowledge Impact in Society program at the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council, with matched funds provided by the Alberta Centre for Children, Family and Community Research and six faculties and units at the University of Alberta:

- Faculty of Arts
- Faculty of Education
- Faculty of Medicine & Dentistry
- Faculty of Nursing
- Faculty of Rehabilitation Medicine
- Office of the Vice-President (Research)

Early Childhood Measurement and Evaluation Resource Centre

The Early Childhood Measurement and Evaluation Resource Centre (ECMERC) entered its second year of operations in 2007/08.



ECMERC Symposium

On February 13, 2008, ECMERC hosted a symposium on *Measuring Early Childhood Development for Prevention and Intervention*. **Clyde Hertzman**, Director of the Human Early Learning Partnership, University of British Columbia, was the keynote speaker. Local presenters, including **Yvonne Chiu** (Multicultural Health Brokers) & **Winnie Chow** (CUP), **Michelle Craig** (Capital Health), **Carole Anne Hapchyn** (Child, Adolescent & Family Mental Health), **Jane Hewes** (Grant MacEwan Community College), **Linda Phillips** (Canadian Centre for Research on Literacy), **Berna Skrypnek** (Human Ecology, University of Alberta), each discussed research focused on measurement in the promotion of early childhood development.

Over 200 researchers, service providers, and policymakers joined us for this event. Slides for all presentations are available at www.cup.ualberta.ca through the ECMERC portal.

Increasing Community Capacity for Research on Aboriginal Children & Youth

ECMERC completed this project aimed at addressing how best to support providers of assessment and programming for Aboriginal children and youth. Three products resulted from this project:

- A research report describing an exploration of the research literature in assessment across a number of domains including cognition, achievement, language, adaptive and maladaptive behaviour, social/emotional functioning, and visual-motor functioning;
- An executive summary based on the research report; and
- An information guide about measurement and evaluation issues, things to consider, and common biases when working with Aboriginal children and youth.

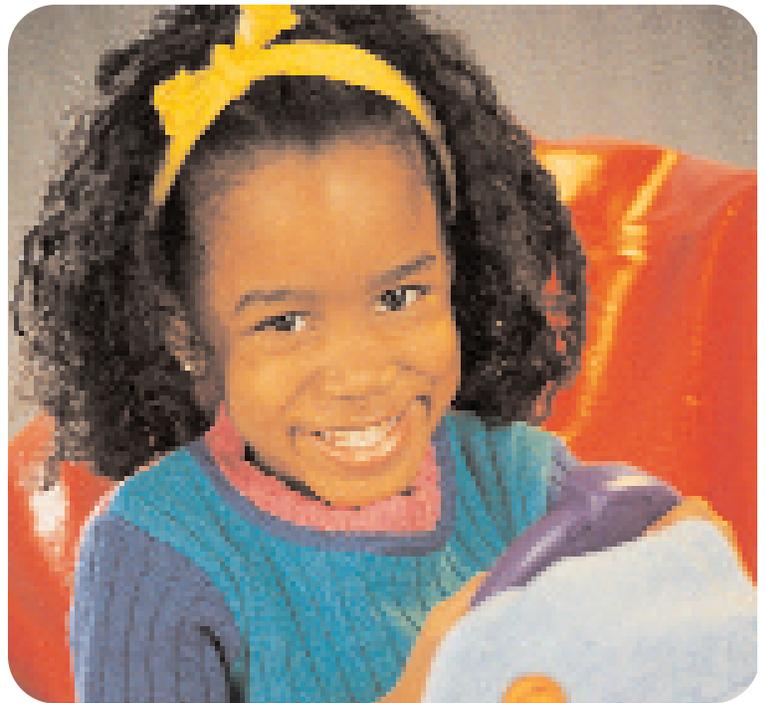
These documents can be found at www.cup.ualberta.ca through the ECMERC portal under the Documents tab.

Preschool Developmental Screening Evaluation

ECMERC, in partnership with Capital Health, is evaluating the effectiveness of the Edmonton and Area Preschool Developmental Screening Project. The evaluation will be used to:

- 1) Generate insight into ways to improve the project's delivery and effectiveness and share project successes for the benefit of other regional developmental screening projects, and
- 2) Critically assess whether the activities undertaken by the project are effective in bringing about desired short-term outcomes.

This evaluation is taking place in the culturally-diverse neighborhood of Mill Woods in Edmonton. The Ages and Stages Questionnaires (ASQ) will be administered to 18- and 36- month old children; after this screening, families will be given developmental awareness, education, and intervention information that connects them with and builds on existing community resources. The evaluation was designed to examine the effectiveness of the screening project in building capacity among families and service providers to support healthy development.



Early Childhood Screening in Immigrant and Refugee Populations

To what degree are early childhood screening tools appropriate for immigrant and refugee populations? Using a multi-method approach including quantitative and qualitative methodologies in a community-based participatory research project, ECMERC, along with Capital Health and the Multicultural Health Brokers, is examining the cultural validity of the ASQ used in the preschool developmental screening project and the impact of the screening process on immigrant and refugee families.

Within a participatory research framework, we are committed to building research capacity among our partners and participants. Within this project, such capacity building is already taking place: the Multicultural Health Brokers were provided with field-based research training to be potential research assistants for this project, which addresses the language barriers and reduces the likelihood that results will be misinterpreted.



ECMERC Core Funding

We would like to extend our thanks to Social Development Canada for ECMERC's core operational support.



ECMERC Symposium Funders

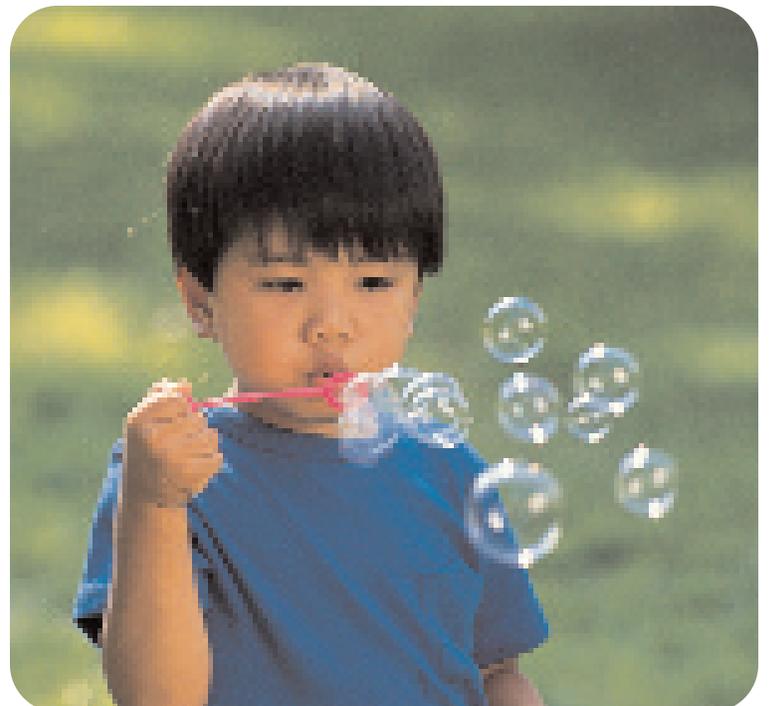
We would like to extend our thanks to the organizations who provided funds for the symposium:

- Alberta Centre for Child, Family and Community Research
- Alberta Education
- Social Development Canada
- Women and Children's Health Research Institute

ECMERC Project Funding

We would like to extend our thanks to the organizations who provided funds specific to ECMERC projects:

- Canadian Council on Learning (Early Childhood Screening in Immigrant and Refugee Populations)
- Capital Health (Preschool Developmental Screening Project)



Families First Edmonton

Project Overview

The Families First Edmonton (FFE) project is a longitudinal, community-based, collaborative research project that is exploring how to better connect families with low incomes to existing services. FFE aims to test whether coordinated, targeted, proactive intervention can create healthier families by exploring how service delivery can be improved and how systems can work together more effectively.

CUP is responsible for coordinating the research components of FFE. Through this research, FFE aims to:

- Test the social, health, and economic impact of four service-delivery models on families with low incomes;
- Determine the relative cost-effectiveness of service delivery;
- Increase our understanding of the collaboration among systems involved in service delivery;
- Describe evidence-based practices supporting program delivery.

Jane Drummond is the principal investigator on this project. For more about FFE, visit www.familiesfirstedmonton.ualberta.ca

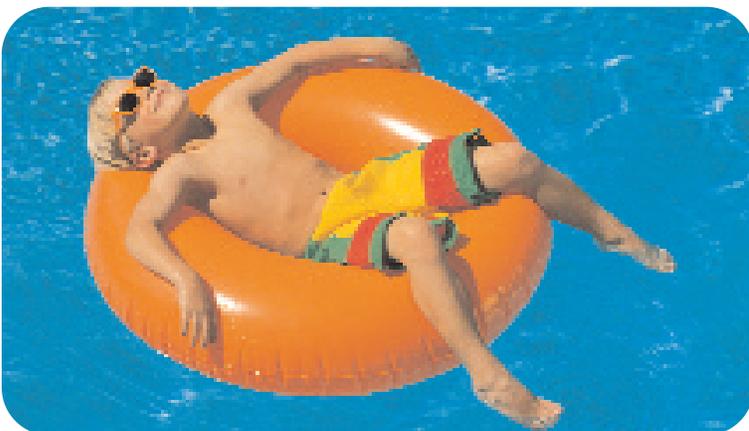


Service Delivery Research

Recruitment for the service delivery research component is now complete. 1,150 families have volunteered to participate in FFE, and have been randomly assigned to one of four groups:

- 1) **Recreation Coordination** - families work with a recreation coordinator to place children in recreational activities.
- 2) **Family Healthy Lifestyles** - families work with a support worker who helps with problem solving and links to health, social services, and childcare options.
- 3) **Comprehensive** - families work with a family support worker and receive the services of both recreation coordination and family healthy lifestyles.
- 4) **Self-directed** - families continue to access services on their own.

Families receive services for up to 2 years. Follow-up research and evaluation will continue for one year after service delivery is complete.



Collaboration Research

As the project progresses, we are also examining how collaboration in such a large-scale endeavor functions so that we can increase our ability to support major collaborations. We are using a Partnership Self-Assessment Tool to identify collaborative strengths and weaknesses, as well as guide strategies for improvement. Thus far, the collaboration among partners has been perceived as positive, with benefits exceeding the drawbacks. Reports are available at www.familiesfirstedmonton.ualberta.ca



Photovoice

In April 2007, FFE researchers worked with ten women from families participating in the comprehensive group on a photovoice project. Photovoice is a qualitative, community-based research method in which the experiences of participants are explored through words and photographs produced by them in regard to some aspect of their experience. In this particular instance, participants were asked to articulate, through words and photographs, the challenges they have faced as low-income families.

Using this method, people gave voice to their struggles with childcare, housing, and accessing assistance. Participants also described the systemic discrimination they face and the perceptions many people have about families with low incomes.

Partners & Funders

Project Co-Leads

- Alberta Employment and Immigration
- City of Edmonton Community Services

Service Delivery Providers (Families Matter Partnership Initiative)

- Bent Arrow Traditional Healing Society
- KARA Family Resource Centre
- Multicultural Health Brokers
Co-operative
- YMCA of Edmonton

Partners

- Alberta Mental Health Board
- Capital Health
- Edmonton Aboriginal Urban
Affairs Committee
- Edmonton Community Foundation
- Edmonton & Area Child and
Family Services Authority – Region 6
- Quality of Life Commission
- United Way – Alberta Capital Region
- University of Alberta – CUP

Service Delivery Funders

- Alberta Employment and Immigration
- City of Edmonton Community Services
- Edmonton Community Foundation
- Stollery Charitable Foundation
- United Way – Alberta Capital Region
- Urban Aboriginal Strategy

Research Funders

- Alberta Heritage Foundation for
Medical Research
- Canadian Health Research Services
Foundation
- Canadian Institutes of Health Research

Publications

CUP Publications

Drummond, J., Mayan, M., Schnirer, L., & So, S. (2007). The comparative costs and effects of four models to augment services for low-income families. *Canadian Journal of Nursing Research*, 39(3), 183-185.

Fong, K. (2008). *From individuals to organizations: A review and application of diffusion of innovations*. Research-project paper for the Industrial Internship Program in Psychology, University of Alberta.

Fong, K. (2008). *International policy forum on family violence: A follow-up evaluation*. Edmonton, AB: Community-University Partnership for the Study of Children, Youth, and Families (CUP) & Alberta Centre for Child, Family and Community Research (ACCFRC).

Fong, K. & Breitzkreuz, R. (2007). *Evaluating a written report as a knowledge-mobilization strategy: The Reproduction in Alberta report*. Edmonton, AB: CUP & ACCFRC.

Fong, K. & Tsui, L. (2007). *FFE learning event summary*. Edmonton, AB: CUP & ACCFRC.

Gokiart, R. J & Tews, L. (2008) *Identifying the measurement needs of the early childhood community: A brief synopsis*. Edmonton, AB: CUP and Early Childhood Measurement and Evaluation Resource Centre (ECMERC).

Schnirer, L., Dalton, A., Dennis, D., Hartnagel, T., Galambos, N., & Bisanz, J. (2007). *Capacity building as crime prevention: Outcomes evaluation of the Kids in the Hall Bistro program*. Edmonton, AB: CUP.

Shaw, K., Chapman, S. A., Fong, K. & Jack, M. (2008). *The many faces of childhood well-being: The early years (2 to 6) symposium evaluation report*. Edmonton, AB: CUP & ACCFRC.

Whitley, J., Odishaw, J., & Gokiart, R. J. (2007). *Psycho-educational assessment of Aboriginal children and youth: A brief summary of issues, research findings, and recommendations*. Edmonton, AB: CUP & ECMERC.

Whitley, J., Odishaw, J., & Gokiart, R. J. (2007). *Factors related to the psycho-educational assessment of Aboriginal children and youth*. Edmonton, AB: CUP & ECMERC.



Presentations

Members of CUP's staff present to a number of different venues and audiences every year. We actively engage with researchers, service providers, and policymakers at peer-reviewed conferences and symposia, and also respond to requests for presentations. A selection of presentations is listed here.

Peer - Reviewed Presentations

Chapman, S. A. & Fong, K. (2008, January). *Community-based research (CBR) workshop series: Growing a learning community!* Main-stage presentation at the University of Alberta's Inaugural Festival of Teaching, Edmonton, AB.

Gokiert, R. J., Tews, L., Odishaw, J. & Whitley, J (2008, February). *Assessment and screening in early childhood: A focus on Aboriginal children.* Poster presented at the Banff International Conferences on Behavioural Science: Banff XL: Effective Early Learning Programs: Research, Policy and Practice, Banff, AB.

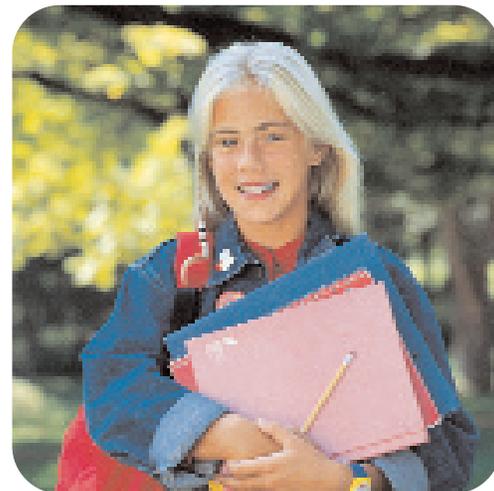
Gokiert, R. J., Tews, L., Odishaw, J. & Whitley, J (2008, March). *Assessment of Aboriginal children: Issues and biases.* Poster presentation at the Banff International Conferences on Behavioural Science: Banff XL: Effective Early Learning Programs: Research, Policy and Practice, Banff, AB.

Klassen, R., Fontaine, J., Muth, T., Schnirer, L., & Trudeau, T. (2007, June). *Increasing our relevance: Community-based educational psychology.* Oral presentation at the 2007 Biennial Conference of the Society for Community Research and Action, Pasadena, CA.

Lynch, S., King, M., & DiMarcello, L. (2007, April). *Early childhood development community mapping project.* Oral presentation at the Community-Campus Partnerships for Health 10th Anniversary Conference: Mobilizing Partnerships for Social Change, Toronto, ON.

Mayan, M., Chapman, S. A., Schnirer, L. & Bisanz, J. (2007, April). *The "essential" nature of CBR.* Oral presentation at the Qualitative Health Research Conference, Seoul, Korea.

Tsui, L., Chapman, S. A., Bisanz, J. & Schnirer, L. (2007, April). *Towards a better understanding of knowledge mobilization.* Oral presentation at the Community-Campus Partnerships for Health 10th Anniversary Conference: Mobilizing Partnerships for Social Change, Toronto, ON.



Invited Presentations

Bisanz, J., Shaw, K., & Shaver, K. (2007, September). *ISM/PPV research: Research to practice*. Presentation at the Big Brothers Big Sisters Western Regional Conference, Canmore, AB.

Chapman, S. A. (2007, October). *An introduction to community-based research*. Presentation to HECOL 100: Introduction to Principles and Practice in Human Ecology, Department of Human Ecology, University of Alberta, Edmonton, AB.

Chapman, S. A. (2008, March). *An introduction to community-based research*. Presentation to SOC 518: Qualitative Methods in Social Research, Department of Sociology, University of Alberta, Edmonton, AB.

Gokiert, R. J. (2007, July). *Assessment in early childhood*. Presentation to graduate students in the Faculty of Counselling Psychology at City University, Edmonton, AB.

Gokiert, R. J. (2008, February). *Behavior Assessment System for Children – Second Edition*. Presentation to Child and Adolescent Services Association, Edmonton, AB.

Gokiert, R. J. (2008, June). *Behavior Assessment System for Children – Second Edition*. Presentation to Catholic Social Services Division, Child and Youth Services, Edmonton, AB.

Gokiert, R. J. & Odishaw, J. (2007, October). *Assessment of Aboriginal children and youth*. Presentation to teachers, psychologists, and administrators from the Edmonton Public School Board, Edmonton, AB.

Gokiert, R. J. & Yohani, S. (2008, May). *Psychological and psycho-educational assessments with ethnic minority students*. Presentation at the Community Forum on Issues Affecting Newcomer Students. Catholic Social Services, Edmonton Immigration Services Association, Edmonton Mennonite Centre for Newcomers, & Northern Alberta Alliance on Race Relations, Edmonton, AB.

Schnirer, L. (2007, April). *Engaging in community-based research*. Presentation at the Families First Edmonton Learning Event, Edmonton, AB.

Schnirer, L. & Bisanz, J. (2007, September). *Funding CBR*. Community-Based Research Workshop, Women & Children's Health Research Institute, Edmonton, AB.

Schnirer, L. & Chapman, S. A. (2007, July). *An introduction to community-based research*. Presentation at the Thinking Qualitatively Conference, International Institute for Qualitative Methodology, Edmonton, AB.

Tsui, L., Fong, K. & Chapman, S. A. (2007, October). *Community-University Partnership for the Study of Children, Youth, and Families*. Presentation to the Alberta Teachers Association Joint Stakeholders Committee on Children and Poverty, Edmonton, AB.

Community - Based Research Workshops

Workshop #1, *Evaluations and Beyond: An Introduction to Community-Based Research & Evaluation* was offered on May 29 and November 2, 2007, and February 2, 2008.

Workshop #2, *Doing CBR Well: Ethically and With Rigour* was offered November 23, 2007 and March 28, 2008.

Support for Core Operations

CUP's core operations are supported by contributions from community, government, and University sources. In addition to core operating funds, CUP also managed over \$ 1.4 million in project funding from April 2007 to March 2008. Details of the contributions are provided below.

Community Contributions

The largest proportion of contributions for core operations comes from the community:

- Edmonton Catholic Schools
- Edmonton Community Foundation
- Edmonton Public Schools
- Norlien Foundation
- Stollery Children's Hospital
- United Way of the Alberta Capital Region

Government Contributions

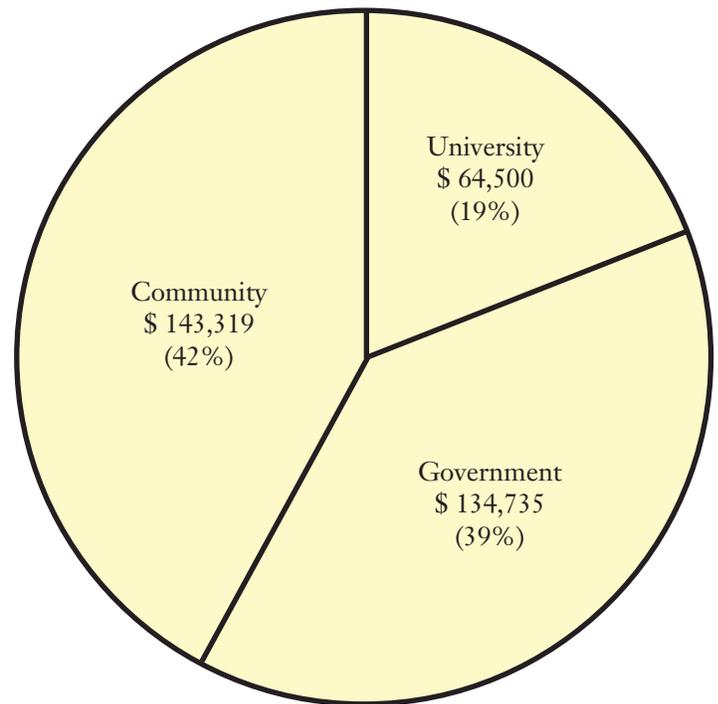
CUP receives support for core operations from several government sources:

- Alberta Children's Services
- Alberta Education
- Capital Health
- City of Edmonton
- Edmonton & Area Child and Family Services, Region 6

University Contributions

The University of Alberta has supported CUP's core operations through the Health Sciences Council (HSC) since CUP's launch in July 2000. The mission of the HSC is to champion interdisciplinary health sciences research, education, and community service at the University of Alberta.

In addition to the financial support represented in the chart above, HSC also provides extensive administrative and infrastructure support to CUP.



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Community-University Partnership
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