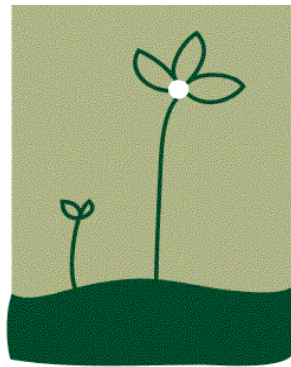


First Duty

Indicators of Change



TORONTO
FIRST
DUTY

Early Learning and Care
For Every Child

First Duty is a new service delivery system model. The vision of First Duty is to create a service delivery system that provides a seamless blend of integrated early learning, care, services, and supports, for all young children and their families in defined communities. The model is organized around five core elements—the early learning environment, an early childhood staff team, local governance, seamless access, and parent participation.

The First Duty *Indicators of Change* is a management tool that guides, tracks, and assesses the progress a site is making towards the integration of programs (child care, early childhood education, family support programs, and kindergarten) that are linked to early intervention, community and public health, and social services. The indicators set out the details of the First Duty vision and outline the predicted, incremental steps that move towards that vision.

The tool was designed to support each First Duty site in creating and implementing its unique blueprint of the service delivery model; each First Duty site's partners identify their own priorities and activities to move towards the vision. The experience of creating and implementing the blueprint is one of growing collaboration among community partners and is preparation for public policy changes towards First Duty program delivery.

While significant system-wide public policy change is necessary to fully realize the First Duty vision, communities can take bold steps towards the model and achieve significant benefits for children, families, and communities.

Background

In 1999, the City of Toronto, the Atkinson Charitable Foundation, and the Toronto District School Board, with the support of participating community agencies, established Toronto First Duty in response to the main recommendation of the *Early Years Study* (McCain & Mustard, 1999). The study called on the provincial government to consolidate the existing patchwork of community services for children and families to provide an integrated early learning, care, and parenting program for every young child in Ontario within five years. Toronto First Duty (TFD) was mandated to demonstrate how existing, distinct child care, kindergarten, and family support programs could be transformed into a single early learning and care program to meet the needs of children prenatal to age six and their families. Its primary goal is to provide detailed public policy and a model for replication.

Between 2001 and 2005, the funding partners supported the first phase of development and implementation of TFD at sites based in five Toronto District School Board elementary schools. They continue to work with the sites to bring about the broader system transformations necessary to support sustainable change.

Early in 2001, the TFD Joint Steering Committee identified five core elements that define the First Duty vision and work together to create an integrated early learning and care program

delivery model (local governance, seamless access, early learning environments, early childhood staff team, and parent participation). The January 2003 *Research Progress Report* indicated that the overarching vision of TFD was clear to participants, but the more specific goals and expectations were not. In response to this finding, the TFD Joint Steering Committee wanted a tool that identified specific indicators of success. Further discussion with the executive directors of the lead agencies and the site coordinators reinforced the need for a tool that could describe the specific indicators of a fully integrated, seamless early childhood community system and sketch out the benchmarks of change.

Upon reviewing a draft of a more open-ended, less defined tool, site coordinators and lead agencies asked for a tool that included a scale and specific, defined steps and milestones for each of the five TFD core elements. This led to the first edition of the *Indicators of Change*.

During June 2003, four of the TFD sites completed the initial *Indicators of Change* worksheets and the fifth site completed the process in the fall of 2003. The site management committees met with a facilitator to use the indicators to explore and document their efforts to create an integrated program. For each of the indicators TFD participants identified the policies and practices used by the site at the starting point of the TFD project (from the time that the site received funding), and those at the June 2003 point. Sites began to identify the end point that they hoped to achieve over the two-year implementation of the project. During the fall of 2003, the site management committees reviewed their site's *Indicators of Change* report. The TFD research team used the reports to prepare site update reports for the December 2003 progress report.

During June of 2005 each site revisited the indicators to review and monitor progress towards integration. Input was gathered from frontline staff members as well as the site management committee members. The June 2005 *Indicators of Change* reports were included in the *Phase 1 TFD Research Report*.

Based on the experiences using the tool, the indicators were revised and reduced from 25 to 19 items to create the *First Duty Indicators of Change*. The tool is designed for use by community child care, kindergarten and family support programs that want to join up their programs into a seamless program for early learning and care.

Summary of key elements and indicators

A unique set of program indicators define specific activities and practice for each of the key elements. Indicators track the progress that First Duty sites are making towards implementing the five core elements. There are a total of nineteen program indicators.

1.0 Local Governance

A local governance structure is responsible for program policies, resource allocation, service planning and monitoring, and human resource decisions.

- Indicator 1.1 **Program mandate, policy, and practices**
- Indicator 1.2 **Service planning and monitoring**
- Indicator 1.3 **Allocation of financial resources**
- Indicator 1.4 **Human resources**

2.0 Seamless Access

Seamless access is available to an expanded and comprehensive early learning and care program, providing a continuum of supports and services to all families and young children prenatally to 6-years.

- Indicator 2.1 **Capacity**
- Indicator 2.2 **Child care provision and affordability**
- Indicator 2.3 **Intake, enrollment, and attendance**

3.0 Learning Environment

High quality learning environments combine learning expectations, activities, and routines from existing kindergarten, early childhood education/child care, and parenting/family support programs.

- Indicator 3.1 **Curriculum framework & pedagogical approach**
- Indicator 3.2 **Daily routines and schedules**
- Indicator 3.3 **Use of space**
- Indicator 3.4 **Children's development and progress**
- Indicator 3.5 **Program quality**

4.0 Early Childhood Staff Team

Develop an early childhood staff team that works together to deliver and achieve program goals.

- Indicator 4.1 **Program planning and implementation**
- Indicator 4.2 **Behaviour guidance/child management**
- Indicator 4.3 **Roles and responsibilities**
- Indicator 4.4 **Staff development**

5.0 Parent Participation

Parent participation in children's early learning and development should be increased through direct involvement in programs, planning, and decision-making.

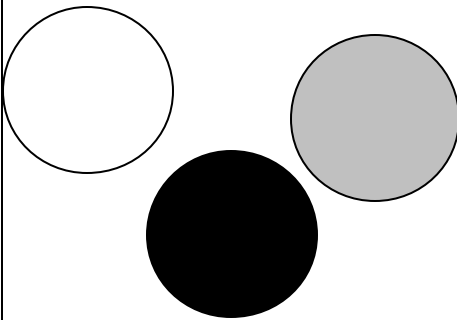
- Indicator 5.1 **Parent input and participation in programs**
- Indicator 5.2 **Parenting capacity**
- Indicator 5.3 **Relationships with families**

Benchmarks

For each of the program indicators, benchmarks track progress along a continuum of co-existence to coordination, collaboration, and integration. The benchmarks are organized on a five-point scale from 1 (co-existence) to 5 (integration).

Level 1: Coexistence

Benchmark level 1 describes practices in early childhood and family programs that are located in the same building or neighbourhood, but operate as separate and distinct services.



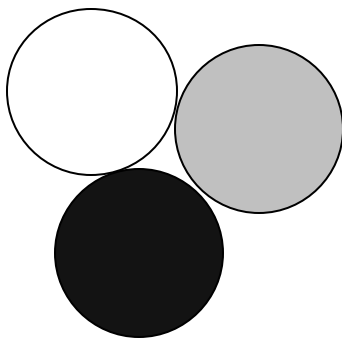
- Programs located in same building or neighbourhood
- Families make separate arrangements to participate

Examples:

- Child care, kindergarten, and family centre located in school building;
- Public Health offers parenting programs in local school or child care facility

Level 2: Coordination

Benchmark level 2 describes individual programs that share information with each other, and perhaps coordinate specific activities.



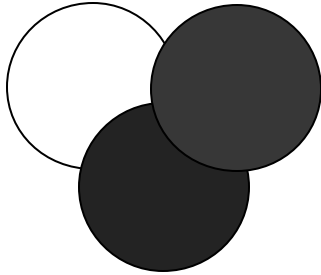
- Share program plans and behaviour guidance strategies
- Work together to reduce number of transitions the child makes in a day
- Provide joint events for families

Examples:

- Joint family night and field trips;
- Public Health early identification takes place at schools junior kindergarten registration

Level 3: Collaboration A

Benchmark level 3 indicates some specific joint First Duty activities that merge human resources, space, and/or materials to offer new program opportunities.



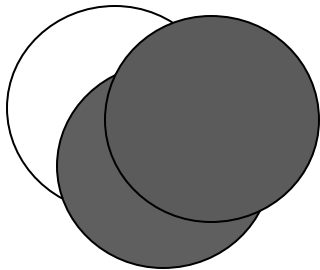
- Bring children and parents/caregivers together for joint activity
- Children choose from activities across programs
- New program activity based on existing resources (e.g. staff, space, or equipment) and expertise

Examples:

- Regular joint storytime/music group;
- community kitchen;
- preschool curriculum planned by kindergarten teachers and ECD staff

Level 4: Collaboration B

Benchmark level 4 describes an expansion of joint TFD activities and a clear influence on the operation of the original partner programs (kindergarten, child care and family support).



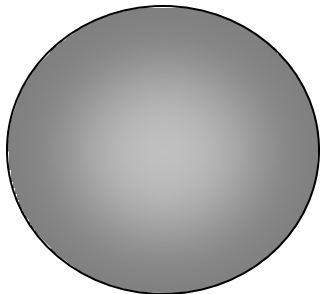
- Common activities expanded
- Partner organizations influenced by collaborative activities
- Joint roles and responsibilities emerge

Examples:

- Child care centre & kindergarten class merge in common space with a joint staff team (ECE & kindergarten teacher)
- Family resource program offers on-going early childhood education program with option of regular or occasional non-parental care

Level 5: Integration

Benchmark level 5 describes full integration of existing and expanded programs into an integrated early learning and care program delivery system within a defined neighbourhood or community.



- Single identity
- One curriculum & pedagogical approach
- Common program policies and practices
- Core staff team
- Seamless participation
- Full-time, half-day, regular part-time, and occasional
- Child- and family-focused
- All children and families can participate
- Single funding envelope

Example:

- Toronto First Duty

Definitions

Child Care/Early Childhood Education: Child care centres, family child care, nursery schools, school readiness programs, preschool programs, special needs resourcing, preschool early intervention group programs. Children may attend without a parent or guardian.

Kindergarten: Junior & Senior kindergarten offered to all children by education system.

Family Support Programs : Parenting centres, family resource programs, Ontario Early Years Centres, prenatal/postnatal groups, family literacy, parenting groups, home visiting, community kitchens and family health and nutrition programs. The focus is on parents and children. Children often participate, accompanied by a parent or guardian.

Partner Programs : Community child care/ECE, kindergarten and family support programs that are offered by lead agencies, community organizations, district school boards, municipalities, provincial./territorial governments and public health unites who agree to participate in local First Duty cross-sector partnership.

Key Element 1: Local Governance

Program Indicators	Benchmark 1 <i>Co-existence</i>	Benchmark 2 <i>Co-ordination</i>	Benchmark 3 <i>Collaboration A</i>	Benchmark 4 <i>Collaboration B</i>	Benchmark 5 <i>Integration</i>
1.1 Program Mandate, Policies & Practices	? Maintain separate mandates, policies, and practices that respect individual program regulatory requirements.	? Review each other's mandates, policies, and practices and develop a shared vision. ? Sign a partnership agreement that defines contributions, with terms of reference that identify the roles, responsibilities, and a decision-making process.	? Establish a joint program statement (that includes operating protocols) for joint activities that recognizes combined regulatory requirements. ? Expand community, cross-sector membership in the partnership.	? Shift decision-making from individual programs to a joint governing structure for policy and operational decisions. ? Expand the use of the joint program statement to new joint activities and other partner program activities.	? Establish a single governance structure that is responsible for financial, human resource, and operational decisions. ? Establish a program statement for the common early learning and care program that meets all relevant requirements.
1.2 Service Planning & Monitoring	? Maintain separate service targets, eligibility criteria, and monitoring criteria for kindergarten, child care, and family support programs.	? Seek input from partners, other community programs, and community representatives to assess capacity and identify needs/gaps. ? Hold joint planning meetings and identify first project activities.	? Define participation targets and program development priorities to expand access and availability. ? Plan/coordinate further development and strategies for increasing capacity.	? Influence service planning of partner programs to accommodate expanded joint activities.	? Carry out common service planning and monitor use of early learning and care program within the defined catchment area.
1.3 Allocation of Financial Resources	? Operate kindergarten, child care, and family support programs with separate budgets and financial resources.	? Allocate project resources to support project activities.	? Contribute partner program resources to joint activities. ? Seek out additional resources to support expanded activities.	? Expand contribution of partner program resources to joint activities.	? Manage and administer a pooled funding envelope for the common early learning & care program.
1.4 Human Resources	? Maintain separate human resource policies and practices.	? Establish a hiring process for a site coordinator, including development of a job description. ? Review partners' human resource policies and practices, including labour agreements.	? Hire and supervise site coordinator and other project staff. ? Develop site human resource policies for hiring and supervision of project staff.	? Expand use of joint human resource policies and practices and influence partner program human resource decision-making, policies, and practices.	? Use common human resource policies and practices for the early childhood staff team.

Key Element 2: Seamless Access

Program Indicators	Benchmark 1 <i>Co-existence</i>	Benchmark 2 <i>Co-ordination</i>	Benchmark 3 <i>Collaboration A</i>	Benchmark 4 <i>Collaboration B</i>	Benchmark 5 <i>Integration</i>
2.1 Capacity	<p>? Engage children & families according to individual program eligibility, participation, and capacity criteria..</p> <p>? Contact with and access of individual partner programs is parents' responsibility.</p>	<p>? Conduct community family survey .</p> <p>? Review partner programs' actual capacity and utilization in catchment area.</p> <p>? Identify barriers to access.</p> <p>? Link parents and children to early childhood and family programs, early intervention services, and community health programs.</p>	<p>? Implement joint activities that expand capacity connect to existing partner programs and address identified gaps and barriers.</p> <p>? Continue to seek input from community residents & programs to identify needs and gaps.</p>	<p>? Continue to expand capacity through scope and quantity of joint activities and incorporate additional partner programs for children 0- to 6-years and their families.</p>	<p>? Provide access to a common early learning and care program for all children 0–6 and thier parents in the catchment area, regardless of parents' work status, family SES¹, age, or special needs.</p> <p>? Have links to early intervention, community health, and social services in a common program that are accessible as needed.</p>
2.2 Child Care Provision & Affordability	<p>? Provide regulated child care in some partner program activities.</p> <p>? Maintain user fees for individual child care programs based on funding and costs.</p>	<p>? Identify community capacity and community demand for child care provision.</p> <p>? Review child care user fees and costs.</p>	<p>? Expand provision of regulated full-day, half-day, regular part-time, and occasional child care as part of new joint activities that are responsive to community demand.</p> <p>? Offer joint activities at no user cost or have user costs that are affordable to community residents.</p>	<p>? Expand the range of child care through joint activities and partner programs to accommodate (xx - a significant increase of) young children 0- 6 years in the catchment area.</p> <p>? Offer at no cost or at a standard, affordable user fee.</p>	<p>? Expand range of child care through early learning and care program to accommodate up to accommodate at least 75% of young children 0–6 years in the catchment area.</p> <p>? Support integrated early learning and care with base funding and standard, affordable fees for some of the programs.</p>
2.3 Intake, Enrollment & Attendance	<p>? Use separate procedures for intake, registration and tracking kindergarten, child care and family support program participation.</p>	<p>? Review partner program intake protocols.</p> <p>? Identify commonalities and gaps.</p> <p>? Review usage patterns of programs within site catchment area.</p>	<p>? Use First Duty common intake protocol for joint activities.</p>	<p>? Use First Duty common protocol for joint activities and as part of all partner programs.</p>	<p>? Use a common intake form and attendance system for all common early learning and care programs.</p> <p>? Monitor utilization to ensure participation includes all groups within the community.</p>

¹ SES = Socioeconomic status
First Duty Indicators of Change
 Atkinson Centre, OISE/UT

Key Element 3: Early Learning Environment

Program Indicators	Benchmark 1 <i>Co-existence</i>	Benchmark 2 <i>Co-ordination</i>	Benchmark 3 <i>Collaboration A</i>	Benchmark 4 <i>Collaboration B</i>	Benchmark 5 <i>Integration</i>
3.1 Curriculum Framework & Pedagogical Approach	? Maintain separate philosophy, goals, and objectives that are consistent within each of the partner programs and meet regulatory requirements.	? Review each other's program philosophy, goals, objectives, policies and guidelines. ? Identify commonalities & differences.	? Develop & implement shared philosophy, goals, and objectives as part of joint activities that promote children's early development.	? Expand influence of shared philosophy, goals, and objectives to change practices to promote children's early development in partner programs.	? Establish and implement program philosophy, goals, and objectives that support children's early development as part of common early learning & care program.
3.2 Daily Routines and Schedules	? Maintain separate schedules in partner programs.	? Identify opportunities for shared activity time across programs. ? Reduce the number of transitions children make in a day.	? Coordinate schedules. ? Implement ongoing joint activities that bring children, parents/caregivers, and the staff together.	? Provide opportunities for children/parents to choose activities from across partner programs and joint initiatives.	? Use a single schedule for a common early learning and care program with a variety of activities available to young children and their families.
3.3 Use of Space	? Kindergarten, child care, and family support programs are located & delivered in separate, designated spaces (located in the same building or neighbourhood).	? Assess space needs and potential among partner programs for new activities.	? Share space to implement new joint activities. ? Reduce physical environment transitions for children and parents.	? Share space to expand the provision of joint activities and to joining together partner program activities.	? Redefine combined common early learning and care program space by function, rather than service delivery type.
3.4 Children's Development & Progress	? Maintain developmental records and implement early identification and early intervention activities within each partner program.	? Review each other's tools and approaches (including early identification tools and early intervention strategies) used to monitor and support each child's development.	? Combine approaches (including early identification/intervention strategies) used in partner programs to monitor children's development in joint activities.	? Use a combined approach (including early identification/intervention strategies) in expanded joint activities and in partner programs.	? Use a common mechanism/approach to track children's development, identify difficulties, and provide early intervention where appropriate.
3.5 Program Quality	? Monitor program quality in each partner program.	? Review each other's program quality tools and related regulatory requirements.	? Combine approaches used in partner programs to monitor program quality in new activities.	? Use combined approach in expanded joint activities and in partner programs.	? Use a common mechanism to monitor & ensure program quality.

Key Element 4: Early Childhood Staff Team

Program Indicators	Benchmark 1 <i>Co-existence</i>	Benchmark 2 <i>Co-ordination</i>	Benchmark 3 <i>Collaboration A</i>	Benchmark 4 <i>Collaboration B</i>	Benchmark 5 <i>Integration</i>
4.1 Program Planning & Implementation	? Kindergarten, child care, and family support programs are planned and carried out independently of each other.	? Share program plans, curriculum expectations, and strategies from kindergarten, family support, and child care/ECE perspectives.	? Share responsibility in planning and carrying out joint activities. ? Plan time/space for joint activities to meet children's developmental needs.	? Expand joint planning to a wider range of program activities, including those provided by partner programs.	? Plan and deliver consolidated activities in the common early learning and care program.
4.2 Behaviour Guidance/ Child Management	? Behaviour guidance strategies are carried out separately, in each partner programs.	? Review behaviour guidance strategies from kindergarten, family support, and child care/ECE perspectives.	? Develop, adopt, and implement a common behaviour guidance protocol in joint activities.	? Expand use of common behaviour guidance protocol to expanded joint activities and to partner programs.	? Carry out common behaviour guidance protocol.
4.3 Roles & Responsibilities	? Specific roles and responsibilities are defined by individual program requirements.	? Co-ordinate responsibilities within a multi-disciplinary team that includes teachers, child care/ECE, and family support staff, and may include early intervention and community health care staff.	? Carry out specific joint activities with involvement of multidisciplinary team.	? Expand and blend roles and responsibilities for joint and partner program activities within the interdisciplinary team.	? Establish common roles and responsibilities for the early childhood staff team. ? Revise job descriptions of the early childhood staff team and supervisors to reflect expectations.
4.4 Staff Development	? Staff development activities are provided separately within each of the partner programs.	? Review each other's staff development activities.	? Provide joint in-service activities for staff involved in the joint activities and invite each other to participate in in-service activities.	? Provide joint staff development for site and partner program staff.	? Provide common staff development for combined early childhood team.

Key Element 5: Parent Participation

Program Indicators	Benchmark 1 <i>Co-existence</i>	Benchmark 2 <i>Co-ordination</i>	Benchmark 3 <i>Collaboration A</i>	Benchmark 4 <i>Collaboration B</i>	Benchmark 5 <i>Integration</i>
5.1 Parent Input & Participation in Programs	? Parent input and participation into kindergarten, child care, and family support programs is provided separately.	? Review how each other's programs involve parents in decisions and programs. ? Seek out parent input (informal and formal) into planning for first joint activities. ? Identify a variety of opportunities for participation that accommodate work and study demands.	? Ensure representation of parents' views (through formal and informal channels) in decision-making about joint activities. ? Encourage parent participation in joint activities.	? Provide opportunities for parent input into decision-making about expanding joint activities and incorporating partner program activities. ? Increase parent participation in joint activities and partner programs by 50%.	? Establish a common approach to ensure meaningful parental input into programming decisions. ? Encourage regular parent participation in the common early learning and care program.
5.2 Parenting Capacity	? Provide opportunities to enhance parenting capacity in some of the individual program activities.	? Review how each other's programs enhance parenting capacity.	? Offer joint activities that include opportunities to enhance parenting capacity.	? Expand joint activities and incorporate partner program activities that enhance parenting capacity.	? Involve parents in regular, ongoing activities that benefit parenting capacity.
5.3 Relationships with Families	? Opportunities to ensure families understand how programs operate and to share information about their child is provided at individual programs.	? Review how each other's programs connect and communicate with families.	? Offer joint activities that include opportunities to build reciprocal communication and connections with families.	? Expand joint activities and incorporate partner program activities that increase communication and connections with families.	? Establish common policies and practices that build responsive, reciprocal relationships with families.