

# DEVELOPMENTS

NATIONAL LONGITUDINAL SURVEY OF CHILDREN AND YOUTH  
Vol. 5, No. 1 Summer 2000

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## Our Photo Contest Winners Captured Images of Canadian Children!

In 1999, the NLSCY won an award from Human Resources Development Canada for innovation. The award money (\$2000) was designated for artwork to adorn our offices here at National Headquarters in Hull. The NLSCY team chose to select a piece of art through a photo contest. Students in post-secondary photography courses in schools across Canada were invited to submit original photographs of children in Canada.

We were enchanted with all the photos we received and spent a great deal of time deliberating over which adorable, smiley-faced children we would pick. You can imagine how difficult it must have been! But we managed to narrow our choices down to five winners who will each receive \$400 for each of their winning photos. The photos will now be individually framed and displayed in our Applied Research Branch boardroom for all to enjoy, and are included in this edition in black and white (please see our web site for the original colour versions).



Human Resources Development Canada  
Développement des ressources humaines Canada

Canada

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## RESEARCH DEVELOPMENTS

### **HRDC-NLSCY Research Network: A New Way of Conducting NLSCY Research**



Photographer: Louise Neron  
Université Laval de Québec

The first round of NLSCY research conducted on Cycle 1 data was successful in beginning to understand the factors affecting child development and well being in Canada. The Applied Research Branch (ARB) has concluded from this experience that a long-term commitment is needed to create ongoing, effective links between NLSCY research and policy. It also sees a need for increased research capacity in the area of human development. This commitment led to an NLSCY Research Network.

This network will focus on the area of child and human development, with the following specific objectives:

- to develop high quality policy relevant research
- to directly connect academic researchers to policy development

- to increase policy research capacity by encouraging the development of quantitative social researchers in universities
- to consolidate research results from the NLSCY.

The NLSCY Research Network will start with 4 sites in universities across the country and one at HRDC in ARB in Ottawa. The ARB site consists of the Network Coordinator and one site Research Coordinator for each university site. Each of the university sites will employ two NLSCY Scholars to work with the NLSCY database under the direction of an established academic – the NLSCY Senior Scholar – for five years.

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Essentially, the role of such centres is to concentrate sustained effort in a defined area of research in order to consolidate research evidence on child development, and link it to policy. The centres will support and train a cadre of young researchers in the use of complex data systems and longitudinal methodologies for child development research. The call for proposals for the HRDC-NLSCY Research Network was sent out in March 2000. Twenty-two packages were sent to a list of universities with the capacity to conduct child development research using the NLSCY. Four proposals to create centres were selected:

- vulnerable outcomes in childhood and schooling outcomes (Douglas Willms, University of New Brunswick)
- trajectories of child behaviour development (Richard Tremblay, University of Montreal)
- impact of particular disadvantages on child outcomes (Dan Offord, McMaster University)
- development of competency in children (Clyde Hertzman, University of British Columbia)

The four research centres will begin during the summer and fall of 2000.

Upon completion of the current round of Cycle 2 research, we plan to highlight the findings in a special edition of the Applied Research Bulletin, focusing on child development, as we did with Cycle 1 research in the Fall of 1999.

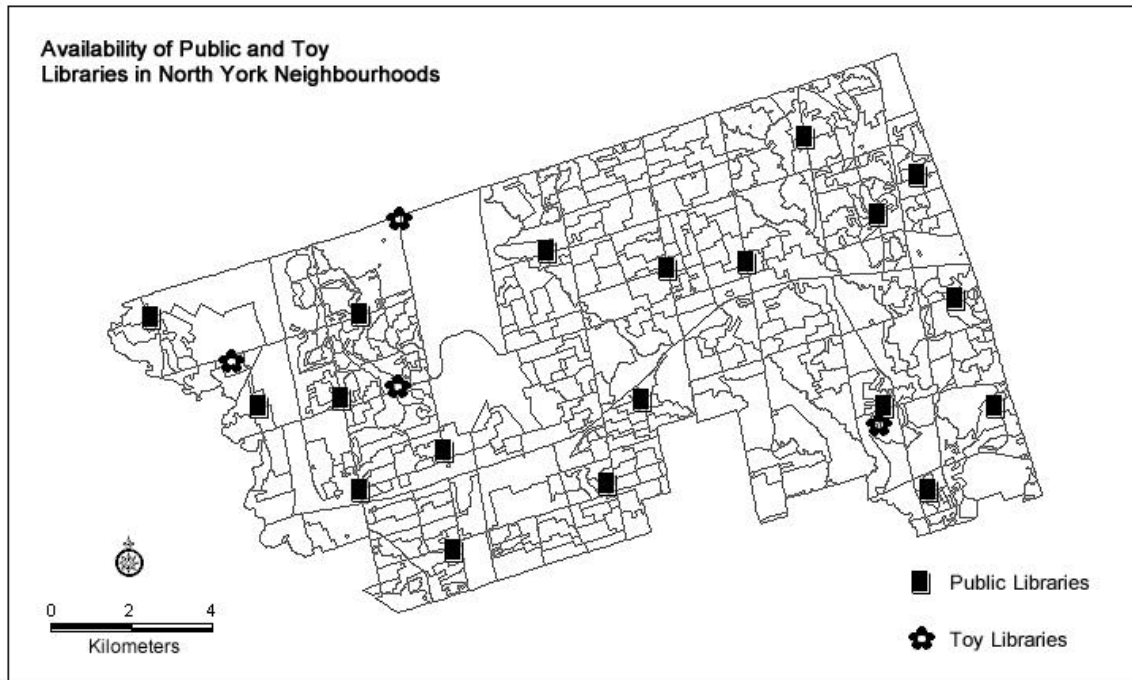


Photographer: Krista Elms  
Lawrence College, St. John's Newfoundland

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## The Use of Community Mapping in Child Development Research



- **What is Community Mapping?**

As a fairly new method of research, Community Mapping seeks to provide a visual representation of various aspects of a geographic area. The definition is continuously evolving however, and incorporates many disciplines.

- **How does it work?**

Using Geographic Information Systems and Science (GIS software, to create maps), a Community Mapping Study can give us a powerful visual representation

of community characteristics, such as the distribution of resources for families and children or other community assets. Alternately, we can show characteristics associated with distress and disadvantage that may compromise child well-being and development. By using GIS we can go beyond description, and analyze community characteristics together in terms of their spatial relationships.

- **How can we use Community Mapping together with research on child development?**

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Child development research can help us to identify the “what” and the “why” of how children are doing, and possible actions that can be taken on behalf of communities to improve their situation. Community Mapping provides an additional third component, the “where” of child development and policy. Through Community Mapping we can identify areas where children’s health and well-being might be at risk, while at the same time showing characteristics of the community that might mitigate these risks by supporting healthy child development. Community Mapping can also provide information on access and availability of resources, and serve as a planning tool to assist and inform service providers and policy makers in creating the best possible environment for children and families. Finally, a Community Mapping Study can help to build public awareness and act as a catalyst for community action to create a supportive, healthy, stimulating environment for families and children.

## Understanding the Early Years is Expanding

The five Understanding the Early Years (UEY) Pilot Sites that were announced in the last newsletter are well underway. The Early Development Instrument and the NLSCY have been collected and communities are currently gathering information about the people and services available in their communities for the mapping study. Communities are very excited to be working with HRDC to monitor the outcomes and foster the development of their young children.

The positive response of UEY has led to the recent decision to expand the project to approximately 8 more sites across the country. Interested communities should look for the Request for Proposals posted on the UEY page of our website. The deadline for submissions is September 25, 2000.



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## CONTENT DEVELOPMENTS

### Expanded Direct Assessments in Cycle 4



Photographer: Anne-Marie Kirouac  
Université Laval de Québec

The process of choosing direct assessments for the NLSCY included review of different measures based on our criteria, such as ease of administration by lay interviewers in the home and coverage of domains in our child development and learning framework. A field test in two sites in September 1999 allowed the NLSCY team to assess five instruments and their potential for use with 3 to 5 year olds. The results of the test plus consultation with experts led to the decision to test the following direct assessments in the NLSCY field test in May 2000:

- **PPVT-R-** expanding the age range to include 3 year olds as well as 4-6 year olds. The PPVT-R measures children's receptive or hearing vocabulary in English or French. Although the PPVT-R was tested with 3 year olds, it was subsequently decided to be used only with 4-6 year olds in Cycle 4.
- **Who Am I?** for 4 and 5 year olds. This assessment focuses on broad stages of development and acquired skills. The shortened assessment for the NLSCY comprises two scales: copying (circle, cross, square, triangle, and diamond) and symbols (printing name, letters, numbers, words, and sentences). This assessment was developed by Dr. Molly de Lemos and colleagues at the Australian Council for Educational Research.
- **Number Knowledge Test** for 4 and 5 year olds. The Number Knowledge Test assesses children's intuitive knowledge of numbers by assessing their understanding of the system of whole numbers. A shortened version of the test covers the first three of the four developmental levels of the test. Items ask about understanding of quantity and number line concepts. The Number Knowledge Test was developed by Dr. Robbie Case at the

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Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, University of Toronto, and colleagues.

Interviewers also complete a checklist of the child's behaviour during the assessments plus factors which may have influenced responses (distractions, etc.) If a child is not able to communicate in English or French, the child will not be given the assessments.



## Cycle 5 Content Development

One of the main strengths of the NLSCY is its focus on child and youth outcomes. Due to their importance, we are re-examining current measurements in the domains of cognitive, social, emotional and physical development. We began with a broad consultation, and received useful comments from several groups, organizations and individuals. We are now carrying out focused literature reviews for each of these outcomes across the age ranges.

- **Physical Development:** The focus has shifted from freedom of disease to quality of life and disability-free years.

Outcomes should measure the broad concept of health, viewing it as the ability of each Canadian to be productive and participate actively in all aspects of their lives.

- **Social Development:** Patterns of human relationship and friendship formation have been affected by a change of information and communication technologies and of societal structures and institutions. Social outcomes should be measured by the capability to relate positively with family, friends, peers, colleagues and superiors. Further, measurements should also include one's ability to retain a sense of membership and shared destiny within groups.
- **Emotional Development:** As indicated by research, emotional stability and well being are important for work in teams and for leadership. Emotional outcomes should be measured ranging from the security that results from attachment to the mother as a baby to the development of mature responsibility and moral judgement seen in adulthood.
- **Cognitive Development:** Given the dynamic nature of knowledge, cognitive outcomes should be measured with respect to the context in which they will be applied in the future. Cognitive trajectories must be measured age appropriately, while recognizing the diversity of

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potential contributions of the individual.

Another major activity for Cycle 5 will be the development of instruments for 18-19 year olds, our oldest cohort.

- **18-19 year olds:** Similar to Cycle 4, the 18-19 year olds of Cycle 5 will again be the primary respondents. To fully examine the life experiences that these individuals may encounter, two perspectives have been proposed. The first will focus on the individual, including skills, relationships, experiences, aspirations and achievements. The second will focus on the broader society and world of work into which these individuals will be entering.

## UPCOMING DATA COLLECTIONS & RELEASES

- Cycle 3  
Fall 2000 – First data release  
Spring 2001 – Second data release
- Cycle 4  
Fall 2000 – Nationwide collection of data begins
- Cycle 5  
2000 – Content development ongoing to June 2001

## CYCLE 5 CONTENT DEVELOPMENT SCHEDULE

### → 2000

- Spring and Summer: review of literature and other instruments
- Fall: development of Cycle 5 instruments\*
- 

### → 2001

- Winter: development of Cycle 5 instruments\*
- Spring: distribution of draft instruments for final review
- Summer: finalize instruments for field test
- Fall: programming and testing of instruments

### → 2002

- Spring: field test; finalize instruments for collection
- Summer: preparation for collection
- Fall: data collection begins

\* The development phase will include consultation with individual experts on specific question as needed, and focus testing of new instruments.





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## NLSCY PROJECT TEAM

The NLSCY is a partnership effort of Statistics Canada (SC) and Human Resources Development Canada. The SC project manager is Sylvie Michaud in Special Surveys Division. The HRDC members are:

**Acting Director-**Satya Brink

**Administration Support-** Joelle Picard, Francois St-Onge and Cindy Menard-Desnoyers (student)

**Research-** Satya Brink, Sarah Connor, Christina Norris, Bruno Rainville, Adrienne ten Cate and Ryan Grist (student)

**Understanding the Early Years-** Margo Craig Garrison, Kristen Underwood, Christina Norris, Sarah Connor and Sidney McLean (student)

**Content Development-** Susan McKellar, Liz Nieman, Milena Gulia, Bruno Rainville, Jaime-Lee Brown (student) and Sarah Freudiger (student).

Canadian Community Health Survey, education statistical research and respondent relations for business surveys. Previous to Statistics Canada I worked at the Canadian Institute of Child Health.

### Bruno Rainville

I obtained my Bachelors degree in economics at the University of Sherbrooke, and my Masters of Science degree in economics at University of Quebec in Montreal (UQAM). I then worked for one year at UQAM's Centre for Research on Economic Fluctuations and Employment (CREFE), where I analysed the amount of time Canadian parents spent with their children. Next I worked for three years as a research officer in biostatistics for the division of clinical epidemiology at McGill University. I contributed to various publications and in projects such as vaccinations among individuals with multiple sclerosis, and kidney disease among juvenile diabetics. My specialty is statistical analysis including the use of quantitative methods. My main research projects with ARB will consist of child development, food insecurity and other aspects of social development. I will also be the primary contact between ARB and the NLSCY's Research Centre in children's behaviour development at University of Montreal.



## WHO WE ARE

### Meet our Newest Members of the Team!

#### Kristen Underwood

Hi, my name is Kristen Underwood, I joined the Applied Research Branch at the end of May and will be working on the Understanding the Early Years project. Before joining HRDC I worked at Statistics Canada, where I was involved in a number of projects including the

#### Milena Gulia

Hello, my name is Milena Gulia and I am delighted to join HRDC's Applied

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Research Branch. In my position as a research analyst, I will be working with the NLSCY team to finalize cycle 4 and develop content for the 18-19 year-old youth component in cycle 5. Prior to joining HRDC, I worked as a research assistant at the University of Toronto (where I obtained a Master of Arts in sociology) and as a senior research analyst at POLLARA, a national public opinion and marketing research firm. I look forward to meeting all of you who have an interest in the NLSCY project!

## Adrienne ten Cate

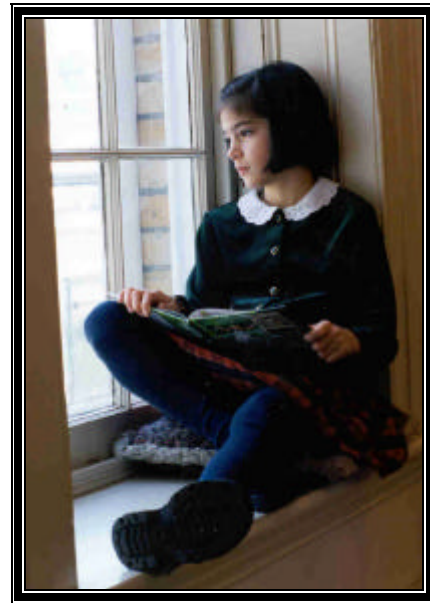
My name is Adrienne ten Cate and I joined ARB in early June. I received my Honours Bachelor degree in Economics and Sociology from McMaster University in Hamilton, Ontario. I have a Master's degree in Labour Economics from Queen's University in Kingston, Ontario. Currently I am in the process of completing Ph.D. in Economics from McMaster University; the title of my dissertation is "The Labour Market Effects of Maternity and Parental Leave Policies in Canada." During my time at McMaster, I was a Canadian International Labour Network fellow and worked on a project involving marginal attachment to the labour force. At ARB, I will be a research officer focusing on social development and also will be the liaison between ARB and the NLSCY's Research Centre at McMaster University.



## FOND FAREWELLS...

Director General, **Jean-Pierre Voyer** has left the Applied Research Branch to join the Social Research and Demonstration Corporation. In his place will be Allen Zeesman, Acting Director General of ARB. Satya Brink will assume Allen's responsibilities as acting director.

**Cindy Cook** has left ARB to join the McMaster/Chedoke NLSCY Research Centre with Dan Offord's group. Cindy can be reached by e-mail at [cindy.cook@statcan.ca](mailto:cindy.cook@statcan.ca)



Photographer: Anne-Marie Kirouac  
Université Laval de Quebec

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## WHERE TO DIRECT YOUR REQUESTS

In an attempt to be more responsive to requests and also to try to ensure some continuity, we are asking people to direct requests to a specific member of our team. We have a contact for the type of organization in which you work.

Non-governmental organizations and consultants      Adrienne ten Cate  
(819) 953-8103  
[adrienne.ten.cate@spg.org](mailto:adrienne.ten.cate@spg.org)

Provincial government      Christina Norris  
(819) 953-3644  
[christina.norris@spg.org](mailto:christina.norris@spg.org)

Federal government and international issues      Sarah Connor  
(819) 953-8110  
[sarah.connor@spg.org](mailto:sarah.connor@spg.org)

Research institutes and universities      Bruno Rainville  
(819) 953-8180  
[bruno.rainville@spg.org](mailto:bruno.rainville@spg.org)

Other      Susan McKellar  
(819) 953-8101  
[susan.mckellar@spg.org](mailto:susan.mckellar@spg.org)

UEY communities      Kristen Underwood  
(819) 953-3527  
[kristen.underwood@spg.org](mailto:kristen.underwood@spg.org)

## WEB SITES

- **NLSCY:** [www.hrhc-drhc.gc.ca/nlscy-elnej](http://www.hrhc-drhc.gc.ca/nlscy-elnej)
  - Research
  - Newsletters
- **Statistics Canada:** [www.statcan.ca](http://www.statcan.ca)
  - Copies of questionnaires for Cycles 1, 2, and 3 [www.statcan.ca/cgi-bin/downpub/freepub.cgi](http://www.statcan.ca/cgi-bin/downpub/freepub.cgi)

## ORDERING INFORMATION-HARD COPY

- Newsletters
- Questionnaires

Contact NLSCY coordinator,  
Susan McKellar  
Tel: (819) 953-8101  
Fax: (819) 953-8868  
[susan.mckellar@spg.org](mailto:susan.mckellar@spg.org)

- Investing in Children's Ideas for Action
- Applied Research Bulletins

Contact Publications Coordinator  
Applied Research Branch, HRDC  
Tel: (819) 994-3304  
Fax: (819) 953-8584  
E-mail: [research@spg.org](mailto:research@spg.org)



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## “DEVELOPMENTS”

The Applied Research Branch, Human Resources Development Canada, produces “Developments”, a semi-annual publication.

### PLEASE KEEP IN TOUCH!



Please let us know if you are changing addresses so that we can continue to update you. Contact Susan McKellar by phone (819) 953-8101 or by email [susan.mckellar@spg.org](mailto:susan.mckellar@spg.org) to inform us of any changes.



Photographer: Mireille Bourgeois  
College d'Artisanat et de Design du  
Nouveau Brunswick

## Our Mailing Address...



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