

**The Role of Evidence  
in the Development of National Policies  
to Enhance Children's Well-Being:  
A Canadian Case Story (1990-2001)**

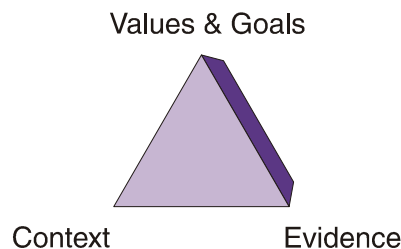
to

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by

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**Key Elements of Policy-Making**



**Question:** *How influential is evidence in shaping public policy?*



## Some Key Policy Initiatives to Enhance the Well-Being of Children Canada, 1990-2001

### 1991

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- Ratification of the Convention of the Rights of the Child

### 1992-2001

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#### Community-Based Initiatives:

- Community Action Program for Children: funds community groups to establish and deliver services that address the needs of at-risk children age 0 to 6 years.  
(<http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/hppb/childhood-youth/cbp/capc/index.html>)
- Aboriginal Head Start: an early intervention program for First Nations, Inuit and Métis preschool children and their families living in urban centres, northern communities and on First Nations reserves. Projects are run by locally managed Aboriginal organizations that directly involve parents.  
(<http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/hppb/childhood-youth/acy/ahs.htm>)
- The Canada Prenatal Nutrition Program: a comprehensive community-based program that supports pregnant women facing conditions that threaten their health and the development of their babies.  
(<http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/hppb/childhood-youth/cbp/cnp/index.html>)
- Fetal Alcohol Syndrome/Fetal Alcohol Effects (FAS/FAE): aims at preventing FAS/FAE by increasing awareness and supporting community action.  
(<http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/hppb/childhood-youth/cyfh/fas/whatisfas.html>)

### 1998

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- National Child Benefit: a collaborative tax benefit policy to prevent and reduce child poverty, ensure that families will always be better off as a result of working and reducing overlap by harmonizing program objectives and benefits. (<http://www.socialunion.gc.ca/>)

### 1999

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- Social Union Framework Agreement: a collaborative framework for social policy in Canada.  
(<http://www.socialunion.gc.ca/>)
- National Children's Agenda (NCA): a cooperative effort by all governments to ensure that all children in Canada have the best opportunity to develop their potential. The NCA provides a shared vision and four goals for all children: good health, safety and security, success at learning, social engagement and responsibility. (<http://www.socialunion.gc.ca/>)

### 2000

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- Health Accord and Early Childhood Development Initiative (ECD): as part of the collaborative agreement to ensure health and health system renewal, all governments have agreed to work

together to invest in early child development (age 0 to 6) in four priority areas: healthy pregnancy; birth and infancy; improved parenting and family supports; strengthening community support, and learning and care. Includes a \$2.2 billion investment in ECD from the federal government over the next five years. (<http://www.pco-bcp.gc.ca/aia/>)

- The federal government has also enhanced maternity, parental and adoption benefits.

## National Research Initiatives to Support Policy Development

### Surveys

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- National Longitudinal Study on Children and Youth (1994): a longitudinal survey that tracks the health and well-being of a large number of Canadian children.  
(<http://www.hrdc-drhc.gc.ca/arb/nlscy-elnej/survey-e.shtml>)
- Health Behaviours in School-Aged Children (WHO cross-national collaborative study) –  
([http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/hppb/childhood-youth/spsc/e\\_trends.html](http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/hppb/childhood-youth/spsc/e_trends.html))

### Surveillance

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- Canadian Perinatal Surveillance System  
(<http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/hpb/lcdc/brch/reprod.html>)
- Canadian Hospitals Injury Reporting and Prevention Program  
(<http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/hpb/lcdc/brch/injury/index.html>)
- Canadian Childhood Cancer Surveillance and Control Program  
(<http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/hpb/lcdc/bc/ccscsp/vol7no1/index.html>)
- Canadian Incidence Study of Reported Child Abuse and Neglect  
(<http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/hpb/lcdc/brch/maltreat/cishl01/index.html>)

### Other Federal Research Programs

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Understanding the Early Years: addresses some of the gaps in research, particularly the influence of communities and neighbourhoods on child development in the early years.  
(<http://www.hrdc-drhc.gc.ca/nlscy-elnej>)

### Research Institutes and Consultation Structures

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- Canadian Institute for Advanced Research (<http://www.ciar.ca/>)
- Centres of Excellence for Children's Well-Being  
(<http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/hppb/childhood-youth/centres/index2.html>)
- Centres of Excellence for Women's Health (<http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/women/english/cewh.htm>)
- Canadian Institutes of Health Research ([www.cihr.ca](http://www.cihr.ca))
  - Institute of Human Development, Child and Youth Health
  - Institute of Population and Public Health

### Public Consultation

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- Public Dialogue on the National Children's Agenda – Developing a Shared Vision ([http://www.socialunion.gc.ca/nca\\_e.html](http://www.socialunion.gc.ca/nca_e.html))
- *It's Your Voice: National Election for Rights of Child*, 1999: a national election for youth based on the Convention of the Rights of the Child

### Some Key Research-Based Reports to Support Policy Development

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- McCain, Margaret Norrie and Mustard, Fraser. *Early Years Study: Reversing the Real Brain Drain*. Report to the Government of Ontario, 2000.
- Federal/Provincial Territorial Advisory Committee on Population Health. *Understanding the Early Years*
- Federal, Provincial, Territorial Advisory Committee on Population Health. *Second Report on the Health of Canadians* (technical report) and *Toward A Healthy Future* (policy report on the Health of Canadians), 1999. (<http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/hppb/phdd/report/subin.html>)
- Federal, Provincial, Territorial Advisory Committee on Population Health *Building A National Strategy for Healthy Child Development*, 1998.
- Conference of Federal/Provincial/Territorial Ministers of Health. *Investing in Early Childhood Development: The Health Sector Contribution*, 1999. (<http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/hppb/childhood-youth/spsc/resources/index.html>)
- Federal, Provincial, Territorial Council of Ministers on Social Policy Renewal. *A National Children's Agenda: Developing A Shared Vision*, 1999. ([http://www.socialunion.gc.ca/nca\\_e.html](http://www.socialunion.gc.ca/nca_e.html))

#### Other Information Sources:

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Childhood and Youth Division, Population and Public Health Branch, Health Canada – <http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/hppb/childhood-youth/>

Health Promotion Online, Health Canada – <http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/hppb/hpo/>

Population Health web site, Health Canada - <http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/hppb/phdd/>

Health Canada – <http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/>

Government of Canada – <http://www.canada.gc.ca/>

- Health Canada. *Healthy Development of Children and Youth: Role of Determinants of Health* (<http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/hppb/childhood-youth/spsc/resources/index.html>)
- Health Canada. *The Opportunity of Adolescence: The Health Sector Contribution*. (<http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/hppb/childhood-youth/spsc/resources/index.html>)

