



Early Child Development Program of Research: Early Development Instrument

Principal Letter

Principal Investigator: Dr. Mariana Brussoni, mbrussoni@bcchr.ubc.ca, Human Early Learning Partnership (HELP), University of British Columbia (UBC)

Co-Investigator: Dr. Barry Forer, HELP, UBC

Co-Investigator: Dr. Martin Guhn, HELP, UBC

Project Contact: Marit Gilbert, edi@help.ubc.ca, (604) 827-5504

Dear Principal,

In February, teachers at your school will be completing the **Early Development Instrument (EDI)** in partnership with the [Human Early Learning Partnership \(HELP\)](#) at the University of British Columbia (UBC). The EDI is a questionnaire about children's social and emotional development, health and well-being, language and cognitive development, and communication skills. The EDI was developed by child development experts and researchers in Canada and with the help of Kindergarten teachers and school administrators. The Government of British Columbia (BC) has funded the collection and use of the EDI for over 20 years.

AT A GLANCE

- Kindergarten teachers will complete the EDI on each of their students in February, 2024, unless a parent/guardian has withdrawn their child by contacting you or the EDI project team;
- The EDI helps us understand trends in children's development at the group level, such as a neighbourhood or school district;
- The EDI is **not** an individual assessment of a student, and a student's EDI results only be reported in a summary with other students;
- The EDI questionnaire and further information are available at:
- <https://earlylearning.ubc.ca/monitoring-system/edi/parent-caregiver-info/>

What is the purpose of the project?

The purpose of this project is to improve the understanding of influences on children's development across BC, and over time. Information from the EDI has proven essential to schools, health professionals, early years service providers, communities and governments in planning programs and supports for children and families.

EDI data can provide insight into how Kindergarten children are doing and encourage discussions about the factors affecting children's early development in neighbourhoods across the province. The information from the EDI is used to increase awareness of the ways in which we can create environments in which children can thrive.

What will happen?

In January, teachers will participate in standardized training on how to complete the EDI questionnaire. In February, teachers complete the questionnaire online, answering questions about five areas of development: 1) physical health and well-being; 2) social competence; 3) emotional maturity; 4) language and cognitive

development; and 5) general knowledge and communications skills. There is no direct involvement of students in completing the EDI questionnaire.

Participation is voluntary for parents/guardians

The EDI is voluntary and a parent/guardian may withdraw their child's data from the EDI within four weeks of receiving the Parent/Guardian Informed Passive Consent Letter by notifying their child's teacher, the school, or the EDI project team at HELP (edi@help.ubc.ca). There is a withdrawal slip on the letter that parents/guardians can complete and submit to you. The teacher or the EDI project team can then withdraw the child's data from the system.

How are Kindergarten teachers compensated?

HELP reimburses Kindergarten teachers (through their school districts) for completing EDI training and questionnaire. Teachers are reimbursed for their training time and for the equivalent of 20 minutes of teacher replacement time for each EDI completed. Some districts may instead opt to provide time in lieu or an honorarium to their teachers as opposed to paying a Teacher on Call. The completion of this work by teachers is voluntary.

How will the EDI data be protected, stored and used?

Teacher responses to the EDI questions are **private and confidential**. No information is added to students' school records from the EDI questionnaire. Students and schools will not be identified in research publications or in public documents.

To take part in the EDI, your school district provides HELP/UBC information about your students, including their name, Personal Education Number (PEN), date of birth, gender, and postal code and whether they are First Nations, Métis or Inuit. Additional information including whether they have a disability or diverse ability, or if they are an English Language Learner or in a French Immersion program is shared for research and reporting purposes. Students' names are only used so that teachers can complete the questionnaire. The names are removed from the EDI data set once the EDI questionnaire has been completed. Personal information is stored separately from the answers to the EDI questionnaire to protect your students' privacy. EDI data are stored in a secure research environment at UBC.

EDI data can only be used for approved research projects **under Federal and Provincial/ Territorial privacy laws**. Researchers may apply for permission to use the EDI data for research or statistical purposes. Approved researchers will be provided access to data that cannot be connected to any individual student.

The data gathered using the EDI may be linked at the individual level to other data to learn about the factors that influence children's well-being, health, and school success. Other data may include education and health information. The data that are linked **can only be used for research or statistical purposes by HELP approved researchers, under an approved Research Agreement, or for program planning, evaluation, or research purposes through an Information Sharing Agreement**.

As the license-holder of the EDI, the Offord Centre for Child Studies at McMaster University receives a copy of students' EDI data, postal code, gender, and month of birth to enable approved national research. Data are also shared with BC Ministries of Government and Health Authorities for specific purposes of program planning, evaluation, research, or statistical purposes. Data shared with the Ministries and Health Authorities may be linked to other data sets and then are de-identified before access and use for analysis, in accordance with the Information Sharing Agreement in place. Reporting can only take place at the group level. More information is available at: <https://earlylearning.ubc.ca/about/privacy-and-ethics> .

EDI Reports

School reports are provided directly to school districts and schools, and are not shared publicly. HELP provides public community reports and neighbourhood maps of the data to support decision making towards improving policies, programs and services for children and families. These reports are available at: <https://earlylearning.ubc.ca/reports/edi-reports/>.

Where can I get more information on the project?

For more information, please visit HELP's website at www.earlylearning.ubc.ca/edi. If you have any questions or concerns please contact Marit Gilbert, Project Lead, via email at edi@help.ubc.ca or by phone at 604-827-5504.

If you have any concerns or complaints about the rights of your teacher(s) as research participants or your students' rights, please contact the Research Participant Complaint Line in the UBC Office of Research Ethics at the University of British Columbia at 604-822-8598, or if long distance, e-mail RSIL@ors.ubc.ca or call toll free 1-877-822-8598. You can also contact the principal investigator at the number or email provided below.

Yours sincerely,

Brenda Kirsch

District Principal of Early Learning and Childcare
Central Okanagan School District
Brenda.Kirsch@sd23.bc.ca

Dr. Mariana Brussoni
Director, Human Early Learning Partnership
University of British Columbia
mbrussoni@bccchr.ubc.ca

We are privileged to work, learn, and play on the unceded, traditional territory of the Syilx Okanagan Peoples