



Meeting with Self-Sufficiency Task Force  
Sunday March 18, 2007  
Presented by  
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## Brief

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### Goal

Promote self-sufficiency in New Brunswickers by promoting New Brunswick as a family-friendly province by investment in healthy child development in the preschool years (0-5years).

### Background

Thirty-one percent of New Brunswick's children are at risk due to delays in cognitive and behavioural development, a rate higher than the national average. Literacy and mathematics skills of New Brunswick's children place them last in Canada and below international averages in the developed world. Based on quality indicators, a national survey revealed that child care in New Brunswick ranks at the bottom. These commonly cited statistics may actively deter New Brunswickers from remaining or returning. Immigrating families are likely to choose to live in a province where children and families are supported, in other words a "family friendly province". Supporting families and children's development is key to their success and to the success of New Brunswick's economy. Healthy child development begets healthy adults who contribute to a self-sufficient work force and a successful population.

### Means

Investment in early child development programming and family support via the following examples: (1) Comprehensive reproductive care, (2) screening for postpartum depression and other family risk factors, (3) adequate family support and follow-up (e.g. parent training, mental health services), and (4) province-wide system of high quality developmental child care.

### Outcomes

Investment in early childhood development will:

1. promote longer term population health;
2. maximize parents' and future workforce participation;
3. attract new immigrants and repatriate New Brunswickers, due to promotion of the province as a family-friendly place where children are supported to thrive.

### How

Building on excellent existing programs in the province such as the Early Childhood Initiative and public health nursing infrastructure will provide the foundation for supporting child development province-wide. Partnerships among learning institutions, community organizations, and government will foster implementation of evidence-based programs that have the greatest likelihood of success.

### Funding sources

CIHR/CFI provides 10million dollars over 5 years for clinical research partnerships with communities in areas deemed critical to maximizing regional health and economic benefits. SSHRC/ CURA provides up to 1 million over 5 years for similar projects. Interest of the Province of NB would greatly enhance the likelihood of success in these initiatives.

