

| Question | Answer |
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| What is the project? | The Child Care Pilot Project is a research project that is studying the impacts of a preschool program for young children in six minority Francophone communities. It is part of the Government of Canada's Action Plan for Official Languages launched in 2003, and is being undertaken by Human Resources and Social Development Canada. |
| What is the goal of the project? | <p>It aims to develop knowledge on the impacts of a French-language preschool program for Francophone children and their parents living in minority Francophone communities across Canada. The project focuses on the linguistic and cultural development, and the readiness to learn, of those children.</p> <p>This new research will add to the collective knowledge of what works and will inform parents, service providers and communities about the design and delivery of early childhood development services for minority Francophone families. The results of the research will help identify ways to preserve their Francophone culture and language, and to influence positive child development outcomes.</p> |
| Why is this project being undertaken? | Studies on the development of Francophone children in minority Francophone communities have shown that an increasing percentage of these children face special challenges when they arrive at French-language school because they lack the skills needed to integrate properly. There is also a significant disparity between the language skills of these children relative to Anglophone children in Canada. Language skills are crucial to a child's readiness to learn and for having a good start in life. The project will evaluate the impacts of the preschool program on the children's linguistic and cultural development, and their readiness to learn. |
| Why are minority Anglophone communities not included in the project? | Research evidence shows that there is a large gap in developmental outcomes for Francophone children in minority Francophone communities relative to the Anglophone majority. A similar gap does not exist for Anglophone children living in minority communities. |
| Where is the project being conducted? | The following six communities were selected to participate in the research project: Saint John, New Brunswick; Edmundston, New Brunswick; Cornwall, Ontario; Durham, Ontario; Orleans, Ontario; and Edmonton, Alberta. |

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| What criteria were used to select the communities? | Minority Francophone communities had to meet certain minimum criteria for participation with regards to the number of Francophone children in the community, the organization of the community and the involvement of a daycare centre. |
| Which preschool program is delivered? | After consultation with experts, it was determined that the preschool program should include both child and family components, as well as training for those providing the program, in order to meet the needs of Francophone families living in these communities. The child component includes daycare services and materials in French to develop French-language skills, a sense of identity with the Francophone culture, and readiness to learn. These services are based on the <i>Programme des prématernelles fransaskoises</i> developed by the Department of Learning in Saskatchewan. The family component includes family literacy services and materials to foster and guide parental participation in their child's learning. |
| What is the current status of the project? When will it end? | The preschool program is being delivered in the participating communities over the two-year period from September 2007 to October 2009. The project will end on March 31, 2010. A final report on the project and its results will be prepared. |

To obtain further information about the Child Care Pilot Project, please contact:

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