



Quality and predictors of quality in Canadian child care

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Presentation

- Canadian research
- Process quality
- Predictors of quality
- Implications
 - Regulatory
 - Funding
 - For program directors



Overall format

- Centres:
 - level of quality
 - predictors of quality level
 - implications

- Family child care:
 - same format



Centre-based research:

Six studies in last decade, collectively:

- Typically-developing children
 - 358 infant/toddler rooms
 - 1,751 preschool rooms
 - 120 school-age programs
- Children with special needs
 - 16 infant/toddler rooms
 - 107 preschool rooms



The good news

- The majority of children age 0-12 in centres receive good custodial care
- Adults are warm and responsive
- Children with special needs receive good inclusive care in spite of less than ideal physical space



Reasons for concern

- The majority of children age 0-12 in centres do not receive adequate amounts or types of experiences to promote language and cognitive development
- Recognition of Canada's cultural diversity is token at best



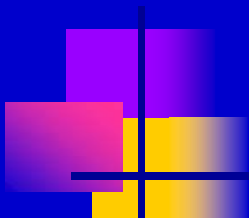
Predictors of quality: Centres

- Teacher's level of ECE training
- Teacher's wage level
- Adult/child ratio
- Centre receives subsidized rent and/or utilities
- Perceived collegiality among staff
- Number of staff in the room



Contributors to quality inclusion

- A high level of centre overall quality
- A committed director with inclusion related training who mentors staff
- Stable staff with inclusion-specific training who are supported in their work
- Appropriate infrastructure, e.g.
accessible space, adapted materials,
consultation, extra staff





Regulatory implications: Centres

- Level of ECE training is the most frequently identified predictor of quality level in both Canadian and U.S. research. Staff responsible for a group must have post-secondary ECE training
- Ratios must be such as to allow for more than simply good custodial care



Funding implications: Centres

- Parents cannot afford the fee level that would cover the true cost of high quality
- Government funding required for:
 - higher wages for all staff
 - consultation and training for people working with children who have special needs
 - building renovations, equipment for children with special needs



Implications: Centre directors

- Collegiality among staff supports high quality. Director is key to the development and maintenance of a positive work environment
- Knowledge and concepts of best practice constantly change. Staff need to be enabled and encouraged to engage in PD to keep current



Family Child Care Research

- The *You Bet I Care!* Project
 - 231 *regulated* family child care homes (7 jurisdictions),
 - data collected in 1999
- *Grandir en qualité* Project (Québec)
 - 153 *regulated* homes
 - data collected in 2003



Summary of family child care findings

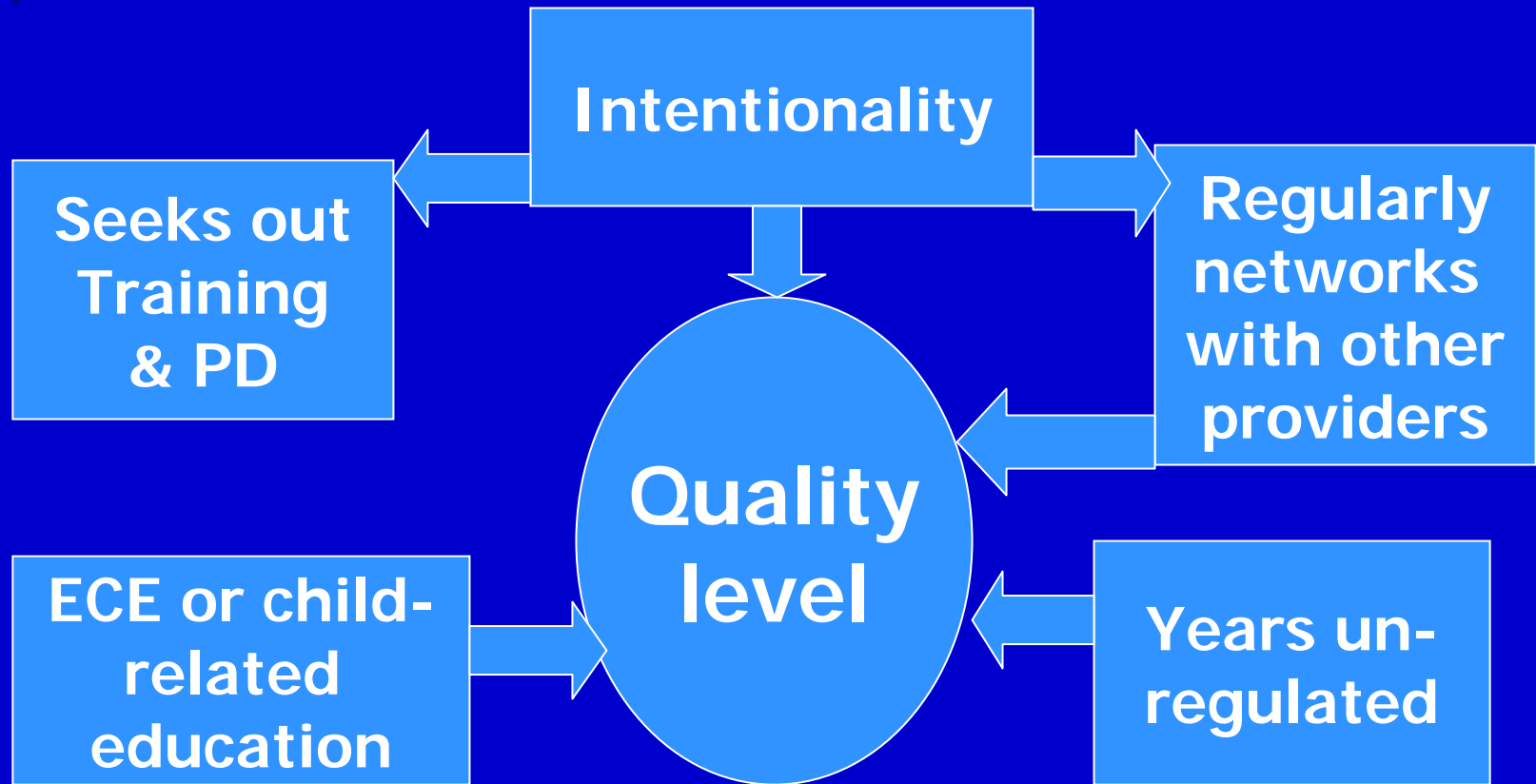
- **The good news:**
 - Most children are receiving good custodial care provided by warm, responsive adults
- **Reason for concern:**
 - Only about a third of homes are providing sufficient stimulation to foster development



Predictors of quality: Family child care

- Highest level of provider ECE or child-related education
- Intentionality – enjoys working with children, would choose this career again, feels it is important work
- Networks regularly with other providers
- Years of unregulated child care provision

Predictors of family child care quality





Regulatory implications

Family child care

- Provision of quality FCC requires knowledge and skills. If providers do not have an ECE credential, they should be required to take FCC training
- Regulations should encourage, not discourage providers from becoming regulated



Funding implications: Family child care

- There is a need for an infrastructure to provide training and facilitate networking for providers.
- Intentionality matters. Women who do not want to provide family child care do not provide a quality service



Implications: Agency directors

- A potential provider's motivation for child care provision is a good indicator of how well she will do the job
- Providing training and facilitating networking among providers boosts quality levels