



Communities  
Together for Children  
FOR A CHILD'S BEST START



## Because Early Child Development is Everybody's Business

### The Science of Early Child Development:

Scientific research shows that experiences that children have, prior to age six, impact how their brain is wired and provide the foundation for establishing their future health, learning and behaviour.

### What does this mean?

These new findings expose that our current early years' systems are overlooking the most important time in a child's brain development - the time before they reach school age. Most importantly, we are overlooking the opportunity to maximize the knowledge and skills potential of the next generation.

### Did you know?

- Brain plasticity is greatest during pregnancy and in the early childhood period when basic neural pathways are constructed for the first time;
- When babies are born they have billions and billions of brain cells called neurons; these neurons get connected (synapses) via social experiences;
- Richer experiences mean stronger connections, whereas irrelevant connections get pruned away starting after approximately 2 years of age;
- Experiences (both positive and negative) that children receive during these sensitive periods of development, modify the brain's circuits in fundamental ways causing neural pathways to become highly stable and therefore more difficult to change in the future - which is why the early years are referred to as a period of heightened opportunities and increased risks;
- The brain connections that are formed during these early years are crucial because they allow thinking and learning to take place; as a result, a child's capacity to learn when they enter school is strongly influenced by the neural wiring that has already taken place, prior to school entry.

## Early Childhood Development: An Economic Issue

As a growing, knowledge-based economy, investing in early child development must become an economic priority for our community. According to the Early Years Study 2, *"it costs less to get it right in the first place than it does to take remedial action later."*

### Fact:

One-quarter of Canada's children between birth to age 6 are experiencing some learning or behavioural difficulty. These problems correlate with later difficulties in school performance, social adjustment and health. *Source: Early Years Study 2*

It makes absolute business sense that by investing in children today; Thunder Bay area businesses can ensure a competitive workforce, reduced social and healthcare costs and a more prosperous economy for tomorrow. The economic and social future of Thunder Bay, Ontario and Canada rests in the very small hands of our children.

## Because Early Child Development is Everybody's Business

Businesses who understand the science of early child development can take action today to help their employees, businesses and economies to become more prosperous and competitive for tomorrow.

### Fact:

Early child development is a prime time investment opportunity for society providing greater returns than any other period of life.

Choose to invest your valuable time, knowledge or financial resources to help address early child development needs in your community. As community leaders, you have the power and capacity to influence government policy and public opinion.

By helping children to reach their maximum potential as adults, you can generate the best kind of returns for your business and your community... for today and tomorrow.

## Get Involved



Communities Together for Children  
Thunder Bay

Tel: (807) 624-5960

Web: [www.ctctbay.org](http://www.ctctbay.org)

Communities Together for Children works to ensure that children in our community get the best possible start in life.