



**Human Development – right from the start**  
**An education leaders' network?**



# WHAT IS A NETWORK?

A **group** of individuals and/or organizations with a **shared** concern or interest who **voluntarily** contribute knowledge, experience and/or resources for **shared learning, joint action** and/or to **achieve** a shared purpose or goal and who rely on the network to **support their own objectives**.

Suzanne Taschereau and Joe Bolger. 2006. *Networks and Capacity*. A theme paper for the study, 'Capacity, Change and Performance'. European Centre for Development Policy Management



# HOW DO THEY WORK?

- Voluntary association to advance an issue or purpose; depend on a 'social contract' among members;
- Negotiated order and reciprocal accountability;
- Fluid and organic; trajectories are not readily predictable;
- Informal structuring of relationships facilitated through information exchange, creation of common spaces to share knowledge and experience;



# WHEN ARE THEY NEEDED?

- Evolve in relation to complex realities;
- Better suited than organizations to facilitate innovation because of the diversity and free exchange of ideas, information and experience among participants with a shared commitment.



# AND YOU SAID.....

## A shared purpose

- Transmit key leadership messages to the field
- Support deep learning of human development
- Create sense of urgency about learners being prepared for the 21st century
- A clearinghouse; knowledge sharing
- Advocacy, public and political
- Model policy development
- Leadership to grow understanding of ECD
- Ongoing and deepening dialogue



# NETWORK ACTIVITIES

**Advocacy to galvanize public, professional opinion to create political will:**

- Public mobilization, social marketing
- Enlist champions beyond the field
- Media relations e.g. Cost benefit analyses

**Learn from each other:**

- Lessons learned; ideas shared – e.g. Inter-sectoral coordination to reduce silos; models learned from.



# CREATE A VISION

What will an ECD system look like when it's working?

Common framework across Canada;

Coherence and integration of policy and action;

Federal –provincial cooperation with investment;

Fairness in recognition, education and training of early childhood educators;

Ultimately a universal system, but especially for those in need.



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# CAUTIONS

- What networks already exist, avoid overlap or duplication
- Be clear in language e.g. what do we mean by integration?
- Be clear about who 'owns' the network
- Don't confuse "education" with "curriculum"
- Who are educators? – health, early childhood, post-secondary



# PARADOX OR POSSIBILITIES

- Human development OR early learning
- School readiness for children OR children's readiness for school
- Development OR delivery
- Development focused OR “schoolification”
- The whole child OR the “sliced child”
- Enabling parents OR compensating for deficits
- A merged vision OR an emerging vision
- Growing the next generation OR instructing the next generation
- Systemic OR ‘grassroots’ action



# SOME LAST THOUGHTS

## How about...

- Rethinking 0-8 years?
- A human development framework for 0-18?
- Rethinking how we use time?
- How about a shared understanding of human learning?
- How about the *Next Practices*?

