

Equity from the Start:

10 Years of the & Beyond

International Conference

Wednesday, June 16th & Thursday, June 17th, 2010

Hamilton Convention Centre

Hamilton, Ontario, Canada

Presented by the Offord Centre for Child Studies, McMaster University along with the Council for Early Child Development & the Canadian Institute for Advanced Research

Special Keynote address on Wednesday, June 16th, 6:30 – 7:30 pm:

Sir Michael Marmot



Former Chair of the World Health Organization's (WHO) Commission on the Social Determinants of Health, he is Director of the International Institute for Society and Health, and Head of the Department of Epidemiology and Public Health at University College, London. In 2000 he was knighted for services to epidemiology and understanding health inequalities.

The contributions of Sir Michael Marmot and Dr. Dan Offord are inextricably linked, both here in Canada and internationally. In the 1980s, Sir Michael's work demonstrated the importance of social gradients in health. This inspired the Canadian Institute for Advanced Research (CfAR) to create a series of programs that have searched for early human developmental origins of the gradient. Dr. Offord, as key member of the Human Development Program in CfAR, conceived of the Early Development Instrument (EDI) as a tool that could allow these processes to be readily understood in their broader social context, and one that could be used to advocate for changes in the allocation of resources to early childhood. The success of the EDI, in turn, became a key source of information for Sir Michael's WHO Commission which has been extraordinarily influential around the world in putting the evidence about early child development and inequity at the centre of policy discussions. Sir Michael was able to clearly document, at the level of the population, how the social environment produces gradients in development in the early years, thus providing clues as to how those gradients might be eliminated, leading to 'equity from the start'.

Conference Overview

Meeting to Promote Monitoring and Advancement of Healthy Early Child Development

It has been ten years since Dan Offord and Magdalena Janus designed the Early Development Instrument (EDI) - a tool to measure children's developmental health at school entry. Now the Canadian EDI database reaches over half a million kindergarten children, and is used or modified for use in over a dozen countries around the world.

A number of international organizations have recognized ***the need to improve the quality and comparability of global child development indicators***. Dr. Magdalena Janus and colleagues including Clyde Hertzman, Fraser Mustard (Canada), Sally Brinkman (Australia) and Neal Halfon (USA) are working with international organizations like World Bank, UNICEF and WHO towards this goal utilizing the experience gained through the EDI studies.

Researchers and policy-makers working on these projects come from many diverse backgrounds including: child psychology, pediatrics, epidemiology, statistics, public health, sociology, geography, education. They also come from many countries such as Kosovo, Jamaica, Mexico, Moldova, Mozambique, Indonesia, the Philippines and Jordan. Many of them will be in attendance to bring us up-to-date on the state of early child development monitoring and health promotion in both developing and developed countries, and to demonstrate now such monitoring can promote early child development.

Speakers Include:

Petra Arck, Associate Professor, McMaster University, Canada

Michel Boivin, Professor, University of Laval, Canada

Sally Brinkman, Senior Research Officer, Australian EDI National Program, and World Bank Consultant, Australia

Jim Dunn, Associate Professor, McMaster University, Canada

Marilyn Essex, Associate Professor, University of Wisconsin, USA

Sharon Goldfeld, National Director of the Australian EDI National Program, Australia

Neal Halfon, Professor, University of California at Los Angeles, USA

Clyde Hertzman, Professor, University of British Columbia, Canada

Magdalena Janus, Associate Professor, McMaster University, Canada

Paul Kershaw, Assistant Professor, University of British Columbia, Canada

Joan Lombardi, Deputy Assistant Secretary and Inter-Departmental Liaison for Early Childhood Development,
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, USA

Helia Molina Milman, Chief of Public Health Policy and Promotion, Ministry of Health, Chile

Fraser Mustard, Founding President, Canadian Institute for Advanced Research, Canada

Sven Silburn, Professor, Menzies University and Telethon Institute for Child Health Research, Australia

Alfredo Tinajero, ECD Specialist for Latin America, Founders' Network, Canada

Conference & Registration Information

Registration has not yet opened for the ***Equity From the Start: 10 Years of the EDI & Beyond International Conference*** but for further details and to be placed on a contact/reservation list, please contact:

Michelle McIntyre, Conference Manager

- Phone: 289-237-2033 (8 am – 5 pm EST)
- Fax 289-956-0220
- Email: michelle@innoventmanagement.com

Web: www.offordcentre.com (Conference details will be posted soon!)

