DAILY ROUTINES, PARENTING HASSLES, AND SOCIAL SUPPORT:
THE ROLE THAT EARLY CHILDHOOD SERVICES PLAY IN
PARENTS' AND CHILDREN'S DAILY LIFE

by

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Abstract

This study explored the impact of integrated services consisting of kindergarten, child care and family support programs on the daily lives of parents and their kindergarten-aged children. The quasi-experimental design compared the daily experiences of parents and children accessing integrated and traditional forms of kindergarten and child care services. Thirty-eight parents completed questionnaires and semi-structured interviews regarding daily routines, parenting daily hassles, social support networks, and views about early childhood services. Sixteen children participated in semi-structured interviews that assessed their views about their daily routines. Analyses indicated that service integration is associated with lower levels of daily parenting hassles, greater satisfaction with some forms of support, and greater levels of continuity in children's days. The results are discussed in relation to implications for practice, policy, and future research.

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Introduction

Background

Context

Parenthood can mean very different things to different people, but nearly everyone can agree that it is hard work and can be stressful at times.   In Toronto, like in many other cities in Canada, parents of young children are forced to navigate their way through a patchwork of fragmented services (Cleveland et al., 2006). There are child care centres, kindergarten and preschool programs, nursery schools, parenting programs, recreation programs and an array of funding arrangements. But, currently there is no coherent system for delivering early childhood education, child care and family support services to children and their families, despite that these programs serve a common population. Consequently, many parents, who are trying both to balance their work and family responsibilities and meet the developmental needs of their children, may be challenged as they piece together a variety of arrangements.

The nature and success of these arrangements vary by the availability of programs in the community, the parents' own financial resources, and their particular work and family requirements (Beach & Bertrand, 2000). If families are low-income, they may be able to get a child care subsidy, and, if they are fortunate, find a space in a high quality child care program. If they are sufficiently disadvantaged, they may be able to attend one of a very few preschool programs targeted toward 'at-risk' families. These programs are almost always a part-day program that makes it difficult for their parents to enter or stay in the workforce. And, unless their parents can pay, many children whose primary caregivers are not in the paid workforce have no opportunity to go to an early childhood

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program until their fifth year when most Canadian children have the opportunity to go to publicly-funded, half-day kindergarten (Colley, 2006).

A multitude of studies have documented the impact of early childhood education and care (ECEC) programs on child development (see Appendix A for a definition of key terms). The evidence base for the impact of pre-kindergarten programs on the cognitive development of children suggests that high-quality, centre-based or school-based early childhood programs that provide learning experiences directly to the child have a positive effect on early learning, cognitive and language development, and school achievement (Anderson et al., 2003; Bartnett, 1995; Brooks-Gunn, McCarton, Casey, & McCormick, 1994; Burchinal, Campbell, Bryant, Wasik, & Ramey, 1997; Magnuson, Meyers, Ruhm, & Waldfogel, 2004; Ramey & Ramey, 1998). However, the findings for the impact on behavioural adaptation are less clear.

Contrary to findings on children's academic gains, several large scale studies have found that children who are exposed to centre-based pre-kindergarten programs are at elevated risk for behavioural problems (e.g., Belsky, 2006; Loeb, Bridges, Bassok, Fuller, & Rumberger, 2007; NICHD Early Child Care Research Network, 2003a; NICHD Early Child Care Research Network, 2003b). Overall, findings suggest that negative behavioural effects of care are greater for children who enter programs at an earlier age and spend more hours per day in programs. However, recent findings stemming from the Early Childhood Longitudinal Study (ECLS) suggest that the seemingly negative behavioural outcomes of pre-kindergarten experiences are limited to children who attend programs provided outside of the school; that is, children who attended programs in the same school as their kindergarten were not associated with behavioural problems

(Magnuson, Ruhm, & Waldfogel, 2007b). Presumably, pre-kindergarten programs located in schools may be more aligned with kindergarten programs in terms of rules for behaviour. Therefore, the provision of high-quality, pre-kindergarten programs that are integrated within the school setting may lead to positive cognitive gains without the added risk of children developing behavioural problems.

Current Study

The focus of the current study is a research and development project that is underway in Toronto, Ontario, Canada. The project is Toronto First Duty (TFD), a multi-partnership community initiative that aims to better support the development of young children through the implementation of an integrated system for delivering early childhood services. The TFD project also aims to support parents by providing access to a variety of family support programs as well as meeting their needs for child care. The TFD was designed to demonstrate and study how existing early childhood and family programs can be transformed into a system of integrated services for children birth to six years. The goal of the project is, therefore, to "...create a 'single stop' were parents could access family supports and children could participate in a range of quality early learning and care activities" (Corter et al., 2006, pp.5). Specifically, the TFD service delivery model consolidates regulated child care, kindergarten, and family support services into a universal, single program, located in primary schools and coordinated with early interventions and family health services.

The purpose of this quasi-experimental study was to build on the evidence base of TFD by exploring the role of early childhood service settings in shaping parents' and children's daily experiences. Previous research evaluating the TFD model suggests that

integrated kindergarten, child care, and family support programs are associated with positive developmental outcomes for children and increased parental involvement for families (Corter et al., 2006). However, what remained to be investigated was whether integration makes a difference in the everyday lives of children and parents. That is, at a very practical level, do parents experience less stress on a daily basis because they are able to access kindergarten, child care and other programs for their child/ren at a single location? Do children perceive their day as a seamless flow of activities rather than going to separate kindergarten and child care programs?

To explore potential effects of services integration on the family, the current study examined several aspects of parents' daily experiences – daily activities, parenting daily stress, and social support networks – as well as children's perception of daily routines. These experiences and perceptions were compared across two early childhood service contexts: TFD integrated school sites that offered kindergarten *and* on-site child care programs versus non-integrated school sites that offered kindergarten but no onsite child care program. By comparing reports collected from the two different types of early childhood service sites, the study aimed to answer the following major research questions:

(1) Do parents from integrated sites experience less stress due to fewer daily hassles involving early childhood services compared to parents at the comparison sites?

(2) Are there any differences in the way children from the integrated sites experience their daily routines compared to children from the comparison sites?

(3) Do more parents from the integrated sites perceive early childhood services as an integral part of their social support network compared to parents from the comparison sites?

Given the aims of this study, it is important to review some the research that has been conducted to date that examines the impact of early childhood services on the daily lives of children and parents. The first section of the literature presents an overview of integrated childhood services and parenting stress in order to build a conceptual foundation for these constructs. The second section reviews the literature on the relations between integrated early childhood services, parenting daily hassles, daily experiences of children, and social support. Finally, the last section concludes with a summary of the literature review and a list of hypotheses that were addressed by the current study.

Literature review

Integrated Early Childhood Services

In order to provide a conceptual and empirical basis for understanding integrated services, this section introduces the rationale for integrating early childhood services and provides key reasons for using the school as a site for delivering an array of coordinated services to children and families. Furthermore, this section also provides a review of two models of integrated services that have been implemented in North America. The first model, the School of the 21st Century, is a well-established approach for delivering school-based child care and family support services in the U.S. The second model, the TFD project, is a recent initiative that has been piloted in Ontario, Canada.

Why Integrate Early Childhood Services?

Advocates of integration have identified a range of practical and conceptual reasons for bringing together early childhood services (e.g., Beach & Bertrand, 2000; Friendly & Lero, 2002). However, a fundamental goal of integration has been consistently identified as the need to support the holistic development of young children and their families (Corter et al., 2002; Finn-Stevenson, Desimone, & Chung, 1998; Pelletier & Corter, 2005; Pelletier & Corter, 2006; Zigler, Finn-Stevenson, & Marsland, 1995; Zigler & Finn-Stevenson, 2007). This goal is related to principles of child development that acknowledge that children develop within multiple, interconnected domains and when one developmental domain is ignored, other domains may suffer (Blank & Berg, 2006). Therefore, the argument is that if children's development is holistic and require various supports in all areas, programs need to work together and share the responsibility for supporting the development of the whole child (Pelletier & Corter, 2006).

Furthermore, integration is also seen as a means to provide a higher level of continuity for children in early childhood service settings (Pelletier & Corter, 2006). Continuity can take shape in a variety of different ways, but, generally, it implies that children experience greater consistency in their daily interactions across settings or over a span of time as a result of fewer transitions. Saracho and Spodeck (2003) describe two kinds of transitions that children typically experience. *Horizontal transitions* require children to move from one type of setting to another at one point in time; having to comply with different rules for behaviour as a child attends a kindergarten program in the morning and a child care program in the afternoon is an example of this type of

transition. In contrast, *vertical transitions* require children to adjust to a new stage of

their life (e.g., entering kindergarten) as they move through developmental transitions

over time. Pelletier and Corter (2006) argue that continuity can be fostered through

service integration strategies that promote home-school-community partnerships that

minimize both horizontal and vertical transitions. For example, they describe child care

integrated with parent education as horizontal integration, and providing child care for

preschoolers and older children as vertical and horizontal integration.

Another important argument for integration is the need to provide improved

access to early childhood programs for families. Several important societal changes such

as the increase in the number of working mothers, and single parent households, have led

to a significant increase in the number of children in non-parental care situations for

substantial portions of their preschool years (Colley, 2005; Sauve, 2004; Shonkoff,

2003). Furthermore, other changes in the family structure, caused by high mobility and

the lack of social capital (referring to the dearth of adults in the lives of children and

weak ties between families and their neighbours and relatives) have also been associated

with increased social inequities for many families (Putnam, 1995). Another demographic

factor pushing the need for integration is the rise in the number of children of foreign-

born parents in schools and early childhood settings (OECD, 2006). Children from

immigrant families may face multiple challenges due to difficulties experienced by their

parents in finding employment and having to navigate through unfamiliar systems of

services. In particular, the combination of second language status and socio-economic

disadvantage may prevent children from taking full advantage of educational

opportunities when they enter the formal educational system. Thus, universally

accessible, developmentally appropriate ECEC services are needed to eliminate a range of social, ability-based, cultural, geographic, and other barriers to equitable access and participation (Colley, 2005; Corter et al., 2002; Finn-Stevenson et al., 1998; Pelletier & Corter, 2006).

Finally, in addition to child and family related goals, another crucial goal of integration is to build organizational and community capacity to support children and families. Integration is seen as a process to bring about cohesiveness and fostering learning and skill development through collaborative practice (Pelletier & Corter, 2006). This in turn is thought to improve the content and the delivery of ECEC programs which lead to better outcomes for children and families. Through collaborative practice, schools, child care centres and other community organizations are thought to be able to work together to provide high-quality, seamless ECEC programs, creating a network of support for children and their families.

Why Should Schools Serve as the Site for Integration?

A growing trend in North America has been the increase of integrated services at school sites (Zigler & Finn-Stevenson, 2007). The idea of using the school for various 'non-academic' services in not new and is in fact inherent in the community school movement that began several decades ago (Dryfoos, Quinn, & Barkin, 2005). Placing preschool care in schools was considered back in the 1970s, with proponents pointing out that schools are a resource that exists in every community (Levine, 1978). Today, similar arguments can still be heard; in a recent publication, Pelletier and Corter (2006) note that, "schooling is universal and it is normative – a service almost every parent expects to connect to, whatever the diversity of their backgrounds and their child's special needs"

(pp. 480). Thus, the premise is that by providing integrated services at the school site,

families will be able to make use of services that were traditionally provided off site with

a much reduced risk of being stigmatized by societal judgement. Furthermore, the use of

schools as a site for integration can also be looked upon as a cost effective approach to

the delivery of early childhood services. That is, public schools are part of an annual

investment that is already supported by tax dollars and used for only part of the day, 10

months a year. Thus, by using the school to provide non-traditional ECEC services, we

are building on a system that already exists, as opposed to creating a whole new system,

which is unrealistic. By capitalizing on this investment and incorporating a range of

early childhood services into schools, we would be able to increase the supply of care

available to families without having to pay for the cost of building new facilities (Zigler

& Finn-Stevenson, 2007).

Furthermore, aside from the practical reasons of using schools as a site of

integration, there are policy-related arguments for situating early childhood programs

under the leadership of the education system. For example, the Organization for

Economic Cooperation and Development's (OECD) *Starting Strong II* report (2006)

states that the advantages of situating integrated programs within ministries of education

are that their primary focus is children and that many of the subsystems necessary for a

quality program (e.g., a training authority, an evaluation body, etc.) are already in place.

Evidence gathered for the OECD reviews show that countries that have already

developed integrated systems under a lead ministry at the national level have been able to

address the care and education of children more holistically and coherently.

Finally, recent studies, investigating the effects of pre-kindergarten programs on children' academic and social adjustment, also suggest some benefits of providing early childhood services at schools. Specifically, as mentioned earlier in this chapter, studies have found that that children who attended programs located in public schools may not experience behavioural problems that are usually associated with being in care from a young age, for longer periods of time (Magnuson et al., 2004; Magnuson, Ruhm, & Waldfogel, 2007a). For example, Magnuson, Ruhm and Waldfogel (2007), using data from the Early Childhood Longitudinal Study (ECLS), examined the effect of pre-kindergarten programs located and not located in the same schools as kindergarten. For externalizing behaviour, an effect size of 0.05 (not significant) was reported for children attending pre-kindergarten in the same school, but 0.20 for children attending programs in a different location. Interestingly, the effect sizes for academic readiness did not differ according to where the pre-kindergarten program was located. These findings suggest that by situating early childhood programs within public schools, we may be able to negate the negative behavioural outcomes associated with early care while still maintaining the academic benefits.

There are of course some arguments for not using the school as a site for integration (Pelletier & Corter, 2006; Zigler & Finn-Stevenson, 2007). Zigler and Finn-Stevenson (2007) note that, "lack of space, a poor track record in serving low-income and non-English speaking children, an overburdened educational system, and presumed parental dissatisfaction with schools" are some of the arguments voiced against placing programs such as child care in schools (pp.178). Another major concern is that since schools are traditionally associated with more direct academic instructional orientations,

children in school-based early childhood programs will be subjected to formal didactic instruction in academic skills at younger and younger ages (Finn-Stevenson & Zigler, 1999).

Despite these objections, increasing numbers of schools have opened their doors to offer a range of early childhood programs to children and families. A growing number of studies have shown that schools can provide good-quality, developmentally appropriate care (e.g., Dryfoos et al., 2005), and integrated programs are not any more expensive than traditional forms of fragmented care (Corter et al., 2006; Johnson & Mathien, 1998).

School-Based Models of Integration

As interest in integrated ECEC services have increased significantly over the last decade, a growing body of research stemming from implementation studies have confirmed that coordinated access to quality ECEC programs provides benefits for children and families across all social and economic classes. In particular, the implementation of integrated services has been most prominent in countries with long-established ECEC traditions (e.g., Belgium, Denmark, France, Sweden, etc). Many of these European nations have achieved integrated ECEC services through the establishment of country-wide policies that have enabled multi-disciplinary teams of staff to develop new ways of working together to overcome professional boundaries and promote coherence in children's lives (OECD, 2006). In contrast, wide-spread implementation of integration based on national policies remains a rare phenomenon in North America. However, notable progress has been made at both the province/state-wide and community levels, resulting in an increasing knowledge base for the various

approaches taken to integrate ECEC programs and associated outcomes for children, families, and communities. In the US, a growing network of 'community schools' has emerged as a champion of integrated services for children and families (Dryfoos et al., 2005). Within this network, Zigler's schools of the 21st Century represent one of the most widely implemented models of integrated ECEC. In Canada, the provinces of Quebec and Ontario have provided examples of integrated models. In particular, the TFD project is a promising model that has demonstrated how kindergarten, child care and family support programs can be brought together at school sites. The following section provides an overview of these models and their evidence base to highlight the state of integrated ECEC services in North America.

The School of the 21st Century (21C). The 21C model, which is currently being implemented in approximately 1, 400 schools in the US, was first conceptualized by Edward Zigler in 1987 (Zigler & Finn-Stevenson, 2007). Also known as Family Resource Centers in some regions, the goal of 21C is to provide a comprehensive program of child care, early education, and family support for children from birth to 12 years old, all operating from the neighbourhood school. Like the TFD, the 21C model is based on the assumption that a child's chances for optimal development are increased by the integration of the family, the educational system, the child care system, and the health care system. Within the 21C model, there are two child care components: (1) all-day, year-round child care for children ages 3-5; and (2) before-and after-school and vacation care for children ages 5-12. As well, there are several outreach services including a home visitation program to support families during pregnancy through to age 3, an information and referral program, training program for child care providers in the community, and a

health and nutrition program (Finn-Stevenson et al., 1998; Zigler & Finn-Stevenson, 2007).

Evaluation studies of the 21C model exist at the national (James-Burdumy et al., 2005), state-wide (Henrich, Ginicola, Finn-Stevenson, & Zigler, 2006), and community levels (McCabe, 1995). At the national level, a three-year study (2000/01-2003/04) followed two large cohorts of children, one starting in preschool and the other in kindergarten, from 10 schools in 5 districts. Each year, data were collected from student assessments, teacher and parent surveys, and classroom observations. Qualitative data were also collected from focus groups with teachers and parents. The results of this national study suggests that preschool and early child care classrooms were of higher quality compared to other large-scale studies on Head Start, child care and state-funded preschool programs in the US. Furthermore, children who attended 21C preschool child care and education programs increased their academic skills in reading and math from preschool through second grade, relative to national norms of children of the same age. On the other hand, the levels of educational attainment by staff, staff turnover and salary, and child-to-teacher ratios were not better on average than national preschool comparisons (Henrich et al., 2006).

At the state-wide level, the Arkansas 21C is the most recently implemented 21C initiative. The evaluation study (2004-05) assessed the implementation of preschool programs within schools and the impact of these efforts on child, families and the school as a whole. Findings suggest that schools that had implemented the 21C for a longer period benefited from significantly lower absenteeism rates, student turnover rates, and out-of-school suspensions. Furthermore, having a preschool program within the school

was significantly related to lower rates of kindergarten absenteeism, fewer grade retentions, and fewer special education referrals. Overall, findings from both the national and state-wide evaluations indicate that integrated ECEC programs can lead to improvements in children's academic achievement, as well as enhanced quality of the learning environment. Other notable 21C evaluation studies will be discussed in the section that reviews integration and parenting stress.

Toronto First Duty (TFD). The TFD project is a school-based integrated service initiative, whose primary aim is to develop working models of early childhood education and care that bring together kindergarten, child care and family support programs into a single seamless program for children and families. Within this delivery model, a professional team of kindergarten teachers, early childhood educators, family support staff and teaching assistants work together to plan and deliver the program. Space and resources are combined, and there is a single intake procedure and flexible enrolment options for parents. Partnerships between the City of Toronto, Atkinson Charitable Foundation, Toronto District School Board (TDSB), and other community agencies enabled the funding of the TFD project.

During the first phase of the project (i.e., 2002-2005), five pilot school sites in the TDSB implemented the TFD model. Each TFD site varied in the curriculum and staffing models according to the needs of each community. Furthermore, the core feature of integrating kindergarten, child care, and family support programs was not achieved fully as two of the five sites. Nevertheless, all sites worked toward an integrated model of service delivery using five dimension of integration: (1) integrated governance; (2) seamless access; (3) integrated early learning environment; (4) early childhood staff

team; and (5) parent participation (Corter et al., 2002). Table 1 provides a description of the core elements for implementing the TFD model of integrated early childhood services.

Table 1

Description of the core service delivery features of TFD

Core Elements	Description
Integrated Governance	A consolidated structure that has control over a pooled budget and a mandate and accountability to provide management, planning and administration and ensure delivery of comprehensive services and supports.
Seamless Access	Single point access to services and facilitated access to other services.
Integrated Early Learning Environment	Blending of the three streams of kindergarten, child care/early childhood education, and parenting.
Early Childhood Staff Team	Integrated staff from the three early years streams with each member delivering core aspects of the Early Learning Environment.
Parent Involvement	Increased participation of parents/caregivers.

The research findings of TFD, to date, have charted the changes, benefits and challenges at three levels: (1) program, practices, and policy; (2) families and children; and (3) communities (Corter et al., 2006). At the second level, the primary focus has been on the evaluation of the impact of integration on children and parents who have participated in TFD programs at the five demonstration sites. Analyses of parent survey results suggested that integrated programming that increases parents' experience with preschool services does indeed help parents engage in their children's early learning. Specifically, compared to parents from non-TFD sites, TFD parents were more likely to be engaged in the school and have higher expectations for involvement and stronger feelings of efficacy to talk to their child's teacher and to help their child learn at home

(Patel, 2004). Furthermore, in order to evaluate the impact of TFD on the development of children, the Early Development Instrument (EDI) rating scale was used to track the changes in child development outcomes. Data were collected for all sites early in the project (2001-2003) and again in 2005. Analyses of EDI data suggested that for all sites combined, significant improvements were seen in three of the five child development domains: social; emotional; and language (Corter et al., 2006).

Taken together, the findings from the 21C and TFD initiatives, suggest that integration is feasible and can lead to positive outcomes for children, parents, staff and programs. In order to maintain interest and support for integration, further research is needed to tease out the nature of the benefits and pathways of change that emerge from the integration process. In particular, it is largely unknown whether there are practical everyday benefits for parents and children accessing integrated programs for the family. At an intuitive and practical level, one would assume that a major benefit for parents would be the reduction in everyday stress associated with having a child in multiple settings throughout the day. For children, integrated programs should result in fewer transitions experienced by children. Therefore, the following section examines the literature on parenting stress to establish the construct as a useful area of study for examining the impact of integration on the everyday lives of parents. It then provides a review of studies that examine the relations between integration, parenting stress, children's everyday experiences in school and child care settings, and the role of social support in the daily life of families.

Parenting Stress

What is Parenting Stress?

After decades of interest in the study of parenting stress, there is little agreement on how parenting stress might be best conceptualized and measured (Crnic & Low, 2002). However, in general terms, Deater-Deckard (2004) has defined parenting stress as, "...a set of processes that lead to aversive psychological and physiological reactions arising from attempts to adapt to the demands of parenthood" (pp. 6). Furthermore, several authors have noted that central to the definition of parenting stress is the parents' perception of having access to available resources for managing the responsibilities associated with parenting, relative to the perceived demands of the parenting role (Deater-Deckard, 1998; Deater-Deckard, 2004; Ostberg, Hagekull, & Hagelin, 2007). Thus, parenting stress can be seen as resulting from a perceived discrepancy between demands of parenthood and personal resources available to the parent.

Theories and Measures of Parenting Stress

Major Life Events. Historically, researchers interested in studying stress and parenting, have used a variety of frameworks to conceptualize and measure parenting stress. Much of the early investigations on parenting stress focused on the impact of major life events on the physical and psychological adjustment of families. This approach, initially proposed by Homes and Rahe (1967), used evidence generated by the Social Readjustment Rating Scale to argue for the connection of the experience of major life change with physical illness and poorer psychological functioning. Based on this conceptualization of stress, a wealth of research followed, suggesting a somewhat unclear picture of the relation between major life events and physical and psychological well-being (Crnic & Low, 2002). Most notably, a subsequent review by Rabkin and Streuning (1976) called into question the validity of the relation between life event stress and health

outcomes. Specifically, they cited weak correlations between the factors as highly problematic; others have noted its failure to address the processes through time by which life events might have an impact on diverse health outcomes such as infections, emotional distress, and cancer. Overall, the major life event approach has been somewhat useful in distinguishing families at risk for problematic outcome (Crnic & Greenberg, 1990), however, major life events are by nature low frequency events and not specific to family processes.

Dysfunctional Child-Parent Processes. More specific to parenting and family processes, Abdin's (1983, 1986, 1990, 1995) Parenting Stress Index (PSI) is a well developed and extensively used measure that focuses on addressing parenting distress and child difficulties. The measure factors into two major scales, a Parent Domain and a Child Domain, each of which contains a number of subscales that describe specific areas thought to promote stress. The subscales describe various child characteristics (i.e., adaptability, demandingness, mood, and hyperactivity/distractibility) that may represent difficulties for the parent, parent characteristics (i.e., sense of competence, depression, and attachment) that may operate similarly to create stress in the family system, and dysfunctional parent-child interactions. Consequently, scores from this measure represent more problematic circumstances than normative, everyday stressors. Nevertheless, studies using this measure have generated a wealth of information on the predictors (e.g., Abdin, 1992; Mulsow, Caldera, Pursley, Reifman, & Huston, 2002; Ostberg & Hagekull, 2000; Ostberg et al., 2007), as well as the impacts of parenting stress on a variety of child and adult outcomes (e.g., Anthony et al., 2005; Killeen & Brady, 2000; Moss, Rousseau, Parent, St-Laurent, & Saintonge, 1998).

Parenting Daily Hassles. The most recent development in the conceptualization and measurement of parenting stress is the daily hassles approach. Crnic and Greenberg (1990) created the Parenting Daily Hassles (PDH) measure, based on a model of parenting daily hassles in which parenting stress is conceptualized within a minor event perspective that addresses the potential everyday frustrations and irritations that accompany childrearing and children's typical, but often challenging behaviour. It is thought that any single event may or may not be considered a hassle, but the cumulative impact of these events may adversely impact child and parent adjustment. Thus, parenting daily stressors are not particular to any high-risk or problematic population, as has been the case with most previous research models of parenting stress. As well, the daily hassles approach considers not only the hassles arising out of challenging child behaviours, but also the stressors associated with everyday parenting tasks (e.g., managing complicated schedules).

Hence, the PDH consists of 20 items related to child behaviour challenges and parenting tasks. Parents are asked to rate on a five-point scale how often the item occurs for them and how much of the hassle each item is perceived to be. Thus, two summary scores are created for this measure: the frequency of parenting hassles, and the intensity of parenting hassles. The intensity score offers an index of appraised stressfulness, whereas the frequency score reflects the presence of stressors.

In Crnic and Greenberg's (1990) initial study, parenting daily hassles proved to be significantly related to aspects of child, parent, and family status. Consistent with earlier research comparing daily hassles and life stress (e.g., Kanner, Coyne, Schaefer, & Lazarus, 1981), the study found that scales of parenting daily hassles were a better

predictor of adjustment for both children and parents than major life events. Thus, this study provided initial support for the notion that parental experiences of minor daily hassles of parenting might affect children's development, and that they are a more salient source of influence than indices of life event stress.

Outcome Studies on Parenting Daily Hassles

Subsequent research using the PDH measure has further supported the validity of parenting daily hassles as a meaningful stress context for families and child development (Belsky, Crnic, & Gable, 1995; Belsky, Crnic, & Woodworth, 1995; Coplan, Bowker, & Cooper, 2003; Creasey & Reese, 1996; Crnic & Booth, 1991; Crnic, Gaze, & Hoffman, 2005; Phelps, Belsky, & Crnic, 1998). Many of these studies have focused on the adverse impact of parenting daily hassles on the adjustment of children and parents.

Child Outcomes. The impact of parenting stress on the development of children has been addressed by several studies using the PDH paradigm. In a correlational study, Creasey and Reese (1996) found that child behaviour problems reported by teachers were associated with parenting daily hassles independently of non-parental stress. Like Crnic and Greengerg (1990), the authors found no significant differences in the ways mother and fathers reported daily hassles. In another study, Coplan, Bowker, and Cooper (2003) found that parenting daily hassles predicted child externalizing problems beyond the contributions of child temperament characteristics. The use of teacher reports and direct observational measures of child behaviour (i.e., in the case of Coplan et al.'s (2003)), rather than parent reports, is a noted strength of these studies, as critics have often cited the use of parent reports as a problematic in distinguishing the two constructs (Crnic & Low, 2002). However, as noted by both authors, the associations between parenting

daily hassles and child adjustment are correlational in nature, and thus the causal direction of the effects could not be addressed.

Furthermore, another relevant issue, not unique to the studies above, is whether the effect of parenting daily hassles on child adjustment is direct or indirect. To date, the best evidence suggests that more often the effect is indirect rather than direct, implying that PDH has the power to disrupt parenting practices, which then impact children's adjustment. Several researchers have proposed that the effect is likely mediated by the quality and sensitivity of the parents' interactions with their children (Deater-Deckard, 1998; Webster-Stratton, 1990), although not all studies have consistently found parent-child interactions as the mediator of parenting stress and child outcomes (e.g., Crnic et al., 2005).

Parent/Family Outcomes. In addition to assessing the impact of PDH on children's functioning, many studies have also concurrently addressed its impact on parents' well-being. A range of parent outcomes has been found to be associated with PDH, including individual parental psychological well-being, attitudes toward parenting and children, and actual behaviour in interaction with children.

In relation to parental attitude and self-reported well-being, PDH has been associated with both mothers' and fathers' satisfaction with parenting (Crnic & Greenberg, 1990; Crnic & Booth, 1991), general indices of low life satisfaction (Crnic & Greenberg, 1990), and mother's and fathers' reported psychological symptoms (Creasey & Reese, 1996; Crnic & Greenberg, 1990). With respect to the impact of minor stressors on the nature of parental behaviour during actual interactions with children, several studies have been conducted to begin to detail such effects. Crnic and Greenberg (1990)

found no relations between mother's reported parenting hassles and the quality of maternal interactive behaviour in a sample of mothers of 5 year old children. However, as noted by the authors, the interactions they observed were laboratory based, which may have reduced the variability associated with reported hassles. Other studies that included home-based interactions have found strong evidence that interactions in the home or other naturalistic settings appear to provide a robust relation to parenting daily hassles (Belsky, Woodworth, & Crnic, 1996; Jain, Belsky, & Crnic, 1996).

Taken together, outcome studies involving parenting daily hassles have established the importance of examining the construct to understand a range of child, parent and family adjustment outcomes. The following section will now provide a summary of the factors that have been reported to impact parents' experience of parenting daily hassles, and provide a rationale for the need to expand the daily hassles framework to include early childhood contexts as important areas of influence on families.

Determinants of Parenting Stress

It seems clear that not all parents are likely to find their parenting or children's behaviour equally stressful; nor are parents likely necessarily to share perceptions of which behaviours and parenting tasks are most stressful. In this respect, several authors have presented frameworks to outline the various factors that help to determine the experience of parenting in general (Belsky, 1984) and parenting stress in particular (Abdin, 1992; Mash & Johnston, 1990; Ostberg & Hagekull, 2000). A review of these models suggest that there are three major areas that have received attention to date: (1) child factors, (2) parent factors, and (3) broader, systematic family level processes.

Child Factors. Factors related to children and the various characteristics they

bring to the parenting context have been suggested an important sources of stress for parents. Child temperament is perhaps the most common child characteristic that has been examined in the context of parenting stress. Crnic and Low (2002) note that children's behavioural and emotional dispositions (i.e., temperament) are characteristics that parents must engage with everyday. Consequently, this factor may provide an important context that is specifically relevant to everyday stresses of parenting. Indeed, researchers studying child temperament in the context of daily parenting stress have found that it appears to contribute directly towards increased parental stress (Coplan et al., 2003; Ostberg & Hagekull, 2000). Other child characteristics that have been linked with parenting stress include developmental disabilities (B. L. Baker, Blacher, Crnic, & Edelbrock, 2002; B. L. Baker et al., 2003), and child psychopathologies (Webster-Stratton, 1990).

Although maladaptive child behaviours have been found to negatively impact the levels of stress experienced by parents, there are also data to suggest that the two factors have a mutually escalating effect on each other, which is consistent with theories of transactional models (Sameroff & Mackenzie, 2003). For example, Baker et al. (2003) reported that in addition to finding that change in child behaviour problems over time significantly predicted parenting stress, they also found that changes in parenting stress over time predicted child behaviour problems. Thus, it is unlikely that child characteristics alone are sufficient to lead to stressful experiences by parents, as the parent must also bring specific vulnerabilities or susceptibilities to the process.

Parent Factors. Parent factors include pre-birth functioning, such as stress levels during pregnancy, as well as factors related to parental beliefs about childrearing and the

level of conflict experienced within the partnership. In particular, the transition to parenthood is associated with marked increase in distress for some parents (Crnic & Low, 2002). A number of studies, not specific to the PDH paradigm, that have examined stress and adult psychological health prior to and after the birth of the child have shown that for some soon-to-be parents, the seeds of parenting stress already have been planted (Deater-Deckard, 2004). For example, signs of depression in the mother or father prior to the birth of the child are the best prenatal predictors of a parent's symptoms of depression and distress, and are known to be associated strongly with parenting stress (Tatano, 2001). Furthermore, parents' beliefs about their developing child during pregnancy are associated with how well they adapt to the parenting role after the birth of the child (Benoit, Parker, & Zeanah, 1997). As well, difficulties in the marriage or partnership prior to the birth can predispose both parents to greater distress once the baby arrives (Wallace & Gotlib, 1990).

There are also studies to suggest that parental gender may be an important consideration in understanding determinants of parenting stress. However, reviews of studies on gender difference in parenting stress generally indicate that results are often mixed and inconclusive (Deater-Deckard, 2004). Overall, it appears that if there are gender differences in parenting stress, the differences are small, with mothers reporting slightly higher levels of parenting stress than fathers (Creasey & Reese, 1996).

Family Level Factors. Just as they do on the individual level, resources developed on the family level may help parents deal with daily parenting stress. These resources include internal assets and capabilities such as intimacy between partners (e.g., marital relationship), and external resources such as general social support made

available to the family. In regard to the role of the marital relationship, Crnic and Low

(2002) state that, "marital relations is a primary stress factor undermining or supporting

parent functioning, and low marital satisfaction is associated with greater parenting stress

by both men and women" (pp. 255).

Social support is also cited as an important factor for predicting parenting stress

(Crnic & Low, 2002; Deater-Deckard, 2004). Studies that have explored the specific

impact of social support on parenting stress in general and parenting daily hassles in

particular, have found that kin support is especially effective in moderating stress from

parenting daily tasks. Specifically, kin support functioned to actively provide the help to

parents and was associated with both fewer parenting daily hassles with young children

and for other aspects of parents' life (Melson, Windecker-Nelson, & Schwarz, 1998).

Thus, generally, social support is perceived to moderate the impact of parenting stress;

however, it is also important to consider the potential negative side of support networks,

such as the effects of negative social exchanges on parental well-being. Non-supportive

or conflict ridden relationships can contribute to decreased feelings of well-being. In the

context of parenting, seemingly well-intended acts of 'kindness' can in fact increase

parents' stress if the timing, amount, and quality of the support are not well chosen.

Expanding the Social-Ecological Account of Parenting Stress

Although child, parent, family factors have proven to be important to our

understanding of everyday parenting stress, ecological systems theories of human

development, such as those proposed by Bronfrenbrenner (1979) and Lerner et al. (2002)

clearly delineate the importance of examining both the proximal and distal interactions

that take place between the person and his or her environment. That is, processes that

take place outside of the family context (e.g., neighbourhood, community, societal level contexts) are likely to be important determinants of the quality of parents' experience. In particular, it is crucial to note that within the literature of parenting stress, studies involving daily hassles have excluded a seemingly important context - early childhood services (e.g., schools, parenting programs, and child care) - as a determining factor within a daily hassles framework. The absence of empirical studies examining interactions or processes that take place within this important context suggest a major gap in our understanding of daily parental stress and everyday parenting processes in general.

In contrast, the child care literature has shed some light regarding the relations between aspects of early care and the well-being of parents. Specifically, studies focusing on the concept of role strain (i.e., conflict between multiple roles) among working parents have found that higher levels of child care satisfaction is related to lower levels of separation anxiety experienced by mothers (Buffardi & Erdwins, 1997; Erdwins, Buffardi, Casper, & O'Brien, 2001). That is, the more satisfied a mother was with her child care arrangement, the less anxiety she experienced about not being with her child full time. In particular, satisfaction with caregiver communication significantly predicated lower levels of maternal separation anxiety, suggesting that guilt over leaving a child may be alleviated by the feeling of participation in the child's day fostered by the feedback and responsiveness of the caregiver.

Overall, findings from studies on role strain suggest that being able to locate appropriate and satisfactory child care plays a crucial role in reducing the concerns working mothers experience about leaving their young children in someone else's care. Further inquiry into the various aspects of child care and other early childhood services as

they relate to parenting stress is needed to understand the role of the school and community contexts in influencing parents' daily life.

<div align="center">***Integrated Services and Parenting Stress***</div>

Although the literature on the benefits of integrated services for children and families has increased considerably over the last few decades, there appears to be only a handful of studies that have included measures of parenting stress as a way to understand the impact of integration on the daily lives of parents. For the purpose of this review, three studies are discussed below to highlight the relations between integration and parenting stress. The first two studies reported on the evaluation work of 21C model. The third study evaluated the CoZi model which is a whole school reform model that combines the Edward Zigler's 21C model with James Comer's School Development Program.

Study 1: Pilot Evaluation of the 21C Schools

In their pilot evaluation of one of the first 21C schools, Finn-Stevenson et al. (1998) asked parents to complete a parenting stress measure in the second, third, fourth years of its operation. The Parenting Stress Index (PSI; Abdin, 1995) was used to measure stress in the parenting system arising from the child, parent, dysfunctional parent-child interactions, and total parent stress. The intervention group consisted of 164 parents of preschool and/or school-aged children who attended 21C schools. The comparison group consisted of 61 parents of preschool and/or school-aged children who attended non-21C schools. Results indicated that total parenting stress score and parent stress scores decreased for *both* the intervention and comparison groups from the third to the fourth year, while the child stress score remained unchanged. Therefore, one might

conclude from the data that decreases in parenting stress could not be attributed to the 21C model, since both groups of parents experienced a decline in parenting stress. However, it is interesting to note that in subsequent publications of 21C, this study is consistently cited as providing evidence for the effectiveness of 21C schools in reducing parenting stress (e.g., Deemer, Desimone, & Finn-Stevenson, 1998).

Study 2: Evaluation of the 21C Family Centre

Although Finn-Stevenson et al.'s (1998) study did not yield conclusive evidence for the effectiveness of integrated programs to reduce parenting stress among participating families, a smaller independent study found that the provision of school-based, full-day care for children ages birth through 5, as well as care for school-age children, was associated with decreases in stress among parents. Specifically, McCabe (1995) examined whether a 21C Family Center program in Leadville Colorado was effectively able to reduce the amount of stress found in parents. Employing a quasi-experimental research design, McCabe compared levels of parenting stress of a group of 50 parents who had received services from the Family Center to a comparison group of 50 parents from another community who had not received comprehensive programs. The PSI was again used to measure perceived levels of parenting stress for both sets of parents. Results indicated that there was a significant difference between the intervention and comparison groups for the parent stress score, but not for the child or total stress scores.

Study 3: Evaluation of the CoZi Model

The study conducted by Desimone, Finn-Stevenson and Henrich (2000) evaluated the impact of the CoZi model that was implemented in an elementary school in the state

of Virginia, U.S. This school, which services a predominantly low-income African American community, first implemented the School Development Program (SDP), which is a school management initiative that includes a parent involvement program, school planning and management team, and mental health team; then a few years later in 1990, implemented the service linkages that are part of 21C and became a CoZi school. In order to evaluate the impact of the CoZi model on children, staff and families, the authors employed a quasi-experimental design, utilizing a second school situated in the same district as a comparison site. The PSI measure was once again used to measure parenting stress. In contrast to the hypothesis outlined by the authors, the findings suggested that there were no significant differences in the perceived levels of parenting stress between parents who participated in the CoZi schools and those who did not.

Overall, findings from the these studies suggest a very mixed picture of the impact of integration on parenting stress and the lack of effects in two of the studies are counter-intuitive to the assumption that a well coordinated system of services leads to the reduction in stress experienced by parents. So, why are we not consistently seeing a reduction in stress for parents who participate in integrated programs? One possible explanation is that the problem lies in the measure that is being used to assess levels of parenting stress. That is, the PSI is primarily a measure that assesses problematic circumstances arising from the child, parent or parent-child interactions rather than normative, everyday stressors. Therefore, the PSI would not be able to capture the varying levels of stress associated with having to navigate through and interact with a variety of different early childhood services. For example, parents may experience less stress about having a child in care for extended periods if they recognize that their child is

in a high quality setting under a single roof throughout the entire day. Thus, it seems likely that a measure that addresses everyday normative stressors relevant to the early childhood setting would yield a more conclusive picture of how an integrated program may impact parents' daily life.

Integration and Children's Daily Experiences

A relevant question in assessing the impact of integration on children is whether children experience a seamless day as a result of the integration of child care and kindergarten or preschool programs. The literature on children's representation of the pattern of daily activities suggest that by the age of 4 years children are capable of ordering activities and by 5 years, are able to judge the forward order from multiple reference points within the day (Friedman, 1990). However, children's perspectives on their daily life have rarely been explored in relation to the services they have received (Walker, 2001).

In a meta-review of a collection of studies investigating this topic, Henessy (1999) reported on a number of studies that examined children as service evaluators of educational programs. The types of service evaluated were primarily group-based early education or child care services including preschools and kindergartens and group-based day care services catering for children between the ages of 3 and 5 years. Several instruments were reviewed, including the Primary Grade Pupil Report (Driscoll, Peterson, Browning, & Stevens, 1990), the Day Care Centre Toy and Interview Questionnaire (Armstrong & Sugawara, 1989), and the Child Care Game Assessment (Austin, Godfrey, Larsen, Lindauer, & Norton, 1996). All of these measures cover the areas of how children feel about the classroom teacher or caregiver and as aspects about

the environmental setting, but fail to address the question of how children feel about their

daily routines or transitions.

An alternative to standardized methods of understanding children's daily

experience is to analyze children's scripts about their daily activities in school and child

care. In a study that examined children's understanding of school in two types of

language settings, Pelletier (1999) asked children to describe what they do in

kindergarten from the time they arrive at school until they went home. It was found that

children reported scripts that averaged about seven and nine events for the children in

regular kindergarten and children in French immersion programs, respectively.

Furthermore, additional meaningful differences were found between the two groups of

children, suggesting that script analysis can be a useful method of acquiring pertinent

information about how children perceive their daily experience.

To date, the TFD project appears to be one of the few, if not only, studies that has

examined children's views of their daily activities as a component of the evaluation

framework for assessing integration. As part of the evaluation work, children were asked

to talk about their day at the sites from the time they got there until the time they went

home at the end of the day. As well, they were asked about what kinds of things they

liked and did not like about their day (Corter et al., 2006). Results suggested that play

was both what children liked and did not like about their day, suggesting that play may be

highly enjoyable for children when it does go well, but can also be a source of

unhappiness when it does not go well. These findings are interesting and highlight the

salience of play for children at this age; however, the analysis is limited in that the impact

of integration on the daily functioning of children cannot be inferred, since there was no

comparison group employed in the inquiry. Thus, in order to build on these results, a comparison of children's views from TFD and non-TFD sites using this methodology may provide further understanding of how integration can impact children's daily functioning.

<div align="center">***Social Networks***</div>

Social Networks and Parenting

According to an ecological systems perceptive, social networks act as channels of communication that help people identify the resources that they need, as well as share and carry information or attitudes from one setting to another (Bronfrenbrenner, 1979). Others have argued that social networks also provide parents with emotional and practical support which can impact parents' beliefs, attitudes and behaviours (Cochran & Niego, 2002). In the general parenting literature, studies typically suggest a strong relation between social support and both positive and negative qualities of parenting (Crnic, Greenberg, Ragozin, Robinson, & Basham, 1983). As well, studies have also found that social support can moderate the impact of parenting stress on the well-being of families (Mash & Johnston, 1990; Mulsow et al., 2002; Ostberg & Hagekull, 2000; Ostberg et al., 2007; Webster-Stratton, 1990).

Within the parent involvement literature, parents' social networks have been conceptualized as social capital, a resource that enhances children's educational outcomes. For example, Lareau and Shumar (1996) found that parents of elementary school children who maintained ties with teachers and other parents regularly gained access to and exchanged information about the school and schooling. Similarly, Useem (1992) found that mothers who were more integrated into a web of informal parent

networks knew more about the school policies than isolated mothers. Furthermore, Sheldon (2002) found that the size of parents' social network for individuals from the school predicted the degree to which parents were involved at home and at school. Based on these findings, the development of social ties with individuals who are part of the school community appear to be associated with enhanced parental involvement which in turn is thought to enhance educational outcomes for children.

Integration and Social Networks

Surprisingly, there is little evidence to support the proposition that integration projects enhance parents' social network by creating stronger linkages between the school and home settings. Despite the aim of integration projects to achieve greater parent involvement, studies have rarely examined whether changes in parents' social networks influence the process by which parents become involved in their child's school. One notable exception is the CoZi evaluation study that examined parents' social networks related to the child at two time points (i.e., fall and spring). Specifically, parents were asked to name their child's friends whom they knew, as well as the names of other parents from the school. The study reported that in both the fall and spring, CoZi school parents had significantly larger networks compared to parents from the comparison school where services were not integrated (Desimone et al., 2000). This finding suggests that as parents access multiple services from the school site, their interaction with people from the school community increases over time, leading to the development of social ties that parents can use to access various both tangible and intangible forms of support.

Statement of the Problem

Although the number of school-based integration projects has continued to rise in North America, the literature reveals that currently we know very little about the impact of integrated services on the everyday lives of children and parents. More specifically, we don't know whether parents benefit in terms of experiencing reduced levels of daily stress related to early childhood services, and whether children perceive their integrated day as a seamless, continuous flow of activities. Furthermore, we have little information on whether a growth in parents' social networks is a benefit of integration projects. By using a new measure of parenting stress, sensitive to the daily hassles related to accessing early childhood services, this study aimed to demonstrate how an integrated system consisting of kindergarten, child care and family support programs can improve the daily experience of parents. In addition, child interviews were conducted to assess whether differences could be detected between children who access integrated care and those who access traditional forms of kindergarten and child care programs. Finally, parents were interviewed about the composition of their social networks in order to determine whether parents viewed the school community as an important source of social support.

Through these investigations, the current study contributed to the literature on parenting stress by stepping beyond the confines of the family system in exploring the range of challenges that can exist in the community school setting for families who access early childhood services. The use of children's reports to determine their perception of their everyday routines is also a novel methodology for evaluating the impact of integration on the daily lives of young children. Finally, the exploration of the social networks among parents of young children who access early childhood services

contributes to our understanding of how integrated services provided within the community school setting can promote daily interactions that enhance parents' network of support.

Based on the review of the literature, the study was designed to test the following hypotheses:

- Hypothesis 1: Parents from the intervention group will report lower levels of daily hassles related to early childhood services compared to the parents from the comparison group.

- Hypothesis 2: Children from the intervention group will describe their day as being more integrated and seamless compared to children from the comparison group.

- Hypothesis 3: Parents from the intervention group will include individuals from the school community as important members of their social network more frequently than parents from the comparison group.

Method

Recruitment

Parent and child participants were recruited primarily from three elementary schools in a large urban public school district, as well as from a child care centre. The schools fell into one of the following two categories of site types: TFD integrated site, and, non-TFD, non-integrated site. Parents and children recruited from TFD school sites represented the intervention group participants and those recruited from the non-integrated site represented the comparison group participants. In order to recruit additional participants needed for the comparison group, a child care centre located in a neighbourhood similar to other school sites was contacted. Table 2 shows the number of parent and child participants recruited from each school or child care site.

Table 2

Number of parent and child participants recruited from each school or child care site

Participant group	Recruitment Sites	# of Parent Participants	# of Child Participants
Intervention	Site 1: School site	17	8
	Site 2: School site	5	2
Comparison	Site 3: School site	12	6
	Site 4: Child care centre site	4	0
Total		38	16

Comparison group participants were recruited from sites that matched TFD sites based on an index of demographic risk called the Learning Opportunities Index (LOI). LOI scores are percentiles representing a school's standing among 389 elementary schools in the TDSB, with higher scores reflecting a 'higher risk' school population. LOI scores are compiled using several sources including information collected by the

TDSB and the Canadian Census. Data are extracted from postal codes in the

neighbourhoods around the schools and from school board administrative records.

Factors that affect a school's standing are as follows: median income, average or mean

income, lone-parent families, housing type (i.e., apartment, single detached housing),

education, immigration, and student mobility of families with school-aged children. The

schools were chosen based on the 2005 LOI percentiles available to the researcher during

the planning and development phase of this study. All sites had similar percentiles,

indicating that children attending these schools had similar demographic risk based on the

indicators mentioned above. Specifically, the LOI percentiles ranged from 75.37 to 76.26

and 71.96 to 75.86 for the intervention and comparison sites, respectively.

Participants

A total of 38 parents and 16 children from 35 families participated in the study

(see Table 2). Families had at least one child who was enrolled in a kindergarten (i.e.,

junior or senior kindergarten) and child care program. Typically, one parent from each

family participated in the parent interview; however, for three families, both the mother

and the father participated. Parents' age ranged from 21 to 52 years, with a mean age of

37.4 years, and the majority of the parents were female (81.6%). Most parents were either

married (57.9%) or in a common law relationship (13.2%); others were

divorced/separated (15.8%) or single (13.2). In addition, the majority of the parents

(63.2%) had an education level of either an undergraduate degree (34.2%), some graduate

training (7.9%), or a graduate degree (21.1%). Furthermore, most parents worked full-

time (68.4%), while a smaller percentage of parents reported working part-time (15.8%)

or being stay-at-home parents (15.8%). Finally, family income levels reported by parents

indicated that the majority of families (69%) earned an income that was significantly

higher than the two-person median family income reported in the 2001 Statistics Canada

Toronto Community Profiles (Statistics Canada, 2001). Specifically, nine families earned

an income of $60 000 – $99 999 and 15 families earned an income of $100 000 or above.

Despite efforts to recruit parents from diverse backgrounds by using translated

materials to advertise the study, the majority of the parents (84.2%) were born in Canada

and spoke English as their first language; the remaining parents who were born outside of

Canada spoke a variety of languages including Mandarin, Tigrinya, Kurdish, and

Amharic. For the group of parents who were not born in Canada, the number of years

they had been living in Canada ranged from 4 to 37 years, with a mean of 16.50 years.

Furthermore, in terms of family composition, most families consisted of a couple with

child/ren (71.1%); other families consisted of a single parent (mother head) with child/ren

(26.3%) or a couple with child/ren and an extended family member (2.6%). In addition,

out of 35 families, 11 had one child (31.4%), 17 families had two children (48.6%), and

seven had three children (20.0%). At the time of the interview, 20 families (57.1%) had a

child enrolled in a Junior Kindergarten (JK) program and 15 families (42.9%) had a child

in a Senior Kindergarten (SK) program. Out of 35 children, 18 were first born (51.4%),

10 were second born (28.6%), and seven were third born (20.0%).

The child participants' age ranged from 4 to 6 years, with a mean of 5.1 years.

Ten out of the 16 child participants were female (62.5%), and all of the children spoke

English as their primary language. At the time of the interview, nine children were

enrolled in a JK program and seven were enrolled in a SK program.

In order to demonstrate the comparability of the participants across the two groups, Table 4 shows that for most family demographic variables, participants in the intervention and comparison were not markedly different. The majority of the descriptive patterns are the same across the two groups with the exception of the number of hours worked by the parent. That is, a greater percentage of parents in the comparison group worked 40 hours or more compared to the intervention group.

Table 3

Family demographic variables

Demographic variables	Intervention group (n=22)	Comparison group (n=16)
Parent gender		
Female	17 (77.3)	14 (87.5)
Male	5 (22.7)	2 (12.5)
Parent mean age	37.4	37.4
Marital status		
Married/common law	16 (72.7)	11 (68.8)
Divorced/separated	3 (13.6)	3 (18.8)
Single	3 (13.6)	2 (12.5)
Parent education level		
Some high school	1 (4.5)	1 (6.3)
High school diploma	4 (18.2)	1 (6.3)
Some community	1 (4.5)	1 (6.3)
Some university	3 (13.6)	2 (12.5)
Undergraduate degree	6 (27.3)	7 (43.8)
Some graduate/professional training	2 (9.1)	1 (6.3)
Graduate/professional degree	5 (22.7)	3 (18.8)
Hours worked by parent/week		
0	3 (13.6)	3 (18.8)
10	1 (4.5)	0 (00.0)
21-30	2 (9.1)	3 (18.8)
31-40	10 (45.5)	3 (18.8)
40+	6 (27.3)	7 (43.8)
Family income		
$15 000 – $39 999	3 (13.6)	2 (12.6)
$40 000 – $59 999	3 (13.6)	3 (18.8)
$60 000 – $99 999	7 (31.8)	2 (12.6)
$100 000 +	9 (40.9)	6 (37.5)
Missing data	0 (00.0)	3 (18.8)
First language spoken by family		
English	19 (86.4)	13 (81.3)
Other	3 (13.6)	3 (18.7)
Parents' country of birth		
Canada	14 (63.6)	11 (68.8)
Europe	1 (4.5)	1 (6.3)
Asia	2 (9.1)	1 (6.3)
South America	3 (13.6)	1 (6.3)
Africa	2 (9.1)	1 (6.3)
Middle East	0 (0.0)	1 (6.3)
Household composition		
Couple with children	16 (72.7)	11(68.8)
Singe parent family (mother head)	5 (22.7)	5 (31.3)
Extended family	1 (4.5)	0 (00.0)
Mean number of children in family	1.91	1.75
Birth order of the child participant		
First born	10 (50.0)	8 (53.4)
Second born	6 (30.0)	4 (26.6)
Third born	4 (20.0)	3 (20.0)

Measures

Data were collected from parent and child interviews. The parent interview involved the administration of the following five measures: (1) Family Background Form; (2) Parents' Daily Activities Protocol, (3) Parenting Daily Hassles (PDH) questionnaire, (4) Parenting Daily Hassles: Early Childhood Services (PDH: ECS) questionnaire; and (5) Parents' Social Network Interview. The child interview involved the administration of the child interview protocol that included a drawing exercise, a task that involved describing daily routines, and several questions relating to children's experience of daily activities in kindergarten and child care. A brief explanation of each measure is provided below.

Family Background Form

This measure was designed to gather information on the following areas: (1) family background; (2) child background; and (3) experience with and beliefs about early childhood services. The form contained 14 demographic items (e.g., parent gender, marital status, country of birth, language, education level, etc.), three items relating to the child's background, and six items about the parent's experience of accessing early childhood services, beliefs about the role of early childhood services in supporting child development and parents, and view on how to improve existing services. Parents in the intervention group were asked an additional question regarding their opinion of what their life would look like without integrated services. Item on the form were administered orally by the researcher and responses were recorded on the form (see Appendix B).

Parents' Daily Activities

This measure was designed to assess the type and frequency of parenting activities that parents engage in on a day-to-day basis. Parents were asked to give a detailed account of the tasks that they engaged in during the previous day, in a sequential manner, starting from the time they woke up to the time they fell asleep. If the previous day did not represent a typical day for the parent, he/she was asked to select another recent day to describe to the researcher. The interviewer recorded each task described by the parent as well as any other related comments made by the parent (see Appendix C).

Parenting Daily Hassles (PDH; Crnic & Greenberg, 1990)

This 20-item questionnaire developed by Crnic & Greenberg (1990) is a measure that assesses general everyday stress experienced by parents. The questionnaire consisted of items related to typical duties or tasks normally associated with parenting (e.g., "difficulties getting kids ready for outings on time"), as well as concerns related to children's challenging behaviour (e.g., "being nagged, whined at, or complained to"). Two summary scores are computed from this measure: the frequency of parenting hassles, and the perceived intensity of parenting hassles. The frequency score reflects the presence of the stressors, while the intensity score represents an index of appraised level of stress.

Parenting Daily Hassles – Early childhood services (PDH-ECS)

This 22 item questionnaire was designed to assess everyday parenting stress related specifically to interactions that take place within the context of early childhood services. This measure contained items normally associated with having a child/ren in kindergarten and day care (e.g., "I have a hard time getting my child ready for

kindergarten"). Similarly to the PHD, parents were asked to rate both the frequency and intensity of each of the hassles. The items for the measure were developed by the principal investigator based on a focus group held with several parents with young children in kindergarten and day care (see Appendix D).

Parents' Social Network Interview

This measure was adapted from the Social Networks Interview (SNI; Cochran, Larner, Riley, Gunnarsson, & Henderson, 1990) which is a semi-structured interview designed to map, describe and analyze the personal network of parents with young children. In the first part of the interview, the researcher led the parent through a series of direct questions to elicit a network membership list. When the list of names was complete, the researcher recorded information about the social sector in which the network member belonged to (e.g., neighbour, relative, friend, child's school and child care, community, work, etc.), as well as the length of the relationship. A checklist procedure was then employed to determine which network members engaged in the following types of social exchange: (1) emotional support, (2) practical support, (3) informational support, and (4) social activities. Finally, parents were asked to name the individuals on their membership list who were especially important to them. No limit was placed on the number of members who were identified (see Appendix E).

Child Interview

This semi-structured interview, adapted from the child interview used in previous research (Corter et al., 2006), was designed to assess the child's perspective on his/her daily activities. First, the child was asked to draw a picture about their day (e.g., "I am interested in what children think about their day here. I would like you to draw me your

very best picture about what you think is important here. Take your time and do a good job"). This task was partly aimed to help the child adjust to the interview process and feel comfortable with the researcher. Following the completion of the drawing, the child was asked to describe the picture to the researcher. The second task involved asking the child to describe his/her day (e.g., "I want to know more about your day here. Tell me about your day here from the time you leave your home until you go home"). If necessary, prompts were given to encourage the child to continue describing the routines (e.g., what happens next?). Finally, during the last portion of the interview, the child was asked to answer questions about aspects of his/her daily activities (e.g., "What things do you like best?" "What things don't you like?"). All responses given by the child were recorded verbatim, by the researchers, on the child interview form. The instructions on the two interview forms (i.e., Child Interview Form – TFD Group and Child Interview Form – Comparison Group) varied slightly to capture the entire day for both groups of children (see Appendix F).

<div align="center">***Procedure***</div>

Recruitment and Consent

Administrative consent was obtained from the TDSB to have the study conducted within schools of that board. Principals, as well as child care centre supervisors were contacted to seek permission to solicit parent participation (see Appendix G). Letters describing the study were distributed to kindergarten teachers and early childhood education (ECE) staff, and individual or group meetings were held when necessary to answer questions (see Appendix H). Teachers and/or ECE staff were asked to send packages containing the Parent Information Letter and Consent Form home with children.

The Parent Information Letter described the nature of parent and child participation for the study and provided contact information whereby further questions could be addressed (see Appendix I). Parents were asked to complete the accompanying consent form, if they wished to voluntarily participate in the parent interview and also if they wished their child to participate in the child interview. Parents sent back completed forms in a sealed envelope to the kindergarten classroom or child care centre to ensure privacy. The envelopes were periodically collected from the teachers or ECEs, and parents were contacted by phone to schedule the parent and/or child interviews.

Data Collection

The parent and child interviews were conducted throughout the 2006/2007 school year. The parent interviews were completed in approximately one hour during a single session and typically took place either at the school or the family's home. Child interviews were primarily conducted in the kindergarten classrooms and typically completed in 25 to 30 minutes. As a token of appreciation, a donation of $5.00 was made to the school or child care centre for every family who participated in the study. Children were given a small gift (e.g., stickers) after completing the interview.

After the study was completed, the results were disseminated to participating schools and child care centres in the form of a written summary, explaining the overall and site specific findings.

Results

Early Childhood Settings

In order to capture the views of families from two types of early childhood settings (i.e., TFD integrated kindergarten and child care program and non-integrated, individually operated kindergarten and child care programs), four different kindergarten-child care sites were sampled. Two of the five Phase 1 TFD demonstration schools were chosen as sites to recruit intervention group families accessing integrated services. One school site and a child care centre were contacted to recruit comparison group families accessing separate kindergarten and child care programs.

The following section provides a description of the level of collaboration that existed between the kindergarten and child care programs at each of the sites. In order to provide a basis of comparison, The Indicators of Change Tool, developed by the TFD Research Team, was used as a framework to describe each of the sites. The First Duty Indicators of Change Tool was developed as a management tool to guide, track, and assess the progress a site made towards the integration of the programs. The tool uses a five-point scale to represent a continuum of co-existence to coordination, collaboration, and integration (Toronto First Duty Research Team, 2005).

Integration scores for the Indicators tool for sites 1 and 2 were collected in Phase 1 of the TFD project. Focus groups were held to gather input from frontline staff as well as from the site management committee members. Since it was not feasible to replicate this process for the comparison sites, information was gathered informally through direct observation and interviews with the school principal, kindergarten teacher, and the child

care supervisor. Table 4 describes each of the five levels of collaboration along a

continuum of change and provides specific examples for each level.

Table 4

The First Duty Indicators of Change Tool

Level	Overall description	Examples
Level 1: Coexistence	Programs that are located in same building or neighbourhood, but operate as separate and distinct services	• Programs located in same building or neighbourhood • Families make separate arrangements to participate
Level 2: Coordination	Separate programs share information with each other, and perhaps coordinate specific activities.	• Programs share program plans and behaviour guidance strategies
Level 3: Collaboration A	Emergence of joint activities that merge human resources, space, and/or materials to offer new program opportunities.	• New program activity based on existing resources and expertise
Level 4: Collaboration B	Expansion of joint activities and clear influence on the operation of the original partner programs,	• Common activities expanded • Partner organizations influenced by collaborative practice
Level 5: Integration	Full integration of existing & expanded programs into an integrated early learning and care program delivery system within a defined neighbourhood or community.	• Single identity • One pedagogical approach • Common program policies & practices • Core staff team • Seamless participation • Single funding envelope

Integrated Intervention Sites

Each of the two integrated school sites sampled in this study (i.e., site 1 and 2)

became pilot sites for the TFD demonstration project in 2002. Each school site

established a partnership with a community agency to bring together early education,

family support and child care into a single program. Although progress varied across the

two sites, over the course of three years (2002-2005), both sites increased in coordination

and collaboration. Figure 1 shows the average benchmark scores for the two sites at the end of the implementation phase of the TFD project in June 2005. The ratings for site 1 ranged from 4.0 to 4.5 and averaged at 4.1 across the key elements, indicating that the site achieved level 4 along the continuum of collaboration for its programs. The ratings for site 2 were slightly lower, ranging from 3.5 to 4.1 and averaging at 3.8 for all of the key elements.
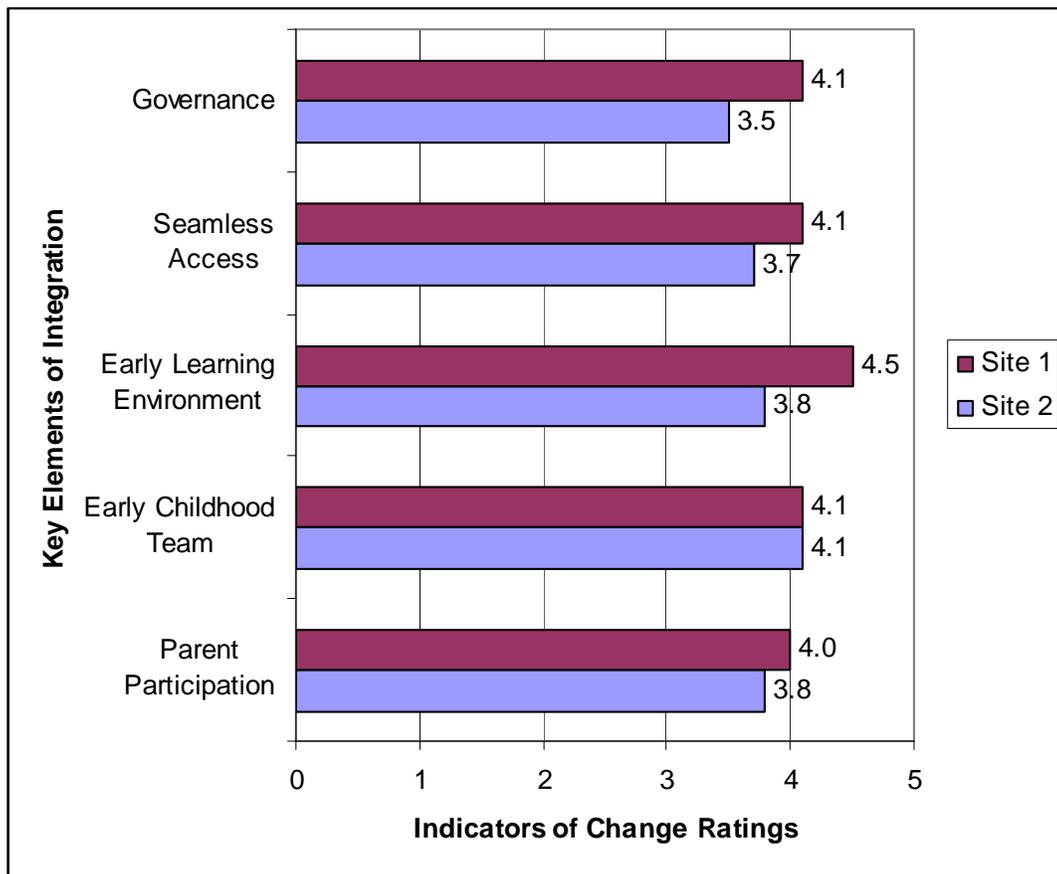
Figure 1. Average scores achieved for sites 1 and 2 as measured by the First Duty Indicators of Change Tool in June 2005.

Non-Integrated Comparison Sites

Two non-integrated kindergarten-child care sites were chosen to represent families who accessed kindergarten and child care services at separate sites. At both sites (i.e., sites 3 & 4), the level of coordination between the child care and kindergarten programs were minimal. That is, like most traditional models, child care and kindergarten programs operated separately as distinct services (i.e., level 1: coexistence). For example, policies for registration and fee structure, as well as rules for behaviour and parent participation were not consistent across child care and kindergarten programs (see Table 5). Both child care programs, however, did offer pick-up and drop-off services, which enabled parents to work without having to worry about making arrangements to transport their children half-way through the day. It is important to note that pick-up and drop-off services may not necessarily be a service offered to all families. At site 3, pick-up and drop-off services were not guaranteed for children enrolled in the afternoon kindergarten program. Consequently, several parents had to negotiate with the centre supervisor once they found out that their children were enrolled in the afternoon kindergarten program.

Table 5

Description of sites

Description	Site 1	Site 2	Site 3	Site 4
Hours of operation	IP: 7:30AM-6 PM	IP: 7AM-6PM	KP: 9AM-11:30PM 1PM-3:30PM CCP: 7AM-6PM	KP: 9AM-11:30PM 1PM-3:30PM CCP: 7AM-6PM
Age of enrolment for CCP	Preschool to Grade 2	Preschool to school age	Infant to school age	Infant to preschool age
KP-CCP transition	Children remain in the same early learning environment as classrooms are licensed for multi-use of space.	Children remain in the same early learning environment as classrooms are licensed for multi-use of space.	Children are walked over to and from the school by CCP staff. *Parents may need to negotiate with CCP depending on enrolment of children in afternoon class.	Children are walked over to and from the school by CCP staff.
Communication between KP and CCP staff	Daily communication	Daily communication	Visits to school for children starting JK.	Minimal communication (e.g., phone call regarding upcoming enrolment for KP)
Access to programs	Seamless access through single enrolment process for KP & CCP.	Separate registration process for KP & CCP.	Separate registration process for KP and CCP.	Separate registration process for KP and CCP.
Fee Structure for CCP	Full day (9-3:30) = $7.00/day Extended day (7:30AM-6PM) =$15.00/day *Subsidies available through the City of Toronto	Learning Enrichment Foundation Child Care Fees for 2006 =$40.38/day. *Subsidies available through the City of Toronto	Municipal Child Care Services Fees for 2006 = $53.00/day. *Subsidies available through the City of Toronto	Municipal Child Care Services Fees for 2006 = $53.00/day. *Subsidies available through the City of Toronto
Parent participation	Parents welcome to participate in all early childhood activities, anytime.	Parents welcome to participate in all programs.	Locked door policy for the kindergarten program.	Locked door policy for the kindergarten program.

*Note: IP = Integrated Program; KP = Kindergarten Program, CCP = Child Care Program.

Daily Hassles

Parenting Daily Hassles (PDH)

To determine whether differences existed between the intervention and comparison group for parenting daily hassles, the frequency and intensity scores for all 20 items on the PDH measure were totalled to yield overall frequency and intensity scales. The means and standard deviations for the frequency and intensity scales are provided in Table 7. For the intervention group, the frequency scale score ranged from 12 to 47 and had a mean of 30.41 (SD = 10.45), and the intensity scale score ranged from 20 to 59 and had a mean of 42.00 (SD = 11.8). For the comparison group, the frequency scale score ranged from 17 to 51 and had a mean of 31.19 (SD = 9.14), and intensity scale score ranged from 25 to 62 and had a mean of 46.50 (SD = 10.21). Independent-samples t tests (two-tailed) revealed no significant differences in the mean *frequency* or *intensity* scale scores (see Table 6 and Figure 2).

Table 6

Descriptive statistic, t test values, and Cohen's d for PDH and PDH-ECS scales

Scales	Intervention group (*n*=22)		Comparison group (*n*=16)			
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*t*	*d*
PDH						
Frequency scale	30.41	10.45	31.19	9.14	-.24	.40
Intensity scale	42.00	11.80	46.50	10.21	-1.26	.08
PDH-ECS						
Frequency scale	12.32	4.94	22.63	11.65	-3.33**	1.05
Intensity scale	34.82	6.57	47.81	12.92	-3.69**	1.13

Note: *T* test values (equal variance not assumed) reported. **$p < .01$.

These findings suggest that parents from the intervention did not experience lower levels of stress associated with daily hassles that are not specific to the early childhood context. However, a small effect size was noted for the intensity scale (Cohen, 1988); this may suggest that with a sufficiently larger sample size, a statistically meaningful difference may have been detected.

Parenting Daily Hassles – Early Childhood Services (PDH-ECS)

Group differences. To determine whether differences existed between intervention and comparison groups for daily stress constructs assessed by the PDH-ECS measure, the frequency and intensity scores for all 22 items were totalled to yield an overall frequency and intensity scales. The mean and standard deviations for the frequency and intensity scales are provided in Table 6. For the intervention group, the frequency scale score ranged from 4 to 19 and had a mean of 12.32 (*SD* = 4.94), and the intensity scale score ranged from 22 to 47 and had a mean of 34.82 (*SD* = 6.57). As for the comparison group, the frequency scale score ranged from 8 to 47 and had a mean of 22.63 (*SD* = 11.65), and the intensity scale score ranged from 28 to 70 and had a mean of 47.81 (*SD* = 12.92). Larger standard deviation scores for both the mean frequency and intensity scores suggest that there was greater variation in the ratings provided by parents in the comparison group compared to parents in the intervention group. Independent-samples *t* tests (equal variances not assumed) revealed statistically significant differences in the mean frequency scores, $t(18.99) = -3.33$, $p = .004$ (two-tailed), $d = 1.05$ and the mean intensity scores, $t(20.64) = -3.69$, $p = .001$ (two-tailed), $d = 1.13$ (see Table 6 and Figure 2). These findings suggest that compared to parents accessing traditional programs, parents who

accessed integrated services experienced fewer hassles and lower levels of stress

associated with having a young child in kindergarten and child care.
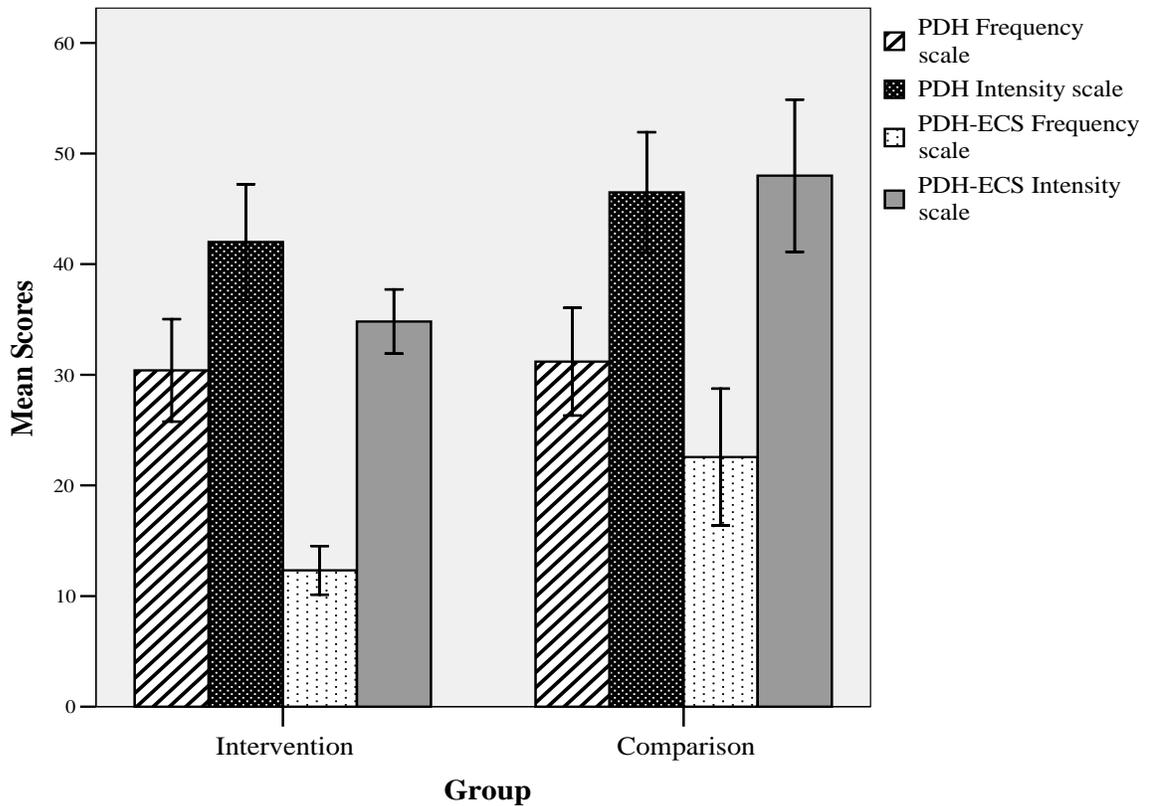
*Note: Error bars represent 95% CI.

Figure 2. Mean scores for PDH and PDH-ECS scales.

        In order to discern the nature of group differences, further analyses of both

frequency and intensity ratings were conducted for each item on the PDH-ECS measure.

Series of independent- samples *t* tests (equal variances not assumed) revealed 14

significant group differences for frequency and intensity ratings (see Appendix J). In all

cases, the intervention group had a mean frequency and intensity score that was lower

than the comparison group, suggesting that parents accessing integrated kindergarten and

child care services experienced fewer hassles and lower levels of daily stress compared to

parents accessing traditional forms of early childhood programs. Specifically, parents in the intervention group, on average, experienced fewer occurrences of hassles related to:

- picking up the child at the end of the day (item 6),

- keeping track of child's schedule (item 7),

- finding the time/energy to help the with the child's learning (item 8),

- finding a good after-school child care that is compatible with the parents' schedule (item 11),

- finding information on how to help the child learn (item 13),

- finding information on how to deal with the child's behaviour (item 14) ,

- finding opportunities to talk to other parents from the child's school (item 15),

- approaching the teacher or other people at the school to talk about the child (item 16), and

- understanding what the school expects of the parent (item 22).

Response patterns on the frequency scale showed that for many of these items, parents in the intervention group most commonly selected *Never* or *Rarely*, whereas parents from the comparison group were more likely to choose *Sometimes, A lot or Constantly.* For example, a majority of the parents in the intervention group (68.2%) indicated that they *Never* or *Rarely* as experienced difficulty finding opportunities to talk to other parents from the child's school. In contrast, a majority of the parents in the comparison group (68.8%) indicated that they *Sometimes*, *A lot* or *Constantly* experienced difficulty finding opportunities to talk to other parents.

Similarly, parents in the intervention group, on average, experienced lower levels of stress or hassles related to:

- keeping track of child's schedule (item 7),

- finding a good after-school child care that is compatible with the parents' schedule (item 11),

- approaching the teacher or other people at the school to talk about the child (item 16),

- finding information on how to deal with the child's behaviour (item 14), and

- finding information on how to help the child learn (item 13).

Response patterns for the intensity scale revealed that for many of these items, parents in the intervention group most commonly chose *level 1(No Hassle)* or *level 2,* whereas parents in the comparison group were more likely to choose levels *2 to 5 (Big Hassle).*

Parents' Daily Routines

In order to understand the impact of integration on the daily routines of parents with children in kindergarten and child care, parents were asked to describe the activities that they engaged in during the day previous to the parent interview. Parents' narratives were systematically categorized through content analysis. Content analysis is a qualitative method for compressing many words of text into fewer content categories based on explicit rules of coding (Stemler, 2001). Content analysis of parents' descriptions of their daily routine revealed several themes that held across both groups of parents.

- *Parents lead busy lives; they go through at least four major transitions during the day.* Parents start their day as early as 6:00AM and many don't finish their day until midnight. They leave home to drop off their child/ren at school or child care, commute to work, pick-up child/ren at the end of the day, and go home. The number

of transitions was greater for parents who had to run errands during the day, pick up children from different sites, or take their child to swimming lessons, soccer practice, etc.

- *Pick-up and drop-off service offered by child care programs were essential for parents to be able to work full-time.* Most parents work 5 days per week (full time) and rely on the availability of child care before and after kindergarten to juggle their family and work life. In particular, parents expressed the importance of not having to leave work to take their child to kindergarten or child care program.
    - o "If I had to pick-up my child from kindergarten at noon and take her to child care, I might as well not work in the afternoon. There is no way that I would be able to work where I work and do what I need to do. I guess I could hire a baby-sitter, but who would want to commit to doing that?" (parent from site 1).
- *Parents rely on routines to survive.* When parents were asked about the consistency of their routines throughout the week, many replied that although some aspects of their day may vary (e.g., kid's schedule for extracurricular activities), for the most part their routines remain the same from day to day.
    - o "I don't know what would happen if all of a sudden something new came up and we had to adjust to it. It took most of September and October for our family to get used to the daily schedules" (parents from site 3).
- *Parents leave major chores for the weekend.*
    - o "Weekdays are for working and making sure that children are happy at school. Weekends are reserved for 'catching up' and relaxing, if possible."

Group Differences

  Although there were more similarities than differences across groups, parents' daily routine involving contact with the kindergarten teacher differed for parents in the intervention and comparison group.

- Many parents from the intervention group (i.e., 12 out of 22 parents) indicated that they routinely spent some time on most days either to play with their child, to speak to staff or socialize with other parents at the school. In contrast, none of the parents from the comparison group indicated that they had regular contact with staff and parents at the child's school.

  o "In the morning, I walk [my daughter] and [son] to school and the three of us usually play together until it's time for my daughter to start kindergarten and for my son to go to preschool. I often have the opportunity to talk to [my daughter] or [son's] teacher during this time. There's often a gathering of teachers and parents because everyone hangs out in the playground."

  o "When I pick up [my child] at the end of the day, it usually takes a while for her to get ready. She needs to show me what she made during the day before we head home. I know I'm not the only parent doing this because I see other parents as well. When I am in the classroom, I feel welcomed. I can even drop-in without giving the teacher notice. And the room is parent friendly. I don't feel like I am crowding the space."

- A few parents from the comparison group (i.e., three out of 16 parents) indicated that they made adjustments to their work schedule to maintain regular contact with the kindergarten teacher. For most parents in this group who dropped off and picked up

their child at the child care centre, their daily routine did not enable them to speak

with their child's kindergarten teacher on a daily basis.

- o "My wife and I made a conscious decision this year to pick up our son from

    kindergarten rather than from the child care centre on Thursdays. This meant

    that I would leave work early at 3:00PM to pick up my son. Fortunately, I

    have enough flexibility at my work to be able to leave early one day a week.

    If we didn't do that, we would have no idea what was happening at

    kindergarten. I don't know that other parents do, but so far, this has been the

    only alternative."

- Overall, due to the drop-off and pick-up arrangements, parents in the comparison

    group had greater contact with staff and parents at the child care centre than at the

    school setting.

Social Support

In order to understand the role of social support networks for families with young

children, parents were asked to provide information regarding individuals they

considered to be important in their daily life as a parent.

Whom Do Parents Rely on for Support?

Analyses of total network size revealed no significant group differences, $t(26) =$

.655, $p = .51$, $d = .22$. For the intervention group, total network size ranged from 0 to 17

and on average parents had 8 individuals in their network ($M = 8.41$; $SD = 4.33$). For the

comparison group, total network size ranged from 2 to 15 and on average parents had 8

individuals in their network ($M = 7.56$; $SD = 3.14$). For the entire sample of parents,

relatives (33.8%), friends (32.0%) and individuals from the child's school/child care

programs (24.5%) together comprised the greatest percentage of parents' total social network. Individuals from other sectors, such as those from the neighbourhood (9.2%), community (4.6%), and work (1.7%), comprised a smaller percentage of parents' social network.

Contrary to study expectations, there was no significant group difference in the mean number of people identified from the child's school/child care programs as part of parents' social network, $t(36) = .64$, $p = .53$ (two-tailed), $d = .21$. For the intervention group, 13 out of 22 parents identified at least one person from the ECE community in their social network. The kindergarten teacher, manager of the child early learning centre, and Early Childhood Educators (ECEs) were most frequently identified by parents. For the comparison group, 10 out of 16 parents identified as least one individual from the child's school/child care programs as part of their social network. For this group, the child care centre supervisor and other fellow parents were most commonly identified. Thus, it appears that parents in the comparison group compensated for their lack of contact with the school with regular contact with staff and parents at the child care centre setting.

What Types of Support Do Parents Receive?

On average parents relied on approximately 5 to 6 people for child care related support ($M = 5.68$; $SD = 3.35$), emotional support ($M = 5.24$; $SD = 3.36$) and parenting advice ($M = 5.37$; $SD = 3.58$). In contrast, parents relied on fewer people when the parent needed to borrow materials ($M = 2.00$; $SD = 2.28$), when the child was ill ($M = 1.42$; $SD = 1.62$), and when the parent needed financial support ($M = 0.82$; $SD = 0.96$).

Whom Do Parents Rely on for Primary Support?

When asked to select a few people as their source of primary support, parents complied by identifying an average of 3 people. Most commonly, parents chose relatives and friends as their source of primary support (i.e., 19 out of 22 parents in the intervention group, and all 16 parents in the comparison group). When asked why parents had chosen the individuals as their primary support, parents consistently described individuals as being 'reliable', 'non-judgemental', and 'source of daily practical and emotional support.'

Satisfaction with Support?

In order to assess parents' perception of satisfaction with the support they received from their network members, they were asked to rate their level of satisfaction (i.e., satisfied, somewhat satisfied but could use more support, not satisfied) with the amount of support receiving for (1) parenting support, (2) personal/emotional support, and (3) overall network support. Interestingly, independent-samples *t* tests revealed significant group differences for the mean satisfaction ratings for personal/emotional support, $t(36) = -3.14$, $p = .003$ (two-tailed), $d = .93$, overall network support $t(36) = -2.91$, $p = .006$ (two-tailed), $d = .87$, but not for parenting support, $t(36) = -1.26$, $p = .22$ (two-tailed), $d = .43$. These findings suggest that the satisfaction with the amount of support parents received from their network members may be independent of the number of people they rely on for various types of support (i.e., network size). That is, despite parents in both groups reporting similar number of people in their network, on average, parents in the intervention group expressed higher levels of satisfaction with personal/emotional support and overall support they received from their social network.

Social Support and Daily Hassles

Kendall's tau-b correlation coefficients were computed among the frequency and intensity scales for the *PDH-ESC* measure and the social network satisfaction scores (i.e., satisfaction rationings for parenting, personal/emotional, and overall network support). The results of the correlational analyses, presented in Table 7, show that five out of the six correlations were statistically significant. The frequency and intensity scales of the PDH-ECS were moderately related to parents' satisfaction with personal/emotional support and satisfaction with overall support with their network. Only the frequency scale of the PDH-ESC was significantly related to parents' satisfaction with parenting support. In contrast, no significant associations were found between the frequency and intensity scales of the PDH measure and the three types of social network satisfaction scores.

Table 7

Correlations between PDH-ECS scale scores and social network satisfaction scores

	PDH-ECS	
Variable	Frequency Scale	Intensity Scale
Satisfaction with parenting support	.29*	.19
Satisfaction with personal/emotional support	.47**	.41**
Overall satisfaction with social network	.41**	.34**

Note: *p <.05 (one-tailed), ** p <.01 (one-tailed).

Parents' Views on Early Childhood Services

Thematic content analysis of parents' answers to open-ended questions in the Family Demographic Form revealed a number of qualitative differences between parents in the intervention and comparison groups.

Expectations about Early Childhood Services

Parents were asked to answer two questions that aimed to capture their views on the role of early childhood services in: (1) supporting their child's development; and (2) supporting parents. When parents from TFD sites answered these questions, it was clear that they had integrated in their mind the role of the school (i.e., kindergarten program) and the child care program into a single entity. That is, their expectations were the same for the kindergarten program and the child care program. Most frequently, parents cited supporting children's academic (68.2%) and social skill development (59.1%) as important roles that that the school and child care community should be playing. In addition, school readiness in terms of fostering independence and familiarity with school routines (27.3%) and safety (36.4%) were also important issues on parents' minds (see Appendix K).

In contrast, parents from the non-TFD sites had different expectations for the kindergarten and child care programs (see Appendix K). Fifty percent of the parents felt that academic skill development was an important area of focus for the kindergarten program, but only 12.5 percent felt that the child care program should play a role in fostering children's academic development. For several parents, the child care setting represented a place where children could enjoy a *positive and fun experience* through the provision of various *play activities* that were *safe* for children. Furthermore, compared to parents from integrated sites, a lower percentage of parents (i.e., 18.8% versus 59.1%) from the non-integrated sites felt that social-emotional development was an important area that kindergarten and child care programs should support.

In regards to the role of early childhood services in supporting parents, both groups of parents indicated that they expect regular, timely, open/honest forms of communication with staff from the kindergarten and child care programs (see Appendix L). Furthermore, additional themes that emerged from parent responses were *partnership* between families and programs, provision of *programs* for children, and provision of *information* to parents. Interestingly, parents from the non-integrated sites appeared to have fewer expectations for the child care program compared to the kindergarten program. That is, parents only identified four expectations (i.e., provide feedback on a regular basis, provide opportunity to meet other parents, provide nutritious lunch/snack program, and provide flexibility in program provision) for the child care setting versus 14 different expectations for the kindergarten program.

Life without Integrated Services?

In order to obtain qualitative data to understand the role of integration in parents' daily life, parents from the TFD sites were asked to describe what their life may look like if they did not have access to integrated early childhood programs. Table 8 shows that many parents felt that their daily life would be quite different if they no longer had access to integrated services. In particular, eight parents felt that they would likely experience higher levels of stress as a result of having to juggle more activities, changes to their daily routine, and worrying about leaving the child in care for extended periods of time and getting the child to and from the kindergarten classroom. In addition, parents voiced concern over finances, and potential impact on their work or school responsibilities. Interestingly, five parents also thought that their children would be aversely affected by the unavailability of integrated services. Specifically, parents thought that their children

would likely experience higher levels of daily stress, less continuity in their day and greater difficulty adjusting to Grade 1.

Table 8

What if no integration? Views of parents from integrated sites

Themes	Frequency
Impact on daily living for parent	
Would experience higher levels of daily stress	8
Would have to juggle more activities on a daily basis	5
Would not be able to maintain current daily routines	5
Would feel less comfortable leaving child in care for extended periods	2
Would worry constantly about getting child to and from school	5
Financial implications for family	
Would have to be on child care subsidy	1
Would have to pay significantly more for child care services	4
Impact on job/school	
Would not be able to work at all	1
Would have to reduce working hours	1
Would have to find another job	1
Would not be able to attend school	1
Changes to kindergarten and child care arrangements	
Would have to withdraw child from child care program	2
Would have to hire baby-sitter to walk child over to school and child care	2
Would lose the communication with the school	2
Would have to access child care at multiple sites	1
Impact on child	
Would experience more daily stress	5
Would experience less continuity throughout the day	5
Would experience more difficulty with transition to Grade 1	4

Children's Views about Their Day

Qualitative analysis of children's responses to questions about their daily routine revealed that, for the most part, children who accessed integrated kindergarten and child care services at the same site considered their 'morning' and 'afternoon' sessions to be synonymous rather than distinct programs. For example, children from integrated sites did not use words such as 'kindergarten' and 'daycare' to describe their day. Instead, they gave names of staff who they spent time with throughout the day, or provided the room number along with a description of activities that they engaged in (e.g., "After circle time

with Ms. X, we go downstairs to room 3 to eat lunch with the other kids"). Also, when asked whether anything was different about their morning and afternoon sessions, most children from the TFD sites responded that they do the same type of activities throughout the day.

In contrast, it was apparent that children from the non-integrated sites distinguished their time spent in kindergarten and child care. In particular, children distinguished the types of activities that they engaged in at kindergarten and daycare. For example, several children described kindergarten as a place to learn, while daycare was described as a place to play. Furthermore, daycare was described also as a place to take a rest (e.g., "I like going to daycare because we get to rest there. [Do you get tired during the day?] Yeah, because we have to do a lot and I don't go home after school like some of the other kids").

Discussion

This study explored the role of early childhood services in shaping the daily lives of parents and children who accessed integrated and non-integrated forms of kindergarten and child care programs. By employing a new measure to assess parenting daily hassles, this study aimed to demonstrate how an integrated service delivery system consisting of kindergarten, child care, and family support programs can improve the daily lives of parents. Furthermore, the relations between integration and social network support were also explored to determine whether parents viewed the school-child care community as an important source of daily support. Finally, children's views of their daily routines were assessed to explore the levels of continuity that children experience in kindergarten and child care settings.

Parenting Daily Hassles

While previous research on service integration has yielded inconsistent results with regard to the impact of integrated early childhood services on levels of parenting stress (Desimone et al., 2000; Finn-Stevenson et al., 1998; McCabe, 1995), the current study found evidence for the association between integrated services for children and lower levels of parenting daily hassles. By utilizing a newly constructed measure sensitive to the daily hassles of accessing early childhood services, the study was able to detect a significant difference in the levels of parenting daily hassles experienced by parents who accessed integrated and non-integrated services. This finding is particularly interesting in light of the non-significant results found for the Parenting Daily Hassles (PDH) measure. The PDH measure, developed by Crnic and Greenberg (1990), has been used previously to assess levels of *general* everyday parenting stress experienced by

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parents with young children. Although this measure has been useful in our understanding the contributions of normative daily hassles on the adjustment of children and families, findings from the current study suggest that the new measure, Parenting Daily Hassles – Early Childhood Services (PDH-ECS), may be better suited to assess the more direct influence of integration on the levels of daily stress experienced by parents.

Furthermore, there was evidence to suggest that parents experienced greater distress in aspects of their daily life when important parenting needs were not met by the school or child care services. Both groups of parents indicated that they expected regular and open forms of communication and access to pertinent information relevant to parenting a young child. When these processes were disrupted (e.g., parents experienced difficulty in maintaining contact with the kindergarten teacher, or accessing information on how to manage child behaviours or help the child learn), higher levels of stress were reported.

The challenges experienced by parents accessing non-integrated services are thought to be associated with several barriers inherent in the delivery of early childhood services. First, the provision of the kindergarten and child care programs in separate locations appeared to be an obvious barrier to parent-teacher communication. That is, the majority of parents accessing before- and after-school care dropped off and picked up their children from the child care centre, thereby creating the possibility that weeks or months may go on before a parent is required to be present at the school. Although several parents made special arrangements to maintain contact with the school, the majority of parents in this group had limited face-to-face contact with the kindergarten teacher. In contrast, parents accessing integrated services had greater opportunities to

interact with the school staff since they were required to pick up and drop off their children at the school site where all programs were offered.

Second, the lack of regular dialogue between the schools and the child care centres may have further contributed to parents' struggle to obtain up-to-date information about their child's progress in school. At the non-integrated sites, there was minimal communication between the schools and the child care centres. Conversely, at the integrated sites, daily communication was maintained by the school and child care staff. For example, at site 1, where a high level of integration was achieved, all members of the early childhood team (consisting of the manager, kindergarten teachers, and early childhood educators) were required to be informed of each child's progress as well as any incidents that occurred in the early learning environment. In this context, parents were able to approach any member of the team to discuss issues relating to their child without having to making special arrangements to meet with the teacher.

Third, a lack of opportunity to visit the kindergarten classroom may have been associated with parents' perceived difficulty in maintaining contact with the school. Specifically, a 'closed door' policy at the non-integrated sites required parents to make prior arrangements to visit the child's classroom. In contrast, parents at the integrated sites were encouraged to informally visit the classrooms at any point during the day. They were able to participate in activities, observe their children at play, and/or discuss pertinent issues with the early childhood team. Many parents reported that they took advantage of these opportunities to gain familiarity with the school curriculum and discuss any developmental concerns that they had about their child.

Overall, these findings suggest that elements of integration such as the proximity of programs, working relationships between teachers and ECE staff, and school policy related to parent involvement impact the ways in which parents engage with the school, and these experiences in turn impact the levels of daily hassles experienced by parents. Furthermore, it is likely that the benefits experienced by parents accessing integrated services is likely attributable to a combination of the various elements of integrated service delivery system described above, and not merely due to the co-location of the kindergarten and child care programs. The co-location of programs may increase the frequency in which parents interact with the school, but it does not necessarily guarantee that staff will communicate or work together to support the optimal development of children. Thus, the intensity or the level of integration across all aspects of the delivery of early childhood services is likely associated with parents' perceived levels of daily hassles.

Social Support and Integration

Parental social network supports have been implicated as important determinants of parenting, and evidence has accrued demonstrating the validity of this notion across population of parents (Crnic et al., 1983; Crnic & Booth, 1991). Within the context of the child's school, the ties that parents develop with teachers and other parents can help the parent gain regular access to information about the school and enhance the parent's sense of belonging to the school community. A common goal of integration is to enhance parent involvement through the removal of systemic barriers to accessing and participating in programs. It was therefore hypothesized that parents from TFD integrated sites would have greater number of social network members comprising of

individuals from the child's school community compared to those from the non-integrated sites, as a consequence of increased contact and involvement in the schools.

Contrary to study expectations, there was no significant group difference in the mean number of individuals identified from the child's school/child care programs as a part of parents' social network. However, an analysis of the individuals identified by parents revealed that there were qualitative differences in *who* parents selected as important sources of daily support. For TFD parents, teachers, early childhood educators and program coordinators were equally mentioned as important to the parents' social network. In comparison, parents from the non-integrated sites selected staff and parents from the child care centre. This is likely a result of the regular contact that these parents had with the child care setting. Unlike TFD parents who were in contact with both the kindergarten teacher and ECE staff on a daily basis, parents from the non-integrated group typically bypassed the daily interaction with school staff as they primarily dropped off *and* picked up their child from the child care centre. Consequently, for these parents, ties with child care staff may have been much stronger than ties with the child's school. These findings are consistent with the higher levels of stress reported by non-integrated parents on several items on the PDH-ECS that pertained to maintaining communication and obtaining information from the school setting. Presumably, these parents experienced greater distress due to the weak social ties that they had with the school staff. Furthermore, TFD parents were significantly more satisfied with the support they received from network members for emotional/personal support compared to parents from the non-integrated sites, suggesting that even though both groups of parents had

similar number of total network members, the quality of support that parents received have differed across the two groups.

Children's Views about Their Daily Life

The assessment of how children themselves experience their day, independent of the views of parents, is an important area of investigation that has been rarely explored in service integration studies. In the current study, qualitative analyses of children's narratives about their daily routines provided some insight as to how children perceive their extended day spent in kindergarten and child care. In particular, there were several indications to suggest that children enrolled in integrated settings experienced greater continuity in their day. For example, whereas children in non-integrated settings used vocabulary such as "kindergarten" and "daycare" to describe parts of their day, children attending integrated early childhood programs did not even acknowledge that they spent part of their day in child care. For these groups of children, their day was organized around activities and who (i.e., staff member) they spent time with in the morning or afternoon. Furthermore, several children from the non-integrated sites had clear ideas of how kindergarten was different from the child care program. Overall, these qualitative differences in children's narratives suggest that children in the integrated early childhood service setting likely perceived their day in a more integrated whole compared to children who attended separate kindergarten and child care programs.

Implications for Theory, Research, and Practice

A full understanding of the nature of parenting stress requires attention across all aspects of the construct including the various contexts that support the development of children. While previous conceptual frameworks have largely ignored the school and

community contexts, the findings of the current study indicate the need to expand the framework to include the early childhood context, and more broadly the educational and community settings, as a determinant of parenting stress. Future investigations are therefore needed to establish the empirical foundation of this framework, including the associated outcomes at the child, parent, and family levels.

Additionally, the findings of the current study suggest that evaluation studies assessing the effectiveness of service integration for children should use measures of parenting stress that are sensitive to the typical challenges associated with accessing early childhood services. The PDS-ECS measure has the potential to be an important tool for assessing an important family outcome. Further investigations are needed to establish this measure as a reliable and valid tool for assessing the levels of daily stress experienced by parents as a result of the challenges associated with accessing early childhood programs.

Finally, the current study has the potential to influence existing practice and policy in the delivery of early childhood services. Desimone, Finn-Stevenson, and Henrich (2000) argued that "[the power of evaluation] is in its ability to help program implementers identify the direction that they are going, how to improve their journey, and whether they have arrived" (pp.316). The findings of this study will be used to inform the school and child care practitioners of the daily challenges that children and parents experience within the existing system. At a broader level, the findings will contribute to the evidence base of the TFD study, which is currently informing the local, provincial, and national policy related to the integrated delivery of early childhood services.

Limitations and Future Directions

This study explored the relations between integrated services for children and families and outcomes for parents and children at the level of daily experiences. Although the study found preliminary evidence for the benefits of integrated services on the daily lives of parents and children, the implications of this study cannot be fully understood without considering the methodological issues inherent in the research design.

First, the inability to select random samples from the experimentally accessible population resulted in the use of a quasi-experimental design. Because this design is not as rigorous as a true experimental design, the findings could not be interpreted as a cause-effect relationship. Furthermore, the findings must be interpreted with caution as we were not able to assume, through random assignment, that the intervention and comparison groups were statistically equivalent in all characteristics (e.g., greater percentage of parents in the comparison group worked 40 hours or more compared to the intervention group). Although randomized controlled trails (RCTs) are frequently cited as the gold standard for evaluation research, it is not typically feasible or ethical to conduct such trials in service integration research. An alternative to RCTs is to conduct a quasi-experimental study that utilizes a pre- and post-intervention design in addition to a control group (Eccles, Grimshaw, Campbell, & Ramsay, 2003). While it was not feasible to apply such a design in the current study, it would be beneficial for future integration initiatives to collect baseline data at both the integration and control sites prior to implementing the service integration strategies.

Second, an additional concern related to the study involves the sample size and the characteristics associated with the families that participated in the investigation. The

obvious consequence of utilizing a small sample size is the limited generalizability of the findings. Additionally, there may have been insufficient statistical power to identify significant differences present between the groups of parents. Furthermore, the majority of the families sampled by the study were from a high socioeconomic status, and a non-minority background. Therefore, future studies need to sample a larger number of families from diverse backgrounds in order to yield findings that are representative of the general population of families accessing early childhood services in the City of Toronto.

Third, the lack of clarity of the role of service integration in influencing parents' social networks need to be further addressed in future research. Of particular interest would be a study investigating parental social support networks before and after a family is introduced to integrated services. Such a study would provide further answers to the question of whether a school-based integrated early childhood services creates a community that encourages parents to expand their sources of social support.

Fourth, although the study found significant differences between parents and children in the integrated and non-integrated groups, it is unclear how much of this effect can be attributed to the fixed structure and programs of TFD and how much is due to the particular people implementing the services at the integrated school sites. As noted by Desimone, Finn-Stevenson and Henrich (2000), the effects of service integration are, without a doubt, mediated by the characteristics of the principal, teachers, ECE staff, and the school and neighbourhood setting. Therefore, it would be beneficial to investigate the role of these variables in explaining the relations between service integration and family outcomes.

Finally, in order to capture the reality of integration efforts that exist across many early childhood contexts, a follow-up study is needed to examine the levels of parenting daily stress across a large number of school communities with a wide range of integration among early childhood services. Future studies should, therefore, assess integration strategies along a continuum rather than classifying integration as a dichotomy of integrated versus non-integrated efforts.

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Appendix A: Definition of Key Terms

Child Care centres provide developmental programming for children from as young as three-months to twelve-years of age. Licensed child care centres are regulated by ----. In Ontario, child care programs operate mostly on parent fees.

Kindergarten is offered through the publicly-funded school system and operates under provincial education legislation. Ontario provides public kindergarten to four and five-year-old children in the form of Junior Kindergarten (JK) and Senior Kindergarten (SK), respectively.

Family Support Programs are designed to complement a family's existing strengths and resources, address existing problems, and/or prevent them. Programs can be offered by small community agencies, or as part of larger child care, education, community, health, social service, or child welfare organizations.

Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) is a term is used to describe an integrated, multifunctional approach to policies and services that is inclusive of all children and parents, regardless of employment or socio-economic status. In Canada, this definition encompasses child care centres and other regulated care services whose primary focus is to allow mothers to participate in the paid labour force. It also includes kindergarten programs, nursery schools and preschools, whose primary purpose is early childhood education.

Appendix B: Family Background Form

<u>**Section A: Basic Family Demographics**</u>

1. Gender of parent? ☐ Female ☐ Male

2. Year of birth? _____ Age? _____

3. If married, or common-law, what is your partner's year of birth? _____
   Age? _____

4. (a) How many adults live at your house? _____
   (b) What relation are they to your child?
   _____

5. (a) How many children do you have? _____
   (b) Ages of the children: _____ _____ _____ _____

6. (a) What is your family's first language? _____
   (b) What is your family's second language? _____
   (c) What language do you speak at home? _____
   (d) What language does your child/do your children speak at home? _____

7. (a) What is your country of birth? _____
   (b) What is your child's country of birth? _____
   (c) How many years have you been in Canada? _____
   (d) How many years have you lived in the current neighbourhood? _____

8. What is your cultural, racial, religious or ethic origin? Please describe how you see
   yourself in any way that you feel comfortable.
   _____

9. What is the highest grade or level of education you completed? **Record the length
   of study**

   ☐ No schooling
   ☐ Some elementary school
   ☐ Some secondary/high school
   ☐ Completed secondary/high school
   ☐ Some community, technical college, CEGEP, Nurses' training
   ☐ Completed community or technical college, CEGEP, Nurses' training
   ☐ Some university
   ☐ Completed undergraduate degree
   ☐ Some graduate work/professional program
   ☐ Completed graduate degree/professional program

10. If you have a spouse or partner, what is the highest level of education that he or she has completed? **Record the length of study**

☐ No schooling
☐ Some elementary school
☐ Some secondary/high school
☐ Completed secondary/high school
☐ Some community, technical college, CEGEP, Nurses' training
☐ Completed community or technical college, CEGEP, Nurses' training
☐ Some university
☐ Completed undergraduate degree
☐ Some graduate work/professional program
☐ Completed graduate degree/professional program

11. What is your current household composition?

☐ Couple with child/ren
☐ Singe parent family (father head)
☐ Single parent family (mother head)
☐ Extended family (parent, child/ren, and other relatives)
☐ Grandparent(s) with grandchild/ren
☐ Other: _____

12. How many hours do you work per week, for pay outside of the home?

☐ 0 hours per week
☐ 10 hours per week
☐ 11-20 hours per week
☐ 21-30 hours per week
☐ 31-40 hours per week
☐ Greater than 40 hours per week

13. How many hours does your spouse/partner work, for pay outside of the home?

☐ N/A
☐ 0 hours per week
☐ 10 hours per week
☐ 11-20 hours per week
☐ 21-30 hours per week
☐ 31-40 hours per week
☐ Greater than 40 hours per week

14. What is your family's total yearly income?

☐ $15 000 or less
☐ $15 000 – $19 999
☐ $20 000 – $29 999
☐ $30 000 – $39 999
☐ $40 000 – $59 999
☐ $60 000 – $79 999
☐ $80 000 – $99 999
☐ 100 000 +

Section B: Child Background

1. If you were asked to describe your child in a few short sentences what would you say?

   _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

2. Have you had any concerns about your child's development (e.g. physical, intellectual, emotional, interpersonal, behavioural)? If so, please describe.

   _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

3. Please describe any major challenges/stressors that you have encountered as a parent while raising your child/ren.

   _____

_____

_____

_____

Section C: Experience with Early Childhood Services & Parental Beliefs

1. Please list the different types of early childhood services that you are currently using or your child/ren? For your self? For example, child care, SK or JK, parent support groups, etc. How would you describe your overall satisfaction with these services?

Services currently used for child (and siblings):

☐ Kindergarten:

    ☐ JK   ☐ AM (Specify hours):   _____
    ☐ SK   ☐ PM (Specify hours):   _____

    Satisfaction: _____

☐ Child care:

    Days of week: _____
    Hours: _____
    Location: _____
    Satisfaction: _____

☐ _____

    Description:

_____

_____

_____

    Satisfaction:

_____

☐ _____

    Description:

_____

_____

_____

Satisfaction:

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Satisfaction:

_____

☐ _____

Description:

_____

_____

_____

Satisfaction:

_____

2. Please list the different types of early childhood services that you have used in the past for your child/ren? For your self? For example: child care, JK, family literacy programs, parent support groups, etc. How would you describe your overall satisfaction with these services?

Services used in the past for child (and siblings):

☐ _____

    Description:

    _____

    _____

    _____

    Satisfaction:

    _____

☐ _____

    Description:

    _____

    _____

    _____

    Satisfaction:

    _____

☐ _____

    Description:

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Satisfaction:

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☐ _____

Description:

_____

_____

_____

Satisfaction:

_____

☐ _____

Description:

_____

_____

_____

Satisfaction:

_____

3. What role should the school and other early childhood services play in your child's development (e.g., learning, social and emotional growth, physical development)?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

4. What role should the school and other early childhood services play in supporting you as a parent?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

5. What would your day-to-day life look like if your child's school didn't offer an integrated kindergarten and child care services? **For TFD parents only**

_____

_____

_____

_____

6. What changes to the kindergarten and/or child care programs would make your life easier as a parent?

_____

_____

_____

Appendix C: Parents' Daily Activities

Protocol: *"Starting from the time you got up in the morning, please describe the tasks you engaged in **yesterday** until the time you went to bed in the evening."* If the previous day was not a typical day for the parent, asks the parent to describe another recent day that represents a typical day.

Note: If the typical day chosen to be described by parent is not the previous day, record the date of the day chosen: _____

Time	Description of Activity	Additional Info (people involved, location, etc.)

Appendix D: Parenting Daily Hassles-Early Childhood Services (PDH-ECS)

Instructions: The statements below describe events that routinely occur in families with young children. These events sometimes make life difficult. Please read each item and circle **how often** it happens to you (<u>Never, Rarely, Sometimes, A lot, or Constantly</u>), and then circle **how much of a hassle** you feel that it has been **FOR THE PAST MONTH.**

Never = 0 times in <u>last month</u> **Rarely** = 1-3 times in <u>last month</u> **Sometimes** = 1-2 times <u>per week</u> **A lot** = 3-4 times <u>per week</u> **Constantly** = 5 times <u>per week</u> (every school day)	HOW OFTEN IT HAPPENS						
	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	A lot	Constantly	NO HASSLE	BIG HASSLE
1. I have a hard time getting my child ready for school or daycare in the morning. Examples: It takes a lot of effort to get my child up from bed and dressed, to get my child to eat enough breakfast, or to make sure that my child's backpack contains all the things he/she needs for the day, etc.	1	2	3	4	5	1 2 3 4 5	
2. I have a hard time getting my child to school or daycare in the morning. Examples: Taking the bus or subway is time consuming and tedious, I have to drop off my children at multiple locations which takes a lot of time and energy, or I need to leave for work early so I have to arrange for someone else to take my child/ren to school, etc.	1	2	3	4	5	1 2 3 4 5	
3. I have a hard time leaving my child at school or daycare in the morning. Examples: My child gets upset and cries when I have to leave him/her, or I worry about how my child will get along at Kindergarten or daycare, etc.	1	2	3	4	5	1 2 3 4 5	
4. I have a hard time leaving my child in care (at school or daycare facility) beyond the regular Kindergarten hours. Examples: My child has a hard time transitioning from Kindergarten to daycare so he/she gets upset and cries when I have to leave him/her there, or I worry about how my child will get along at daycare, etc.	1	2	3	4	5	1 2 3 4 5	

5. I have a hard time coordinating after school care for my child. Example: I have to interrupt whatever I am doing in the middle of the day to get my child from Kindergarten to daycare, or vice-versa.	1	2	3	4	5	1 2 3 4 5
6. I have a hard time picking up my child at the end of the day. Examples: I have to rush from work to pick up my child/ren at daycare, or sometimes I am late picking up my child/ren because of bad traffic or because I had a lot to do at work, etc.	1	2	3	4	5	1 2 3 4 5
7. I have a hard time keeping track of my child's schedule. Example: It's hard to organize and remember where my child is going to be after school.	1	2	3	4	5	1 2 3 4 5
8. I have a hard time finding the time and energy to help my child improve his/her learning skills. Examples: I am so tired by the time I get home that it's really hard to sit down with my child to read on a regular basis, or there isn't enough time in the day to help my child with his/her numbers, etc.	1	2	3	4	5	1 2 3 4 5
9. I have a hard time dealing with my child's behavioural difficulties at school. Example: My child doesn't get along with other children in the class or has trouble making friends, and I don't know what to do to help my child, etc.	1	2	3	4	5	1 2 3 4 5
10. I have a hard time dealing with my child's learning difficulties. Example: My child seems to have trouble learning letters, and I don't know what I can do to help him/her, etc.	1	2	3	4	5	1 2 3 4 5
11. I have a hard time finding a good after school daycare program that is compatible with my schedule. Example: Most of the daycare centres in my neighbourhood close too early, etc.	1	2	3	4	5	1 2 3 4 5
12. I have a hard time finding parenting programs that meet my needs. Examples: I want to know how I can be more	1	2	3	4	5	1 2 3 4 5

effective as a parent, but I don't know where to go to find good programs, or I can't find good programs easily, etc.						
13. I have a hard time finding information on how to help my child learn. Examples: I want to know how I can help my child learn, but I don't know where to look for information or I can't find good information easily, etc.	1	2	3	4	5	1 2 3 4 5
14. I have a hard time finding information on how to deal with my child's behaviour. Examples: I want to know how I can help my child get along better with other children or help my child become a better listener, but I don't know where to look for good information, or I can't find good information easily, etc.	1	2	3	4	5	1 2 3 4 5
15. I have a hard time finding the opportunity to talk with other parents at my child's school. Example: I want to talk to other parents to see how they are dealing with certain issues, but I don't have the time to wait around because I am rushing off to another place, etc.	1	2	3	4	5	1 2 3 4 5
16. I have a hard time approaching the teacher or people at the school to talk about what's going on with my child. Example: I have some concerns that I want to discuss with my child's teacher, but I don't know when it's the best time to talk to him/her, etc.	1	2	3	4	5	1 2 3 4 5
17. I have a hard time communicating with my child's school because English isn't my first language. Example: I am not fluent in English so it's hard to approach my child's teacher to talk or it's hard to understand letters that are sent home, etc.	1	2	3	4	5	1 2 3 4 5
18. I have a hard time understanding how things work at my child's school. Examples: I don't know what I am supposed to do when my child is sick, I don't know if it's okay for my child to bring certain items/foods to school, etc.	1	2	3	4	5	1 2 3 4 5
19. I have a hard time dealing with multiple people at my child's school.	1	2	3	4	5	1 2 3 4 5

Example: It is hard to keep things straight when multiple people care for my child during the day, etc.						
20. I have a hard time staying connected with my child's teacher about day-to-day things. Example: It's hard to know what happens with my child at school because I usually don't talk my child's teacher on a regular basis, etc.	1	2	3	4	5	1 2 3 4 5
21. I have a hard time finding the time to volunteer in my child's school. Example: I would like to be able to help out with school activities like fundraising events, but I just don't have the time or energy, etc.	1	2	3	4	5	1 2 3 4 5
22. I have a hard time understanding what the school expects from me as a parent. Example: I don't know what the school expects from me in terms of helping my child learn at home, etc.	1	2	3	4	5	1 2 3 4 5

Appendix E: Parents' Social Network Interview

"This interview has to do with the people you and your child know in several areas of your life – people like your friends, neighbours, and relatives. For some of the people you mention I will be interested in what you do together, how often you see each other, how long you have known each other, and things like that. I would like to point out that the people we talk about today don't have to be always helpful or pleasant to you. You may also wish to discuss people who make things difficult or who hassle you sometimes."

"As we go along, if you have a question, please don't hesitate to ask it. Again, you should know that anything you tell me is confidential. Your name will not be used in our study."

A. Name Generation

"I want to begin by asking you to think about some people that you and your child know that are important to you in one way or another. I mean people who you might turn to for general help or advice about things like taking care of your child or where to find information. <u>These people that can be your friends, neighbours, relatives, or people that you know from your child's school (like teachers or the principal) or community organizations, or from other settings.</u>"

"I would like you to name around 10-15 people that you currently know that make a difference in your daily life as a parent. You may rely on these individuals for support and they may in return rely on you for support as well. However, you don't necessarily have to be in contact with the person frequently nor does the relationship have to be always positive."

*Record the first name of each individual on LIST A. Ask the parent how he/she knows each member (i.e., social sector: friend, relative, neighbour, people from work, child's school, child care, community organization, and others). OK to check off more than one category. Then ask how long he/she has known each individual.

B. Social Exchange

Now I would like to know a little more about the people on your list who come to you or who you go to for help and support.

"Let's start with being a parent. Starting at the top of your list, are there people that you turn to or who turn to you for baby-sitting or child care?" (CHILD CARE column)

"What if you and your child are sick? Do you turn to anyone on the list for help in times like these/ does anyone ask you for this kind of help?" (SICKNESS column)

On LIST A, check off names as parent gives them.

"Are there people on your list who you turn to or who turn to you for advice about brining up a young child --- things like what foods to buy, how to handle behavioural problems, or helping your child learn?" (ADVICE column)

"When it comes to being a parent, how do you feel about the help and support you have in this area?"

Record information below:
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

"What about when things are really financially tight? Who on the list can you turn to for help in time like this? Does anyone come to you?" (FINANCIAL column)

"Are there any people on your lit who lend you things or who you lend things to like a car or a small amount of money? What about sometimes giving you something like clothing, toys or food for the family? Or do you give anyone on the list things like that?" (BORROWING column)

"When you're upset or worried about other things do you have anyone on your list who you can talk to? If you, who?" (EMOTIONAL column)

"We've been talking about your personal and emotional needs. How do you feel about the part the people on your list play in helping you meet these needs?"

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

"Looking now at your entire list of contacts, could you tell me whether you sometimes have a hard time getting along with anyone? By this I mean that you might disagree or be in conflict with this person a fair amount of time."

What do you think causes the conflict or disagreement?

Record information below:

Contact #   Why difficulty getting along?

_____   _____
                                   _____
_____
                                   _____
_____
                                   _____
_____
                                   _____
_____
                                   _____
_____
                                   _____
_____
                                   _____
_____
                                   _____
_____
                                   _____
_____
                                   _____
_____

C. Primary Network

"When you think about your life, who would you say the "most" important people to you? By "most" important, I mean those people, for whatever reason, have the greatest effect on your life. What I'd like you to do now is tell me the names of the people who you feel are most important to you on this list."

Interview record names on LIST B.

"Could you tell me what it is about (first person mentioned for primary network) that made you choose him/her as one of your most important contacts?"

Go through each individual mentioned.

"Now that I'm finally finished asking all of my questions about the people you're in touch with, I'm interested in what you think on the whole about your "network" of contacts. In other words, how satisfied are you with the people you know and do things with?"

_____

_____

_____

Appendix F: Child Interview

Instructions for Part 1: Child Drawing

- Hand out a piece of white paper and crayons and ask/help the child to write his/her name on the paper (some children will not be able to do this).
- Ask the child to turn the paper over so that his/her name is on the back and no longer visible.
- Say: *"I am interested in what children think about their day here. I would like you to draw me your very best picture about what you think is important here. Take your time and do a good job."*
- Once the child has finished, ask him/her to describe the picture – *"Tell me about your picture."*
- Record the child's narrative (verbatim) below:

Child's narrative:

_____

_____

_____

_____

Instructions for Part 2: Daily Activities

- Put the drawing and the crayons aside and say: *"I want to know more about your day here. Tell me about your day here from the time you leave your home until you go home."*
- Probe: *"What is the first thing you do?" "And then what happens?"*
- Take particular notice of any words that the child uses to describe the program(s). Does the child call it school, day care, or the particular name of the program?
- Record the child's responses verbatim on the next page:

Child's Responses:

1._____

_____

_____

2._____

_____

_____

3. _____

_____

_____

4. _____

_____

_____

5. _____

_____

_____

6. _____

_____

_____

7. _____

_____

_____

8. _____

_____

_____

9. _____

_____

_____

10. _____

_____

_____

Instructions for Part 3: Question
After the child is finished describing his/her day, ask each of the questions listed below.
Be sure to record the responses verbatim.

1. *"What things do you like the best about your day here?"*

_____

_____

_____

_____

2. *"What things don't you like about your day here?"*

_____

_____

_____

_____

3. Depending on the child's schedule, ask the child how he/she feels about transitioning from kindergarten to child care or child care to kindergarten. Example: *"How do you feel when you have go see (use child care provider's name) after being with (use kindergarten teacher's name)'s class?*

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

4. Is daycare different from what you do at kindergarten?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

*Record any observations noted during the interview below.

Observations:

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Appendix G: Principal Information Letter and Consent Form

Dear Principal:

I am a graduate student at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education of the University of Toronto. I am conducting a research project entitled, Parents and children's perspectives on their daily life: The role that early childhood services play in parents' daily activities, perceived parenting stress, and support networks, under the supervision of Dr. Carl Corter as a Masters' Thesis. It builds on the Toronto First Duty Project, in that this study will sample parents from one of the Toronto First Duty Project sites, as well as at schools that are not part of the project. The Toronto First Duty project offers an integrated system of services for young children and their families using the school as a hub.

The purpose of this study is to investigate the views of parents on their daily responsibilities, hassles, and social support that they receive, as well the views of children about their daily kindergarten and daycare experiences. Specifically, I plan to compare two different types of school communities, namely, (1) integrated sites in which there is daycare provided on-site (Toronto First Duty Schools), and (2) sites in which there are no school-based daycare services.

The Toronto District School Board (TDSB) has given permission for this study to take place in schools within the TDSB, subject to the approval of the principal and the informed consent of all participants. I would like to request your school's participation in this study.

For the purpose of this study, we are primarily interested in interviewing **parents and children who access kindergarten and daycare services**. An information letter will be sent out to parents through the kindergarten class, and parents will be asked to return the signed or blank consent form in a sealed envelope to the school. Parents of kindergarten students (JK & SK) who choose to participate in this study will be asked to complete an interview with the student researcher, either in an unused classroom (if possible) or at their home. The interview will include questions regarding the parents' daily responsibilities/tasks that they engage in, parents' perception of daily hassles, and the types of social support that parents receive. The interview will take approximately 30 to 60 minutes to complete.

Children, whose parents give permission, AND agree to participate (through oral assent), will be asked to talk about their daily experiences and engage in a drawing exercise in a quiet area of the classroom with the student researcher. Arrangements will be made, prior to the interview, with the classroom teacher.

In addition to the parent and child interviews, participating kindergarten classes will be observed by the student researcher for the purpose of taking informal notes about the classroom environment, routines and activities. During this observational period, the individual behaviour of the children in the classroom will NOT be noted.

The name of the schools or parents and children who choose to participate will NOT be used in this study in any way. All participants will be given a number code to order to maintain anonymity. All information collected during the interviews will be kept strictly confidential and parents, children, and schools will not be identified individually. Records will be destroyed after 5 years.

There are minimal risks associated to participation in this study. Parents and children may feel fatigued during and after their participation. An attempt will be made, however, to minimize participant fatigue by allowing rest breaks between measures. Additionally, parents will be given an option to have the researcher visit their home if they are unable to come into the school to participate in the study.

The benefits of this study include that the results of this study will be sent to all parents/guardians and school Principals who participate. Additionally, a small donation of $5.00 will made to your school for each parent who participates in the study.

Your school's participation is this study is completely voluntary.

If you have any questions about the study, please feel free to contact me. Please read and sign the attached consent form and indicate whether your school wishes to be involved.

If you wish to speak to someone not associated with the study, you can contact Dean Sharpe who is an Ethics Review Officer at the University of Toronto (416-978-5855).

Thank you kindly for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Tomoko Arimura
MA Graduate Student
OISE/ University of Toronto
Phone: (416) 270-8911
E-mail: tarimura@oise.utoronto.ca

Dr. Carl Corter
Professor, Institute of Child Study
OISE/ University of Toronto
Phone: (416) 934-4502
E-mail: ccorter@oise.utoronto.ca

PRINCIPAL CONSENT FORM

I _____ consent to having my school _____
      (First, Last Name)   (Name of School)

participate in this study.

Signature: _____   Date: _____

*Principal's Telephone Number: _____

Appendix H: Early Childhood Professional Information Letter and Consent Form

Dear Early Childhood Professional:

I am a graduate student at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education of the University of Toronto. I am conducting a research project entitled, Parents' and children's perspectives on their daily life: The role that early childhood services play in parents' daily activities, perceived parenting stress, and support networks, under the supervision of Dr. Carl Corter as a Masters' Thesis. It builds on the **Toronto First Duty Project**, in that this study will sample parents from one of the Toronto First Duty Project sites, as well as at schools that are not part of the project. The Toronto First Duty project offers an integrated system of services for young children and their families using the school as a hub.

The purpose of this study is to investigate the views of parents on their daily responsibilities, hassles, and social support that they receive, as well the views of children about their daily kindergarten and daycare experiences. Specifically, I plan to compare two different types of school communities, namely, (1) integrated sites in which there is daycare provided on-site (Toronto First Duty Schools), and (2) sites in which there are no school-based daycare services.

The Toronto District School Board (TDSB) and the principal of your school have given permission for this study to take place in your school, subject to the informed consent of all participants. I would like to request your class's participation in this study.

For the purpose of this study, we are primarily interested in **interviewing parents and children who access kindergarten AND daycare services.** In order to invite parents and children to participate in the study, we would like to send out an informational letter to all parents and ask them to fill out a form that indicates whether they choose to participate and/or give permission for their child to participate. Parents will then bring back the completed form in a sealed envelope to your classroom. The student researcher will periodically come to the school to pick up the envelopes.

Parents of kindergarten students (JK & SK) who choose to participate in this study will be asked to complete an interview with the student researcher, either in an unused classroom (if possible) or at their home. The interview will include questions regarding the parents' daily responsibilities/tasks that they engage in, parents' perception of daily hassles, and the types of social support that parents receive. The interview will take approximately 30 minutes to one hour to complete.

If parents give permission for their child to participate and the child agrees to participate (through oral assent), the student researcher will contact you to setup an appropriate time to come to the classroom to interview the child. The interview will take about 30 minutes and the child will be asked to talk about his/her experiences in Kindergarten and daycare.

We are hoping to interview at least 25 parents and children at your school. In addition to the parent and child interviews, participating kindergarten classes will be observed by the student researcher for the purpose of taking informal notes about the classroom environment, routines and activities. During this observational period, the individual behaviour of the children in the classroom will NOT be noted.

The name of the schools or parents and children who choose to participate will NOT be used in this study in any way. All participants will be given a number code to order to maintain anonymity. All information collected during the interviews will be kept strictly confidential and parents, children, and schools will not be identified individually. Records will be destroyed after 5 years.

There are minimal risks associated to participation in this study. Parents and children may feel fatigued during and after their participation. An attempt will be made, however, to minimize participant fatigue by allowing rest breaks between measures. Additionally, parents will be given an option to have the researcher visit their home if they are unable to come into the school to participate in the study.

The benefits of this study include that the results of this study will be sent to all parents/guardians and school Principals who participate. Additionally, a small donation of $5.00 will made to your school for each parent who participates in the study.

Your class's participation is this study is completely voluntary.

If you have any questions about the study, please feel free to contact me. Please read and sign the attached consent form and indicate whether your class wishes to be involved.

If you wish to speak to someone not associated with the study, you can contact Dean Sharpe who is an Ethics Review Officer at the University of Toronto (416-978-5855).

Thank you kindly for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Tomoko Arimura
Graduate Student
OISE/ University of Toronto
Phone: (416) 270-8911
E-mail: tarimura@oise.utoronto.ca

Dr. Carl Corter
Professor, Institute of Child Study
OISE/ University of Toronto
Phone: (416) 934-4502
E-mail: ccorter@oise.utoronto.ca

<u>EARLY CHILDHOOD PROFESSIONAL</u>
<u>CONSENT FORM</u>

I _____ , a _____at the

_____consent to having my Kindergarten students participate in this study.

Signature: _____   Date: _____

<u>Contact Information:</u>
- Telephone Number: _____
- E-mail: _____

Appendix I: Parent Information Letter and Consent Form

Dear Parent/Guardian:

I am a graduate student at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education of the University of Toronto. I am conducting a research project entitled, Parents' and children's perspectives on their daily life: The role that early childhood services play in parents' daily activities, perceived parenting stress, and support networks, under the supervision of Dr. Carl Corter as a Masters' Thesis. This study is part of the **Toronto First Duty Project.**

In this study, I will be looking at parents'/guardians' daily experiences as well as children's perspectives on their daily activities. I am interested in interviewing **families taking part in the kindergarten program AND a daycare program.** The purpose of this letter is to ask if you will agree to participate in an interview, and to ask if you will agree to have your child take part in the study.

If you agree to take part in this study, you will be asked to participate in an interview that will involve talking about your daily responsibilities and daily parenting hassles, and answering questions about people who provide you with support. With permission, the interview will be audio-taped to ensure accurate record keeping. The interview will take about 30-60 minutes to complete and will be conducted at a time that is convenient for you. The interview will take place in a quiet classroom at your child's school or at your home. If you do agree to take part in the study, I will call you to arrange a time for the interview.

If you give permission for your child to take part in this study, a female graduate student will visit your child's classroom during a time when it will not disrupt the Kindergarten program. She will invite your child to a quiet area of the classroom or to a nearby room to talk about school experiences. For example, your child will be asked about daily routines s/he engages in at the school. The interviewer will make notes about what your child does and says. These questions and activities would take from about half an hour of your child's time. Your child will be free to end the interview at any time.

The Toronto District School Board has given permission for this study to be carried out in your child's school. The school principal has also approved the study. However, whether you participate or not is entirely up to you.

You don't have to agree to take part in this study. If you say no, it won't affect how you or your child are treated in the programs at school. If you say yes, you can change your mind. You and your child can stop taking part at any time. If you say yes, it won't benefit you or your child directly. However, the results of this study will be sent to all parents/guardians who participate. In addition, a small donation of $5.00 will be made to the school as a token of our appreciation for your participation.

If you do take part, your name and your child's name will NOT be used in this study in any way. The information from the interviews will be kept strictly confidential and parents and children will not be identified individually. All data that are collected will be number coded, and will be linked to you and your child only by this number. To further assure confidentiality, the consent form, once signed, will be kept separate from all data that are collected. The study data will be kept in a locked filing cabinet in our research office, and will be accessible only to the researchers named below. Records will be destroyed after 5 years.

The results of the study will be written up for the purpose of a MA Thesis. As part of the research process, the results of the study will also be written up and submitted for publication in a professional journal.

If you agree to take part or if you agree for your child to take part, please read and sign the attached consent form. Please return all materials except this letter and the consent form marked "KEEP THIS COPY." Even if you don't want you or your child to participate, we would like to get the blank forms back. Please place the papers in the envelope provided and seal it. Then return the envelope to the classroom as soon a possible. These forms will be collected by the researcher. None of the teachers or other staff members will know what you decided.

Thank you kindly for considering this request. If you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to contact either Tomoko Arimura, principal investigator (416-270-8911) or Dr. Carl Corter, thesis supervisor (416-934-4502).

If you wish to speak to someone not associated with this project, you can contact Dean Sharpe who is an Ethics Review Officer at the University of Toronto (416-978-5855).

Sincerely,

Tomoko Arimura
Graduate Student
OISE/University of Toronto
(416) 270-8911

Dr. Carl Corter
Professor, Institute of Child Study
OISE/University of Toronto
(416) 934-4502

CONSENT FOR PARTICIPATION

I have read the attached information about the study by Tomoko Arimura and Dr. Carl Corter carried out at your child's school. I understand that nothing bad will happen if I don't agree for me or my child to take part. I also understand that I can agree for one of us to take part and not the other.

I understand that if **I** take part:

- I will be asked to talk about daily tasks, and answer questions about everyday parenting hassles and about people who provide me with support. If I don't agree to take part in the study, nothing bad will happen to me or my child.
- The interview will be audio-taped if I give permission. I don't have to give permission if I don't want to.
- The interview will take place either at the school or my home and will take about 30 minutes to one hour to complete. I understand that I can stop taking part at any time and nothing bad will happen. I don't have to answer every question.
- The student researcher (Tomoko Arimura) will contact me by phone to arrange a time, at my convenience, for the interview.
- Records from the study will be kept confidential in locked files. Only the student researcher (Tomoko Arimura) and her supervisor (Dr. Carl Corter) will see my records. My name will be removed from all records. Records will be destroyed after 5 years.
- After the study is finished, I will have the summary of the research results sent to my home by mail.

☐ Yes, I agree to take part in the study.

Name: _____   Signature: _____

Date: _____   Phone Number: _____

I can be reached at this number during these hours:

_____
_____
_____
_____

Please indicate the time and day(s) of the week when the researcher will be able to reach you on the phone.

I understand that if **my child** takes part:

- My child will be approached by the classroom teacher if he/she wants to talk to an interview asked to talk to an interviewer in a quiet area of the classroom or in a nearby room.
- The interviewer will ask my child to draw a picture and talk about kindergarten and daycare experiences.
- The interview will take no more than half an hour.
- My child doesn't have to take part if he/she doesn't want to. I understand that my child can stop taking part at any time and nothing bad will happen.
- Records from the study will be kept confidential in locked files. Only the student researcher (Tomoko Arimura) and her supervisor (Dr. Carl Corter) will see my child's records. My child's name will be removed from all records. Records will be destroyed after 5 years.

☐ Yes, I agree that my child can take part in the study.

Child's Name: _____

Signature of Parent or Guardian: _____

Date: _____

Appendix J: *T* test Values that Yielded Significant Differences for PDH-ECS Frequency and Intensity Ratings (*p* < .05, two-tailed)

Item	Intervention group (*n*=22)		Comparison group (*n*=16)			
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*t*	*p*
6. I have a hard time picking up by child at the end of the day.						
Frequency rating	0.77	0.69	1.44	1.03	-2.24	.034
7. I have a hard time finding the time and energy to help my child improve his/her learning skills.	0.00	0.00	0.88	0.81	-4.34	.001
Frequency rating	1.00	0.00	1.94	0.93	-4.04	.001
Intensity rating						
8. I have a hard time dealing with my child's behavioural difficulties at school.						
Frequency rating	1.45	0.80	2.13	0.72	-2.71	.011
11. I have a hard time finding a good after school child care program that is compatible with my schedule.	0.00	0.00	1.06	1.57	-2.71	.016
Frequency rating	1.14	0.47	2.38	1.59	-3.03	.008
Intensity rating						
13. I have a hard time finding information on how to help my child learn.						
Frequency rating	0.23	0.43	1.00	.97	-2.99	.007
Intensity rating	1.23	0.43	2.19	1.38	-2.70	.015
14. I have a hard time finding information on how to deal with my child's behaviour.						
Frequency rating	0.32	0.57	1.13	0.96	-3.01	.006
Intensity rating	1.32	0.57	2.13	1.20	-2.45	.022
15. I have a hard time finding the opportunity to talk with other parents at my child's school.	1.00	1.11	1.81	1.28	-3.72	.001
Frequency rating						
16. I have a hard time approaching the teacher or people at the school to talk about what's going on with my child.	0.14	0.47	1.06	1.34	-2.65	.016
Frequency rating	1.14	0.47	2.13	1.20	-3.12	.006
Intensity rating						
22. I have a hard time understanding what the school expects from me as a parent.						
Frequency rating	0.50	0.74	1.19	1.17	-2.07	.049

Note: The frequency ratings scale ranged from 0 to 4 (i.e., 0=Never, 1=Rarely, 2=Sometimes, 3=A lot, and 4=Constantly) and the intensity rating scale ranged from 1 to 5 (i.e., 1=No hassle…5=Big hassle). *T* test values (equal variances not assumed) are reported.

Appendix K: Parents' Expectations for the Role of Kindergarten and Child Care Programs in Supporting Children's Development

| | Intervention group (n=22) | | Comparison group (n=16) | | | |
| | Kindergarten & Child care | | Kindergarten | | Child care | |
Themes	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
School readiness (e.g., provide opportunities to establish familiarity with routines and foster independence)	6	27.3	1	6.3	0	0.0
Academic skills (e.g., develop skills in literacy and numeracy)	15	68.2	8	50.0	2	12.5
Social-emotional development (e.g., foster social skills, problem solving skills, and self-esteem)	13	59.1	3	18.8	1	6.3
Safety (e.g., provide safe learning and play environment, adequate supervision, and sense of community for children)	8	36.4	4	25.0	4	25.0
Nutrition (e.g., provide nutritious snack and lunch program to promote healthy development and support parents)	1	4.5	0	0.0	1	6.3
Physical development (e.g., promote healthy physical development by providing range of athletic programs)	3	13.6	2	12.5	2	12.5
After-school activities (e.g., provide a variety of activities such as homework clubs, arts and crafts, athletic activities)	2	9.1	1	6.3	0	0.0
Social events (e.g., provide activities to involve parents in school activities)	1	4.5	0	0.0	0	0.0
Balanced learning approach (e.g., conceptual and rote learning, academic and athletics/arts)	2	9.1	3	18.8	0	0.0
Diversity (e.g., foster learning of diversity issues)	2	9.1	0	0.0	1	6.3
Partnership (e.g., school/child care initiates learning process; parents then follow-up on learning at home)	2	9.1	3	18.8	1	6.3
Integrated programming (e.g., support transitions throughout day, transitions to Grade 1, and holistic development of child)	3	13.6	0	0.0	0	0.0
Play (e.g., provision of play activities to foster learning in various areas)	0	0.0	0	0.0	4	25.0
Flexible programming (e.g., programming should take into account learning needs of child)	0	0.0	1	6.3	0	0.0
Positive and fun experience (e.g., should be a place where children can have a positive and fun experience)	3	13.6	0	0.0	3	18.8

Appendix L: Parents' Expectations for the Role of Early Childhood Services in Supporting Parents

| | Intervention group (n=22) | | Comparison group (n=16) | | | |
| | Kindergarten & Child care | | Kindergarten | | Child care | |
Themes	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Communication						
Provide feedback on a regular basis	8	36.4	7	43.8	3	18.9
Provide feedback that is timely	6	27.3	3	18.9	0	0.0
Provide feedback that is open/honest	9	41.0	2	12.5	0	0.0
Provide feedback that is proactive	1	4.5	0	0.0	0	0.0
Provide feedback on strengths AND needs	1	4.5	0	0.0	0	0.0
Provide a single channel of communication	3	13.6	1	6.3	0	0.0
Provide translation services	0	0.0	1	6.3	0	0.0
Partnership						
Promote a sense of community	4	18.2	2	12.5	0	0.0
Enable parents to work/go to school	3	13.6	1	6.3	0	0.0
Encourage parent involvement	1	4.5	3	18.9	0	0.0
Provide opportunity to meet other parents	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	6.3
Programming						
Provide affordable and convenient child care program	2	9.1	0	0.0	0	0.0
Provide after-school activities	1	4.5	1	6.3	0	0.0
Provide nutritious lunch/snack program	1	4.5	0	0.0	1	6.3
Provide consistent programs across age groups	1	4.5	0	0.0	0	0.0
Provide programs during the summer	1	4.5	0	0.0	0	0.0
Provide high-quality of care	2	9.1	1	6.3	0	0.0
Provide flexibility in how programs are provided	1	4.5	1	6.3	1	6.3
Information						
Provide information on community programs	1	4.5	0	0.0	0	0.0
Provide information on what children are learning	6	27.3	2	12.5	0	0.0
Provide workshops on child development related topics	2	9.1	1	6.3	0	0.0
Provide information on behaviour management strategies	1	4.5	2	12.5	0	0.0