



Banff International Conference on Behavioural Science -- Overview of Policy Implications

March 19, 2003
Closing Plenary Session



Policy implications

- **What have we learned?**
 - To reinforce Canadian policy directions
 - To challenge Canadian policy directions
- **What don't we know?**
- **Advice on how to advance the ECD agenda**

Support for Canadian policy directions

- **ECD interventions work:**
 - effective models of home visiting, parent training, child care, comprehensive community-based services identified
 - significant long-term return on investment
- **The quality of interventions matters**



Challenges

- **ECD interventions should be evidence-based**
- **Need for continuous adaptation in program design and delivery**
- **Canada lags in provision of early childhood care and education**
 - **Quality of preschool programs too low**
 - **Insufficient focus on preschool curriculum**

What don't we know about "best practices"?

- **Program design issues**
- **Long-term program impacts on education, labour market outcomes**
- **Returns on universal interventions**

What don't we know about the best policy mix?

- **Best ECD mix for children from birth to 3**
- **Best mix of ECD and other interventions, e.g., poverty reduction measures**
 - **Role of broader social context**



Advancing the ECD Agenda

- **Dissemination of best practices**
- **Knowledge translation**
- **Integrated decision-making structures**
- **Private sector support**
- **Alignment of the stars**