Institut
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Québec

I AM, 'LL BE
THE SURVEY ON THE
FUTURE OF A GENERATION

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FACT SHEET

03

SUCCESS STARTS IN GRADE 1

1 CONTEXT

Strong associations have been observed between children's readiness for school and their future academic performance and social adjustment. Indeed, children who are less prepared at their entry into school are more likely to present academic difficulties, behavioural problems, and/or social maladjustment.

SOURCE

This fact sheet is a brief summary of the results presented in the following fascicle: LEMELIN, Jean-Pascal, and Michel BOIVIN (2007). "Success starts in grade 1: The importance of school readiness," *Québec Longitudinal Study of Child Development (QLSCD 1998-2010) – From Birth to 7 years of Age*, Institut de la statistique du Québec, Vol. 4, Fascicle 2.
http://www.iamillbe.stat.gouv.qc.ca/pdf/publications/feuillet/Fasc2Vol4_an.pdf

2 HIGHLIGHTS

The results of two measurement instruments used to assess child development at the end of kindergarten showed that boys entering Grade 1 were less ready than girls in terms of responding to the demands and expectations of the education system.

The fact that children from disadvantaged families presented lower academic performance in Grade 1 can be largely explained by the fact that they were less prepared to face the demands of school in kindergarten.

The level of school readiness also varied with socioeconomic status. For example, children from low-income families scored lower in general than their peers in the Lollipop Test and in the five domains of development assessed using the Early Development Instrument (EDI), namely:

- Physical health and well-being
- Social competence
- Emotional maturity
- Language and cognitive development
- Communication skills and general knowledge.

The socioeconomic status of the child and the results obtained in the following three domains of child development contributed to predicting academic performance in Grade 1:

- Language and cognitive development (the strongest predictor)
- Communication skills and general knowledge
- Physical health and well-being.

Note that the QLSCD has been following a cohort of children who were born in Québec in 1997-1998.

3 DEFINITIONS AND MEASUREMENT INSTRUMENT

Early Development Instrument (EDI)

The EDI was developed for teachers to assess children's readiness for school.
It assesses five domains:

- **Physical health and well-being** – General physical development, motor skills, diet and dress, cleanliness, punctuality, alertness.
- **Social competence** – Social skills; self-confidence; sense of responsibility; respect for peers, adults, rules and routines; work habits and autonomy; curiosity.
- **Emotional maturity** – Pro-social behaviour and helpful to others (voluntary intention to help others), fear and anxiety, aggressive behaviour, hyperactivity and inattention, expression of emotions.
- **Language and cognitive development** – Interest in and skills in reading, writing and mathematics; competencies in language.
- **Communication skills and general knowledge** – Ability to communicate and be understood, ability to understand others, clear articulation, general knowledge.

Lollipop Test

This test administered to the children, comprising four subtests, assessed:

1. Identification of colours and shapes, and copying shapes.
2. Spatial recognition.
3. Identification of numbers, and counting.
4. Identification of letters, and writing.

To learn more about the QLSCD and access the other fact sheets in the kit, visit our website at

www.iamillbe.
stat.gouv.qc.ca

INTERVENTION PATHS

These results indicate the importance of early intervention to foster the development of skills needed for academic success, particularly among children from disadvantaged families. Cognitive development and language skills can be fostered by interventions designed to improve the quality of parent-child interactions and pre-school daycares.