TLC3 Vancouver Project Final Report

CONNECTIONS

June 2003

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Forward

In the fall of 1996, I received a call from Dr. Freda Martin, Director of the Hincks-Dellcrest Institute in Toronto. Freda asked if I would participate in establishing a site in BC as part of TLC3, a national project funded by the Lawson Foundation focusing on language and cognitive development in very young children. That phone call marked the beginning of one of the richest and most meaningful experiences of my career. It led us to developing Connections described in great detail in this excellent report authored by Sue Formosa, Director of Connections, the TLC3 Vancouver Project. Connections in turn enabled us to provide Parent Child Mother Goose training to over a thousand people throughout BC. Parent Child Mother Goose programs are now well established in hundreds of settings across this Province. This report documents the development and operation of Connections and describes the benefits to parents and infants and young children who participated in this community program. In addition to Parent Child Mother Goose, Connections also provided early screening and referral for children with language or other delay leading to early intervention and improved outcomes for many children and their families.

On behalf of parents and children who participated in Connections or attended Parent Child Mother Goose in other settings, I would like to thank Dr. Freda Martin, her staff and the Lawson Foundation for their trust in us and for their enthusiastic and skilled support for our work here. I thank the National Advisory Council to TLC3 for their expert council and the staff in the other six sites who shared their successes and challenges with us through annual symposiums. Our achievements in BC which are considerable are a result of a collective spirit here and across the country, and although individual effort was always high it is our combined talents that really made this initiative so very successful.

In closing, I would also like to gratefully acknowledge the contributions of others who played important roles in our collective. These are listed under Acknowledgements on the following page.

Yours sincerely,

Dana Brynelsen, Provincial Advisor, Infant Development Programs of BC
Chair, Advisory Committee to Connections

Acknowledgements

Parents of infants and young children who sat on our Advisory Committee to Connections and provided wise guidance to our efforts.

Michelle Droettboom and Sue Formosa, Connections Coordinators

Our incredible Parent-Child Mother Goose Leaders

Our faithful, thoughtful Advisory Committee members and with particular thanks to Dana Brynelsen as Chair.

Sue Wastie, Senior Speech-Language Pathologist, and the Community Health Services Staff in Vancouver, particularly from the North and Evergreen Health Centres.

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Executive Summary

Brief Program Description

The TLC3 Vancouver Project in Vancouver was part of a seven-site, five-year national project designed to enhance language and cognitive development in the context of early relationships in children from birth to 5 years. The TLC3 Vancouver project was a partnership of the Vancouver Infant Development Program, Developmental Disabilities Association, and the Alan Cashmore Centre, Vancouver Community Mental Health Service of the Vancouver Coastal Health Authority. Staff from each of these organizations worked in partnership with staff of Kiwassa and Collingwood Neighbourhood Houses to provide the Parent-Child Mother Goose Programs and Developmental Screening for parents and infants and parents and toddlers.

The Parent-Child Mother Goose Program is a group experience for family members in a parenting role and their babies and young children focusing on the pleasure and power of using rhymes, songs and stories together. The program was offered for 30 sessions each year for five years. Families participated in the parent-infant Parent- Child Mother Goose Program until their child was two years old. In addition to the weekly session, families also took part in a Developmental Screening provided by the registered speech-language pathologists who were working for the TLC3 Vancouver Project. The developmental screening, which consisted of a number of standardized developmental assessment measures for the children was provided to families: 1) when they began in the Parent-Child Mother Goose Program, 2) when they left the program, and 3) for, 24 families, a year after they left the program.

In the last two years of the project, parents who had become trained as leaders also ran parent-toddler Parent-Child Mother Goose Programs through the TLC3 Vancouver Project. Families participated in the parent-toddler Parent-Child Mother Goose Program when their child was between two and three and a half years old.

In total, 356 Parent-Child Mother Goose Program sessions were provided to 174 families across the 5 years of the TLC3 Vancouver Project. Developmental screening was provided at least twice to 106 families.

For the first two years, the You Make the Difference program was also provided at Kiwassa Neighbourhood House as a pilot program available to families who were using the Parent-Child Mother Goose Program there. This was an eight-week program focussed on teaching families strategies for enhancing their infant's communication. The You Make The Difference program was not included in the final development of the TLC3 Vancouver Project.

The TLC3 Vancouver Project worked closely with the National Office of the Parent-Child Mother Goose Program to develop a regional office for the organization. The Infant Development Programs of BC supported the TLC3 Vancouver Project by sponsoring and coordinating training and workshops about the program through its in-service education program. Two of the leaders in the TLC3 Vancouver Project obtained training to train leaders for the Parent-Child Mother Goose Program. This training continued after the TLC3 Vancouver Project.

In the final three years of the project, "Gatherings" were offered through the TLC3 Vancouver Project twice a year to provide continuing education and support to Parent-Child Mother Goose Program leaders running programs in the lower mainland.

An Advisory Committee played a very important role in the development of the project and subsequently in the planning and implementation of the evaluation of the project. Dana Brynelsen, Provincial Advisor for the Infant Development Programs of BC was the chair of the committee which had representatives from parents, Health, Mental Health, the Neighbourhood Houses, and the TLC3 Vancouver Project.

A funding committee played a key role in obtaining the funding for sustaining the Parent-Child Mother Goose Program beyond the project and had representation from the Vancouver Public Library, Pacific Immigrant Resources Service, Family Resource Programs, parents, leaders of programs, and staff from the TLC3 Vancouver Project.

Summary of Evaluation Findings

The project was evaluated from 1999-2002. Fifty-four families (56 children) participated in the evaluation. All 54 families were involved in the pre and post program evaluation and 24 of the families were also seen for a follow-up evaluation session a year after they finished in the project. Evaluation measures were completed with the children, the parents, the staff in the project, and the administrators of the Neighbourhood Houses.

The children were measured on several different measures before they began the program, after they completed the program and one year after they left the program. These standardized measures, which assessed their development, were part of the Developmental Screening component of the program. The Communication and Symbolic Behavior Scales – Developmental Profile (CSBS-DP) (Wetherby & Prizant) was the main child measure used for the evaluation. The CSBS-DP is an easy-to-use, norm-referenced screening and evaluation tool that helps determine the communicative competence (use of eye gaze, gestures, sounds, words, understanding, and play) of children with a functional communication age between 6 months and 24 months. The CSBS-DP caregiver questionnaire and the CSBS-DP Behaviour sample were used for this evaluation. A comparison of the pre-program and post-program standard scores on the CSBS indicated that there was a significant increase in the children's standard scores from pre-test to post-test, indicating that on average their communicative competence (social, speech and symbolic domains) had improved during their participation in the program.

The children who had typical development demonstrated gains in their communication development, as well as those children who had language, developmental or social interaction challenges. The children with identified difficulties, however, attended the program longer and used additional therapy services recommended by the registered speech-language pathologists who worked in the project. The results show that the program clearly offered something for all of the children.

The parents rated the program as being very satisfactory and reported on benefits for themselves and their children. They felt their experience in the program gave them a sense of community and support and many stated that a year later they had maintained friendships with people they had met in the program. The parents reported that the program had provided their children with a positive first social experience and some parents felt it had given their children more confidence in social situations.

Parents liked some aspects of the project better than others. Within the Parent-Child Mother Goose Program, they enjoyed learning and using the songs and rhymes, however, they found the story learning was not as enjoyable. It was concluded that it was the performance anxiety associated with the solo retelling that caused the discomfort as the great majority of parents reported enjoying being told the stories by the leaders. How to teach and support the learning of storytelling continues to be an area worth exploration by the National Office of the Parent-Child Mother Goose Program.

The large majority of the parents reported that the Developmental Screening component of the program, had been a useful experience that had provided them with information about their children's development and ideas of ways to promote the next phases of communication and language development. The families who were referred for therapy services for their children (10 families) reported that the help from the leaders and registered speech-language pathologist had been supportive and useful. They all reported satisfaction with the

current interventions for their children. The Developmental Screening required little time and was very effective in identifying children and supporting families.

The staff in the project evaluated the experience of leading the Parent-Child Mother Goose Program at the end of every 10 sessions. Over the period of the evaluation of the TLC3 Vancouver Project, 9 leaders were involved in leading groups. All of the leaders indicated that being a leader in this program was very satisfying, that they had grown personally and professionally, and valued seeing the pleasure of parents supporting the growth of their children through this kind of activity. The leaders of the parent-infant Parent-Child Mother Goose Program had all assumed positions of greater responsibility in their agencies by the conclusion of the TLC3 Vancouver Project.

As an outcome of the success of the Parent-Child Mother Goose Programs 7 parents began running Parent-Toddler Mother Goose Programs. Two of these parent leaders are now running the Collingwood Neighbourhood House Parent-Child Mother Goose Program. The other parent leaders have moved on to other community activities and continue to form a community for themselves and other friends with children. Two of the child minders also received training and are running Parent-Child Mother Goose programs elsewhere in the community. Overall, nine parents became qualified as Parent-Child Mother Goose Leaders and went on to run programs.

Administrators of the Neighbourhood Houses were also interviewed at the conclusion of the project. They reported that the experience of participating in the project had been positive. They saw growth in the staff and valued the programs offered by the project. The two Houses had quite different experiences in working with the administration of the project. In one House things went very smoothly from start to finish. In the other House, the project had many growing pains and all participants learned a great deal about communication and working across different systems of administration. Both Houses were highly regarded in the community and they reported that their involvement in the TLC3 Vancouver Project confirmed their commitment to quality programs. A decision was made by both of the Houses to continue offering the Parent-Child Mother Goose Program for parents and infants and to expand the program to offer a program specifically for First Nations families as well.

Overall Impact

The result of having the TLC3 Vancouver Project in Vancouver was powerful and had impacts on many levels. Everyone connected with the overall project and the evaluation described the project as enhancing: a sense of community, a support network, pleasure and growth. These themes were seen repeatedly no matter who was being thought about – the children, the parents, the leaders, or the community.

What began as one site in east Vancouver developed into many Parent-Child Mother Goose programs all over the province. The results provided a confirmation that play with rhymes, lullabies, songs and stories was a joyful experience for parents with their young children no matter where they lived or the circumstances of their lives. No bells and whistles or special props were needed to facilitate this time together and the growth of community that came from the experience for most of the parents. What was required was skilled leaders who were sensitive to the importance of relationships, who were knowledgeable about child development and the challenges of parenting in the early years and who had a love of singing, storytelling and other play with language. Skilled leaders with sufficient time to prepare for the program, connect with families outside of the program and debrief after each session ensured that families valued this experience and saw it as a significant experience for themselves and their children.

As stated above, the child participants demonstrated growth in their social communication, symbolic and language skills. Fourteen children were referred to the Vancouver Coastal Health Authority for speech and language services or to the Vancouver Infant Development Program for support. Parents reported finding a

social network that had been sustained beyond their time together in the project. Several families referred to discovering a sense of community. Nine parents became qualified as Parent-Child Mother Goose Leaders and went on to run programs. Two child minders also completed the training and went on to run programs. The TLC3 Vancouver Project leaders all were given more managerial responsibility in their positions with their various agencies.

Over 950 people were trained as program leaders in the province of BC. Programs are now running all over the province. "Gatherings" were offered for continuing education and support to leaders. The program is known to administrators of education, social services, health, mental health, library science, infant development, and government officials.

Funding was obtained for a Provincial Coordinator of the Parent-Child Mother Goose Program as well as for two mentoring sites because of the broad knowledge of this program in the community and the high regard it had received from parents and professionals. This funding was short term. Ultimately, there is a need for government funding to ensure these programs are sustained. Administrators at the level of the municipal governments and coastal health authorities knew this was a program to promote.

The Developmental Screening was not continued subsequent to the project due to cutbacks within health care. This had been an important piece of the TLC3 Vancouver Project for most of the families and in particular for the 10 families whose children were identified and subsequently seen for therapy while they were still infants. The evaluation outcomes should be sufficient argument for the provincial government to consider the funding needed, particularly as this was not a time intensive service to provide.

This project provided many different people with an enriching, life changing experience. It impacted at the level of individual participants and at the level of systems within the city of Vancouver and the province of BC. The TLC3 Vancouver Project, like its main program, the Parent-Child Mother Goose Program, looked simple on the surface and yet had such depth that a powerful, sustained outcome had been the result.

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Introduction

TLC3 was a five-year national project developed to promote and enhance early childhood language and cognitive development. The project was funded by The Lawson Foundation and managed by The Hincks-Dellcrest Institute in Toronto. Seven sites across the country were involved in the project, each providing their own unique programs for young children and parents. This report provides a detailed description of the TLC3 project in Vancouver, including how the project was developed and details about the programs offered to the participants. The report also reflects on issues relating to collaborations, sustainability, and communication. In addition, a large part of this report focuses on the evaluation of the project and the evaluation findings. The last section of the report is a stand-alone section on the learnings gained from implementing and evaluation the project. This section includes tips on how to develop new initiatives, form successful collaborations and implement programs into a community.

Early development of the project

The TLC3 initiative in Vancouver began when Dana Brynelsen , Provincial Advisor for The Infant Development Programs of BC, was approached with the original offer of funding to provide programs for children living at risk for language and learning challenges. Dana Brynelsen invited Michelle Droettboom, a registered speech-language pathologist in private practice, to participate with IDP in developing a proposal for the TLC3 funding. Michelle had worked with IDP providing training and consultation for many years. In the process of developing the proposal, Sue Formosa, registered speech-language pathologist and Director of the Alan Cashmore Centre in Vancouver, was asked to participate. In a meeting with Dr. Freda Martin, in April 1997, the Vancouver people were asked to provide programs to families who were working class to middle class.

TLC3 had a unique structure in Vancouver. Rather than adding into existing programs, several community agencies and professionals collaborated to create places and provide staff for community based programs for families with infants and toddlers. This period of creation spanned the first year of the TLC3 Vancouver Project in Vancouver. The TLC3 Vancouver Project was named CONNECTIONS to emphasize this cross-community creation.

At the outset of the TLC3 Vancouver Project, there was a vision of supporting families to promote communication and learning for their young children. It was envisioned that we would train people working in community programs to run You Make the Difference and Parent-Child Mother Goose Programs and to move on to new settings every year to help the information spread and to share the TLC3 funding across the community. It was anticipated that the programs would be offered as universal programs initially and then be geared to special populations as we learned to use the programs. Communication and developmental screening was not conceived of as a separate program at the outset.

***The basic principles which shaped the development of CONNECTIONS were*:**

- parents are providing care for their children to the best of their abilities,
- parents are the primary teachers of their children,
- a focus on abilities and pleasure would promote strong, positive attachments for parents with their children,
- strong, positive relationships for infants with their parents make the infants available for experiencing and exploring the world,
- programs promoting sound and language play are most effective in providing infants with the underpinnings for developing strong social communication and reading skills,
- strong social communication and reading skills equip children for success in school and community learning,

- early intervention for communication and learning challenges maximizes success and minimizes behavioural sequela,
- universal programs provided where families used other community programs would be attended by the broadest range of families,
- programs embedded in the neighbourhood would be sustained more effectively than those brought in and 'laid on' and run by specialized agencies.

These basic principles led to the selection of the You Make The Difference and the Parent-Child Mother Goose Programs. The You Make the Difference Program was structured to teach and provide experience with eight strategies to promote shared communication for parents with their babies. The Parent-Child Mother Goose Program was designed to teach and provide experience with sound and language play, stories and songs to share with their infants across a range of daily life events in promoting the development of the parent-child relationship. You Make The Difference focused on specific intervention strategies for parents to use with their children. Parent-Child Mother Goose was non-directive and focused on the parent and child together. Both emphasized the parent's relationship with the child as the pivotal experience in a baby's development.

The Hanen Centre (You Make The Difference) and the National Office for The Parent-Child Mother Goose Program were contacted to ask for permission and training to use the programs. Both organizations agreed to the use of their programs and wanted input into the evaluation of TLC3 with regards to their own programs. This was agreed to by everyone involved. Michelle Droettboom, one of the TLC3 coordinators already had the training to provide You Make The Difference workshops to families. Vancouver TLC3 used some funding for Celia Lottridge, Executive Director of the National Office of Parent-Child Mother Goose Program, to come to give a Parent-Child Mother Goose Program training in Vancouver in May 1997. Michelle Droettboom, Sue Formosa, Dana Brynelsen, and three future program leaders for TLC3, Hydi Sham, Beth Hutchinson and Mary Lee Best took the training.

The decision was made that the Parent-Child Mother Goose Program would be the core program and families attending this program would be offered the You Make The Difference Program. Since You Make The Difference was a small group format, and it was felt that some families would not choose this second program. The concept of the communication and developmental screening program evolved to be offered to all families. As well, all families would be shown ways to promote their children's communication development, ensuring that any children with delays or differences would be identified early and referred to services in a timely manner.

Program evolution over the TLC3 period

The TLC3 Vancouver Project arrived in Vancouver in a time of significant changes to health and social services and in particular changes to services for families with young children. The early childhood community of professionals and parents had worked hard over a three year period to develop a change to services for children with special needs in childcare settings. The early childhood community developed a commitment to partnerships and sharing of resources. There was also a strong belief in providing services within neighbourhoods. The term used was "closer to home" (Seaton Report, 1991). There was a huge change with agencies looking at partnerships and no longer operating independently in making decisions about service provision within the agencies. Program development now always had the view of the community as a whole and input was sought from the community when new initiatives were planned by any given agency. This framework and atmosphere provided the opportunity for specialized agencies to seek a collaboration with Neighbourhood Houses.

Because of this framework and atmosphere it was felt that the programs would best be provided through Neighbourhood Houses. These were facilities located in each community within Vancouver, which provided education, support services, family resource programs, childcare, English second language training, food banks,

family kitchen and social programs for families in the neighbourhood. Use of the resources by families was completely by their choice and interests.

Hydi Sham, the coordinator of the Kiwassa Family Place, became a leader for the Kiwassa Parent-Child Mother Goose Program along with Beth Hutchinson, consultant from the Vancouver Infant Development Program, and Michelle Droettboom and Sue Formosa. The Kiwassa Parent-Child Mother Goose Program began running in September 1997. Michelle Droettboom provided You Make The Difference for Kiwassa families beginning in January 1998. Michelle and Sue provided language screening and consultation for all of the Kiwassa families who were participating in the Parent-Child Mother Goose Program. Two of Kiwassa's parent volunteers were hired to provide child minding for the programs. Dana Brynelsen formed an advisory committee of parents and community professionals in the fall of 1997 and was the chair of this committee. Sue Formosa and Michelle Droettboom were the TLC3 coordinators who oversaw the administration of the project and the budget and then the evaluation.

By the end of **Year One** (spring of 1998) the program had grown from one Parent-Child Mother Goose Program and one You Make The Difference Program in one site to TLC3 implementing communication and developmental screening for all of the families as well. In addition, the CONNECTIONS Advisory Committee was formed and training from the National Office of Parent-Child Mother Goose Program was arranged for community professionals in the lower mainland.

Also in the spring of 1998, several Neighbourhood Houses were invited to compete for the second site for the TLC3 Vancouver Project based on the composition of families in their area. In the selection of the second site, the aim was to replicate the mix of cultures and languages as well as the mix of income levels found in the Kiwassa neighbourhood. As a result of the first experience with the Vancouver Health Department connected with beginning the TLC3 programs at Kiwassa Neighbourhood House, care was taken to involve the Vancouver Health Department nurses and registered speech-language pathologists in discussion about possible sites for the second TLC3 site.

Three facilities competed and Collingwood Neighbourhood House was selected. At this second site, the TLC3 Vancouver Project was embedded into the Childcare Program. The Collingwood TLC3 Parent-Child Mother Goose program was staffed by Alison Merton, supervisor for under-three childcare at Collingwood, Mary Lee Best, senior clinician at Alan Cashmore Centre, and Sue Formosa. Sue Formosa also provided the language screening and consultation for the Collingwood families who were participating in the Collingwood Parent-Child Mother Goose Program. Collingwood's early childhood education substitutes provided the child minding for the programs. The nursing staff and registered speech-language pathologists of East Health Unit (now Evergreen Health Office/ Vancouver Community Health Services of the Vancouver Coastal Health Authority) visited the Collingwood Parent-Child Mother Goose Program, connected families with the program, and received referrals for the children in the Collingwood Parent-Child Mother Goose Program who were identified as having communication concerns.

In **Year Two**, the first site's programs continued and the programs at the second site, Collingwood Neighbourhood House, were implemented. ACCESS, a specialized program for young parents, in Vancouver, was also supported in running a You Make The Difference Program and modifying the Parent-Child Mother Goose Program. A Parent-Child Mother Goose Program and communication and developmental screening program were implemented at Collingwood Neighbourhood House. During this time the evaluation tools began to be piloted. Late in the year, the evaluation consultant was changed from a university based professional to a private consultant. The organization of training of community professionals was moved out of the TLC3 Vancouver Project and was partly organized through the Infant Development Programs of BC and was provided by trainers from the National Office of Parent-Child Mother Goose Program. The CONNECTIONS Advisory Committee now had two parent representatives on a committee of nine people. "Gatherings" were begun for leaders of Parent-Child Mother Goose Programs in the Lower Mainland. Fifteen Parent-Child Mother Goose

Programs were implemented within Vancouver and the Lower Mainland by the end of the second year of the project. Twenty-two other programs were opened in other communities in BC.

In **Year Three**, the two sites in the Neighbourhood Houses ran Parent-Child Mother Goose Programs and communication and developmental screening was offered to all families. The You Make The Difference Program was not offered as not enough parents were able to take two days to attend programs within the TLC3 Vancouver Project. The staff working in the Kiwassa Parent-Child Mother Goose Program provided training and mentoring for a group of 5 parents to begin a Parent-Child Mother Goose Program for toddlers. TLC3 provided funding for honoraria and snacks for this program in the spring of 2000. The evaluation began this year. Training for the Parent-Child Mother Goose Program continued to be provided through the National Office and led by Michelle Droettboom and Beth Hutchinson. Two "Gatherings" were offered for continuing education and support to leaders in BC. By the third year, community professionals and administrators who were not directly involved with the provision of Parent-Child Mother Goose Programs knew about the program, approved funding for training their staff, and developed cross agency collaborations to develop and provide programs. A most striking example was the community of Grand Forks in which 4 community agencies collaborated to train community professionals and implement Parent-Child Mother Goose Programs.
The Vancouver Libraries funded training for all of the child librarians and hired Jane Cobb, one of the librarians as the Parent-Child Mother Goose coordinator for the library community partnership programs. Jane worked closely with the TLC3 staff in seeking continued funding for these programs in BC.

In **Year Four**, Michelle Droettboom moved and had to leave the TLC3 Vancouver Project, though she continued to offer consultation to the project. Sue Formosa became the solo coordinator. Beth Hutchinson took on some additional coordination responsibilities from the fall of 2000 and by the spring of 2002 was sharing the coordination with Sue. A registered speech-language pathologist was added from Community Health Services of Vancouver/Richmond Health Board (now Vancouver Coastal Health Authority) to work in the Kiwassa program in Michelle's place. She worked in the program for 5 months but did not continue further. The parent-infant Parent-Child Mother Goose Programs were continued in each site as was the communication and developmental screening. Parent-toddler Parent-Child Mother Goose Programs were added to each of the sites. These programs were run by parents who had been participants and then had completed the training to be leaders. The design of the evaluation was completed for the one year follow-up.

The TLC3 Vancouver Project Advisory Committee remained active in giving direction and feedback to the evaluation process, in pursuit of funding, and in setting policy for handling waiting lists. Beth Hutchinson became the contact for Parent-Child Mother Goose Program information and organized two "Gatherings" and a community meeting to develop a long term plan for Parent-Child Mother Goose Programs in BC. A funding committee was struck, comprised of administrators and leaders of Parent-Child Mother Goose Programs in Vancouver and chaired by Sue Formosa.

In **Year Five**, each site continued to have parent-infant and parent-toddler Parent-Child Mother Goose Programs, and communication and developmental screening. The data gathered for the evaluation was completed in July 2002. There were 55 families in the evaluation. Of these families, 24 had had a one year follow-up consultation as well. Two "Gatherings" were offered. Funding was obtained for Provincial Coordination of Parent-Child Mother Goose Programs in BC. In May 2002, BC Council for Families took over the sponsorship of Parent-Child Mother Goose Programs in BC in collaboration with the National Office of Parent-Child Mother Goose Program. Beth Hutchinson was hired as the first provincial coordinator for the Parent-Child Mother Goose Programs and the two TLC3 sites were contracted with to run their Parent-Child Mother Goose Programs as mentoring sites for other programs running in the Lower Mainland.

The original four agencies remained involved. Greater Vancouver Mental Health Services moved first under the direction of Vancouver/Richmond Health Board and then was incorporated into the Vancouver Coastal Health Authority as Vancouver Community Mental Health Service.

In the 2002 winter session of the programs, Mary Lee Best and Beth Hutchinson began to take secondary roles as leaders in preparation for leaving the programs in the spring of 2002 as the TLC3 Vancouver Project completed. The size of the programs was reduced in anticipation of only having two leaders to run the programs beginning in the spring 2002 session. During the spring 2002 session, the parent-infant Parent-Child Mother Goose Programs were run by two leaders both hired by the Houses and 12-15 families attended.

Communication and developmental screening was offered throughout the five years of the TLC3 Vancouver Project for families attending the parent-infant Parent-Child Mother Goose Program. Parents used these opportunities to ask about communication concerns, behavioural challenges, eating and sleeping concerns, conflicts in styles of parenting, worries about returning to work and finding and funding child care. Referrals were facilitated to Vancouver Infant Development Program, Alan Cashmore Centre, Family Resource Programs, Vancouver Community Health's community health nurses and registered speech-language pathologists, financial assistance, child care centres, and community programs. Three families lived in Burnaby and were referred to the Burnaby Speech and Language Clinic. Only three families did not elect to use this service over the five years of the TLC3 Vancouver Project. Families reported that they found this a big support and gave them confidence to address concerns early. They also reported being much more aware of their children's communication development.

The CONNECTIONS advisory committee ran throughout the five years of the TLC3 Vancouver Project with Dana Brynelsen as the chair. In the final two years, we had parent representatives (Rhiannon Morgan and Della Lee) and representatives from Vancouver Community Health of Vancouver Coastal Health Authority (Heather Arthur), Kiwassa Neighbourhood House (Nancy McRitchie), Collingwood Neighbourhood House (Kimberlee Gillis and Alison Merton). The evaluation consultant for the TLC3 Vancouver Project, attended these meetings in 2000-01 while the evaluation components were still being designed and finalized.

Partnerships that enhanced the project throughout the project

The collaboration of two specialized agencies (Infant Development Programs of BC and Alan Cashmore Centre) with community agencies that focused on services for all families (Kiwassa Neighbourhood House, Collingwood Neighbourhood House and Community Health Services of Vancouver Coastal Health Authority) was central to the success of the TLC3 Vancouver Project in Vancouver.

Other significant relationships were formed through the "Gatherings". The Aboriginal Friendship Centre, Sheway, Building Blocks, Vancouver Public Libraries, Family Resource Programs, and Pacific Immigrant Resources Service all had important connections to the TLC3 Vancouver Project through this route.

Dr. Clyde Hertzman, medical epidemiologist at UBC, became an important support for the TLC3 Vancouver Project through his inclusion of the project in presentations on best practices that he gave to administrators and bureaucrats in BC. The establishment of a community wide funding committee for the Parent-Child Mother Goose Program added Vancouver School Board's Literacy Programs, Literacy BC, BC Council for Families, and the Ministry for Children and Family Development as important partners for the long term viability of these programs.

BC Council for Families became the sponsoring agency for the Parent-Child Mother Goose Programs in BC at the completion of the TLC3 Vancouver Project. Sue Wastie, senior speech-language pathologist for Community Health Services of Vancouver Coastal Health Authority, was a strong supporter for the TLC3 Vancouver Project and would be continuing to look for ways to link registered speech-language pathologists to these programs in Vancouver for the communication and developmental screening. John Andruschak, network coordinator for Vancouver Coastal Health Authority, was keen to find ways to extend these programs to identified groups of families – most particularly young parents. Even though money was tight, he would continue to look for ways to

include Parent-Child Mother Goose Programs in local initiatives between the Vancouver Community Health Services of the VCHA and neighbourhood organizations in Vancouver.

Challenges in providing programs for children "at risk"

Since the TLC3 programs in Vancouver were initially set up as universal programs, the more empowered parents in the neighbourhoods found the programs and filled them until the format for selection from the waiting list was changed. These programs were focused on wellness and play with language so there was no challenge in having all families in the neighbourhood see the program as applicable for them if there was a good mix of families in the program.

It was felt that many families, in these neighbourhoods, whose children were most at risk did not access the TLC3 programs. It was doubtful that they would have accessed programs that focused on an identified problem either. It was felt that word of mouth by friends they trusted was the likely way to have these families come to the program. Families were encouraged to bring friends along and to promote the program to friends they felt would enjoy it and/or welcome the support provided. In a mixed neighbourhood, what did become apparent was that programs offered to some targeted groups – young parents, single parents, working parents, culturally specific - would be more likely to be attended by these families through feeling an affinity with the other families who were attending (this had been the experience of the Nobody's Perfect Program). In both of the TLC3 sites in Vancouver, these were the parents who found it very difficult to participate due to the time of the programs and/or the comfort level for being in a program with many families in which both the parents were involved.

TLC3 Program Description

The following section describes the programs offered by the TLC3 Vancouver Project.

1) The **Parent-Child Mother Goose Program** is a group experience for family members in a parenting role and their babies and young children focusing on the pleasure and power of using rhymes, songs and stories together. Parents and their infants and toddlers attend a group session once a week for 10 week sessions to learn rhymes, songs, lullabies, and storytelling. Within each session, the leaders teach the skills through repetition of the rhymes, songs, lullabies, and storytelling as a group. There are no props, books, or toys used in the program. The program is the families and very skilled leaders who are knowledgeable about relationships, child development, and community resources. Each week the parents introduce themselves and their children and give their thoughts on a topic introduced by the leaders on some aspect of parenting, being a family, or their child's development.

   The sessions are 1 _ hours in length. The first half hour focuses on rhymes and songs. At the mid-point, a healthy snack is provided. The parents use this time to connect with other parents and to seek information or support from other parents and the leaders. The final half hour focuses on helping parents learn a new story to reflect on personally or to tell to their children at home. The program helps parents learn the stories, rhymes and songs through repetition within the session and week to week.

   The program promotes a healthy parent-infant attachment and provides the parents with a broader support system. The parents gain skills and confidence that can contribute to their ability to create positive family patterns during their children's crucial early years. It also enables the parents to give their children a healthy early experience with social communication and the language of literacy through the sound and rhythm of language; two vital precursors for the development of literacy skills.

The leaders are knowledgeable about early development and are able to talk with the parents about the usual developmental challenges and to help with referrals for other specific concerns. The families can attend the parent-infant Parent-Child Mother Goose Program until their children are two years old. The families can attend the parent-toddler Parent-Child Mother Goose Program when their children are between the ages of 2 and 3 _ years. The parent-toddler programs of TLC3 in Vancouver were offered for 24 sessions per year and were led by parents who had been trained as leaders.

Child minding, an integral part of the Parent-Child Mother Goose Program, is provided by two staff for each of the programs. Children who are too young or too old for the current group are cared for in a play environment. The child minding staff help the children come and go from the group as they need to see their parents. These staff also prepare the room and snack for the programs. The responsibilities of the child minders enables the leaders to be available to greet families and provide individual conversation with families as needed.

Two additional significant parts of the Parent-Child Mother Goose program occur outside of the group time. The first is a weekly phone call to remind each family about the upcoming session and to see how they are doing. The second is the in-depth discussion by the leaders about each family after each session, to note how the session seemed to go for each parent and child, to update on any changes or concerns brought up by the parents, and to plan for ways to support participation by the parent or child if this was not happening easily. These discussions about the families are used when generating the plan for the next session.

The Parent-Child Mother Goose program has a 15-year history. It was originally developed by Joan Bodger and Barry Dickson for Children's Aid Society in Toronto. Subsequently, Celia Lottridge and Katherine Grier, who had been leaders in the program, oversaw the development of the Parent-Child Mother Goose Program as a non-profit society offering the programs through other agencies in the Toronto area and the gradual promotion across the country. The current executive director is Glenna Janzen. The focus has remained on deepening the relationship of the parent and child. The families are offered the program at no charge. At the current time, the organization has undergone exponential growth that now requires regional coordination.

2) The **Developmental Screening** component was created as an individual time for each family with a registered speech-language pathologist for language screening, to answer questions and provide parents with information about how their child's communication was growing. It supported early referral to community resources if needed. The child and parent were seen as they entered the Parent-Child Mother Goose Program, when they completed in the program and one year after finishing in the program.

3) **You Make the Difference** was also used in the first 2 years of the project at the Kiwassa Neighbourhood House. This was an 8-week program attended by parents with their infants to learn techniques for promoting the infants' communication development. The instruction offered in this program was felt to be a good complement to the learning through experience offered in the Parent-Child Mother Goose Program. It was an additional program offered to families who were already attending the Parent-Child Mother Goose Program. Families were very limited in being available for two mornings a week for programs so, despite rave reviews by the participants, not enough families were able to use the program and it was discontinued.

Development of the Programs:

You Make The Difference and Parent-Child Mother Goose Program - were used with their full designs. The protocols for both were fully adhered to and did not leave a sense of needing to be modified. In fact, when others began using the Parent-Child Mother Goose Program, it became apparent that only agencies failing to allocate sufficient funds and staff time felt a need for modification in the program structure. If the funding was in place, then the full program worked for a broad range of families. Some specialized programs were needed (this was discussed above in 1c of Reflections on the TLC3 Vancouver Project).

The communication and developmental screening program was modified as it was implemented until acceptable tools were found (this was discussed above in 1c of Reflections on the TLC3 Vancouver Project). At times, the tools were completed with an interpreter present for families who had very limited English. At other times, when parents had learning disabilities, the written tools were completed in an interview format.

Where children spoke a language other than English in the home, the evaluation was completed with the parent and child using their own language for the interactions. The parents interpreted the child's comments for the registered speech-language pathologist. As surface language skills were not being evaluated as an aspect of change for the children in the program, it was not necessary for the speech-language pathologist to know exactly what the children had said. Evaluation of social communication and social engagement was possible regardless of the language used.

Evaluation: Rationale, Design, and Methodology

a) Once the programs were selected for the TLC3 Vancouver Project, thinking began about how to evaluate the project.
The impression was that offering the Parent-Child Mother Goose Program and the You Make the Difference program as universal programs in a mixed income and multicultural neighbourhood would most likely impact the parents by providing them with a supportive environment while parenting their young children. It was expected that the group would provide opportunities for friendships to reduce the isolation so common to new parents. It was expected that parents would feel further supported by being able to use knowledge of the leaders and of the other parents to locate and access community resources that they needed/wanted.

As the majority of the children who were attending were showing typical communication and language development, it was not expected that there would be demonstrable change/gain in their symbolic or language skills. However, it was expected that there would be demonstrable positive changes in the children's social communication skills as a result of them participating in a group experience so early. It was expected that the children would develop recognition and pleasure in the activities of the group. It was anticipated that this pleasure with oral language would provide an underpinning for the development of literacy.

It was felt that the use of a developmental screening would identify children for therapy at an early age. It was anticipated that the children identified with communication or developmental disorders would show benefits to their symbolic and language development due to the early intervention that would be provided.

The evaluation design process began early on and a Logic Model was completed at the 1998 TLC3 symposium to clearly illustrate the goals and linkages of the program. The goals of the program for the children were enhancement in the children's social communication, phonological awareness, and expressive and receptive vocabulary. The program goals for the parents were that the parents would have an increased awareness of their children's communication development and view the program as a supportive experience for themselves. These expectations/goals guided the development of the measures that were selected or developed for the evaluation.

All staff in the TLC3 Vancouver Project participated in the design and development of questionnaires or interviews for the parents, the parent-child checklist and staff questionnaires. An evaluation consultant formatted

and revised all of the measures and used the staff input to modify them as needed. The communication and language measures were selected and collected by the registered speech-language pathologists who worked on the TLC3 Vancouver Project.

b) Although a number of measures were considered and some even piloted, the measures used in the evaluation are presented below.

Child Measures:

Pre and post program measures – Developmental Screening

Communication and Symbolic Behavior Scales – Developmental Profile, Caregiver Questionnaire and Behaviour Sample

The Communication and Symbolic Behavior Scales – Developmental Profile (CSBS-DP) developed by Amy Wetherby, PhD CCC-SLP, LL Schendel Professor of Communication Disorders, Florida State University, and Barry Prizant, PhD CCC-SLP, Director of Childhood Communication Services, Adjunct Professor Center for the Study of Human Development, Brown University, was selected for the evaluation because of its focus on children's ability to socially signal and interact, as well as rendering some language measures. The scale has two parts; a four-page questionnaire completed by parents or caregivers (CSBS - DP – Caregiver Questionnaire) and a face-to-face evaluation of the child administered by the SLP facilitating the program (CSBS – DP – Behavior Sample). The scale was developed for use with children 6 months to 2 years of age. Amy Wetherby and Barry Prizant, provided the project with the opportunity to use this newly developed measure with the children and Dr. Wetherby was consistently available for guidance and ideas throughout the project and in the year after as data was analyzed. .

Both the CSBS -DP– Caregiver Questionnaire and the CSBS-DP- Behavior sample have three domains – Social, Speech, and Symbolic – with several subcategories looking at sound and speech development, play development, and gesture and pragmatic development.

Vineland Adaptive Behaviour Scale:

The Vineland Adaptive Behaviour Scales are completed by the parents. The scales are divided into four subscales: 1) communication, 2) daily living skills, 3) motor skills, and 4) socialization. The four sub-scores can be added up to arrive at an adaptive behaviour composite score. It was felt that these measures complemented the information obtained from the CSBS-DP and Rossetti Scales. Also, the Vineland scale could be used with children, 0-5 years of age, ensuring comparability of the measure over time.

After a year of using the Vineland, there was some dissatisfaction with the formality of the instrument but the decision was made to continue using it to provide a general developmental profile. The results from this measure were at odds with the language measures, which included observations and direct testing in addition to parent report. Due to these puzzling results and the fact that the majority of the Vineland's domains do not focus on areas directly related to PCMG or the TLC3 goals, the measure and the results will not be discussed in the remainder of this report. In hindsight, this measure may not have been an appropriate measure to use for assessing typically developing infants as the skills asked about were over a very broad range of abilities.

Pre-program measure only

Rossetti Infant-Toddler Language Scale:

The Rossetti Infant-Toddler Language Scale was selected for evaluation purposes because it provided measures applicable to very young children, was play-based and a gave a high weighting to information provided by the parent. The Speech-Language Pathologists piloted the Rossetti Scale in the fall and spring of the first year of the project. They concluded that the scale worked well with very young infants (birth to 9 months) but not as well with older infants. As a result, the CSBS-DP, mentioned above, was selected as the primary measure of communication development. However, the CSBS-DP could not be completed with infants under 8 months of age so the Rossetti was used as an entry measure for the very young infants who entered the program.

A known limitation of this selection of tests was that the Rossetti was criterion referenced and so we were unable to reliably compare results across the Rossetti and CSBS-DP for those children who were too young for the CSBS-DP on entry into the program. The measure was instead used to guide discussion with the parents about their children's development.

Follow-up Measures – 12 months after ending involvement in the program

Language Use Inventory:

Dr. Daniela O'Neill, Associate Professor, Department of Psychology at the University of Waterloo, provided the project with the opportunity to use her newly developed measure, the Language Use Inventory (LUI), with the children and was also readily available for help and questions throughout the evaluation period of the project. The LUI was included as a measure of pragmatic and semantic development. The LUI looked at social use of language for children 3 to 7 years of age. Dr. Daniela O'Neill developed the measure to help differentiate children in the autism spectrum from other children with language/developmental delays. The LUI asks parents/caregivers to report on the child's social uses of language. It is a very detailed questionnaire inquiring about semantic and pragmatic development.

The LUI was selected because it looks at the same areas of language and social communication mastery that the CSBS-DP assesses. Testing for construct validity was completed with the LUI using the CSBS full measure and results showed a positive correlation between the two measures. The CSBS-DP was a screening measure with the same scoring and same structure as the CSBS full measure using the most potent tasks for differentiating social communication and developmental differences. It was expected that the LUI would also correlate with the CSBS-DP.

Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test-Revised (Form L):

The Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test-Revised (PPVT-R) was added to the evaluation at follow-up to provide a base line for any future language assessment that may be done as part of a long-term evaluation on the outcomes of the TLC3 Vancouver Project.

The PPVT-R measures a subject's receptive vocabulary.

Preschool Language Scale – III:

The Preschool Language Scale–III is a very well known language measure that looks at both receptive and expressive language skills. Its focus is on the surface aspects of language mastery. It was also added to the evaluation at follow-up to provide a baseline for any future language assessment that may be done as part of a long-term evaluation on the outcomes of the TLC3 Vancouver Project.

Parent-Child Measures:

Checklist:

A checklist to be completed by the staff was developed to look for change in the parent and child participation in the Parent-Child Mother Goose Program over time. The items on the checklist were included to keep a record of the interactions between the parents and their children and with others in the group. The checklist was developed to be completed after each session for each family. The checklist had a short open format section for general remarks and then contained 14 items to be rated on a 5-point scale from 1= very much to 5= not at all. Items focused on: how much the parent was participating in the program and engaging with their child; how much the parent was engaging and interacting with other parents, other children and the group leaders; how much the child was relating to the parent; how much the child was participating and responding to the activities; and how much the child was moving around the room and relating to other children.
The checklist was revised several times during year two and three before a version was settled on by everyone. In the end, it was still a challenging measure since there continued to be individual differences in the interpretation of the items and varying comfort levels in making subjective evaluations of the family experiences in the program. This comfort level was most challenged when parents and their infants were struggling in their relationships with each other.

An alternative means of evaluating the families' experiences in the group would probably have been more effective.

Parent Measures:

Management Information System Interview:

The Management Information System (MIS) was an interview developed at the Hincks-Dellcrest Institute with input from each site. The MIS interview was used at each site to collect basic demographic information about each family and child in the program. For example, the interview included questions about household income, parent education level, ethnic background, and child's health.

Entrance Questionnaire:

The entrance questionnaire was an interview designed to complement the MIS interview and to address questions that the TLC3 Vancouver Project staff felt had relevance to their programs. Parents were asked about their own experience with rhymes, lullabies, songs and stories while growing up and whether they currently used rhymes, lullabies, songs or story telling with their infant. They were also asked about their sense of competence as a parent and if they had any current concerns about their child's development. The final section of the interview looked at their social connections and whom they used as resources.

Journal:

Modeled on the journal used in the TLC3 program in St. Rémi, the second evaluation consultant designed a journal for families to keep track of how often and in what situations they used rhymes, lullabies, songs and storytelling with their children. It was a picture journal showing several daily activities such as bathing, feeding, going for a walk, shopping, driving in the car, and visiting friends. Families were asked to circle the number of times they used rhymes, lullabies, songs or storytelling within these activities each day for a week. There was one page per day. Initially, families were asked to volunteer to do this. It was very difficult to keep track of these journals in this way and it was unclear how the information would be related to anything else. By the fourth year, it was decided that we wanted to attach this information to specific families so each family was given the journal to complete before they came for their developmental screening, when they entered the project and when they left the project. This meant that they had already been in the program for a few weeks when they completed the journal for the first time. This was a limitation for it meant that the first journal was not

completed prior to their participation in the program but rather within the first few weeks of their participation, a time when their enthusiasm for practicing what they were learning in the program at home was probably high.

Program Feedback:

After each set of 10 sessions in the Parent-Child Mother Goose Program, parents were asked to give feedback about the program on a feedback form. This form included 4 open-ended questions. Parents were asked what they liked about the 10-week program, what they did not like about the program and ideas for changing the program. They were also invited to make other comments. There was also a 5-point rating scale for the parents to rate the 10 session cycle from 1= poor to 5 = excellent.

The feedback form was translated into Chinese for the Chinese speaking parents. For parents who spoke other languages, we arranged for them to use the help of a friend or family member to complete the form. We had no difficulty in having families complete the form and offer us feedback.

Exit Questionnaire:

The exit questionnaire was an interview designed for parents to complete when they left the program. It asked for their feedback on the impact of the Parent-Child Mother Goose Program and the Developmental Screening for their family. They were asked which aspects of the program they had enjoyed the most and asked if they had suggestions for changes. Other questions asked if they had any current concerns about their child, and which community resources they were currently using and if they had heard about these through the project. They were also asked questions about their social network and whether they had added to this network through being involved in the TLC3 Vancouver Project. Finally, they were asked if they would recommend the programs to other families.

Keeping In Touch Questionnaire:

One year after leaving the project, families were seen again for another developmental screening of their child. The parents completed another questionnaire asking them about their current activities with their child, their current childcare arrangements, and the languages being used in the home and with their child. Also included were questions about their current use of songs, rhymes, lullabies, and stories and about their social network.

One significant limiting factor in analyzing the data was the failure to ensure that questions asked of parents across time were the same. For example, the questions in the Entrance, Exit and Keeping in Touch interviews were similar but not the same. This then limited how much actual quantitative or qualitative analysis could be done with the parent interview data. It is a point worth stressing to others developing evaluation for their own projects in future.

Staff Measures:

Staff Questionnaire:

Each ten weeks, the staff completed a short questionnaire on how the sessions had gone for them, what had been particularly satisfying, what had been particularly challenging and goals they set for themselves over the next 10 weeks of the program. At the end of each 30 week block, the staff completed a longer more detailed questionnaire about their experience in running the program. They were asked about the skills they had developed, what had been most satisfying, what had been challenging, how the partnership with the other leaders had been, what they felt was needed to promote the Parent-Child Mother Goose Program in the

community with families and professionals, and what the TLC3 Vancouver Project could do to better support them in the role of leader.

The supervisors of the staff in each of the Houses were interviewed at the end of the project about the impact of the project on their staff and the other programs in the Houses.

Evaluation: Results

a. Participant information. Who came to play?

Fifty-nine families attended the TLC3 Vancouver project's parent-infant Parent-Child Mother Goose Program during the evaluation period from September 1999 to June 2002. Fifty-four families (56 children) participated in the evaluation. Twenty-six of the children participated at the Kiwassa site and 30 children participated at the Collingwood site. According to the MIS interviews completed by the parents participating in the program, 50 families were two-parent families (93%), with the remaining four families being headed by women. Thirty-two (59%) respondents reported that they were born in Canada. The other respondents were born in a broad range of countries with the largest number being born in Asia. Specifically, 5 were born in China, 4 in the Philippines, 2 in Hong Kong, 2 in Korea, and 2 in Malaysia. Other parents were born in Britain (n=1), Bosnia (n=1), India (n=1), Mexico (n=1) and Peru (n=1). Although only 5 parents reported that they were born in China, 15 parents reported being of Chinese origin.

The families enrolled in the TLC3 Vancouver Project at Kiwassa tended to form a more homogeneous group than those at Collingwood. At Kiwassa, the families were largely Canadian born and native English speakers. The immigrant families at Kiwassa were, on average, settled in Canada twice as long as their Collingwood counterparts. The Collingwood families also tended to be more multilingual than the Kiwassa ones.

Of the 54 parents interviewed, 19 spoke only English (35%). Thirty-five parents reported being able to conduct a conversation in two or more languages. Regardless of how many languages the parents were able to speak, 40 respondents (74%) reported that the main language spoken in their home was English. Another 13% reported that the main language spoken in their home was Cantonese/Chinese or Mandarin. Other main languages spoken in the home were Spanish, Ilocano, Ilonggo, Inuit, and Korean. There were 8 parents who spoke very limited to no English when they began the program.

The educational and income profiles suggest that both sites served mainly middle class families. Sixty-seven percent of the respondents had a post-secondary education diploma or degree and 78% of their spouses also had post-secondary diplomas or degrees.

As a whole, the families who participated in the TLC3 Vancouver Project could be classified as being at the lower end of the middle income range. The mean income for the 48 families for whom income data were available was roughly $40,000[1]. Half of these families had an income in the $50,000 to $60,000 range. A quarter of the families had a household income above $60,000. At the opposite end of the income range, 23 per cent of the families had a household income of under $30,000. Half of these families received less than $15,000 per annum.

About the Children:

[1] The MIS question concerning household income did not ask the interviewees to specify whether the figures they were giving referred to gross income, or take-home pay. As most people tend to think in terms of gross income, it is being assumed here that the data represent total pre-tax household income

All 56 infants were born in Canada and lived with their birth parents. On beginning the program, the average age of the infants was 7.7 months with a range in age from 1 month to 15 months of age.

The following information about the families was gathered through the Developmental Screening:

- Nineteen of the children were using English as a second language (34%). Six of the children using ESL were from the Kiwassa site and 13 were from the Collingwood site.
- Two children were showing speech disorders (these two children were siblings),
- Four children were displaying language delays or disorders yet doing well in other developmental domains.
- Seven children were very shy and socially cautious.
- Five children were showing general developmental delay
- Two children were diagnosed as being in the autism spectrum.
- Three of the 56 children were identified as being at risk for development when they began the program. Two of these children had parents with significant mental health challenges and the other child had been identified in utero as having ceased growing.

Fifty-two of the 56 infants whose families participated in the evaluation of the TLC3 Vancouver Project were born in a hospital. Four infants were born at home. Sixteen of the 54 mothers (29%) reported having experienced problems during pregnancy such as high blood pressure, heavy bleeding or gestational diabetes. Twenty-two mothers (39%) reported having experienced problems during labour. Examples of problems during labour included: very long labour, emergency caesarean and induced labour. Fourteen of the 56 infants (25 per cent) were reported to have experienced problems at birth including jaundice, premature birth, and feeding difficulties.

At the time of the MIS interview, 48 of the 56 respondents (86%) considered the health of their child to be either excellent or very good. Only one child was considered to be in poor health. Seven infants had experienced one or two ear infections during the interval separating their birth and the MIS interview. None of the infants had tubes in their ears. Seven infants had vision problems. Only one infant had corrective lenses.

Parents' Focus with their Children:

When asked what child development goal was their highest priority for their child the top three areas reported were: 1) language development (25%), 2) eating (20%), and 3) sleeping (14%).

Forty-nine of the parent respondents reported that they read storybooks to their infants. Of these parents, 14 reported reading their infant storybooks *many times a day*, 26 parents reported reading their infant storybooks *daily*.

b. Attendance – how often they came to play

Attendance information was available for 55 children. The mean number of sessions that these children attended with their parent was 24 sessions with a range from 3 sessions to 55 sessions. Specifically, 6 children (11%) attended between 1 and 10 sessions, 18 children (33%) attended between 11 and 20 sessions, 18 children (33%) attended 21-30 sessions, 5 children (9%) attended 31-40 sessions and 8 children (14%) attended 41 sessions or more.

Children that began attending the program before they were 8 months of age (n=29) attended an average of 30 sessions with a range from 10-55 sessions. Children that began attending the program at 8 months of age or older attended an average of 18 sessions with a range from 3-44 sessions. (Note that children had to leave the program when they reached 24 months of age.)

Attendance of children showing typical development was compared to children who had a language delay or issues with social relating. These groups differed slightly in their attendance patterns, with the identified children attending more sessions, on average, than the children who were showing typical development. Specifically, the children with language delay (n=11) attended an average of 24 sessions with a range from 13-51, the children with issues with social relating (n=9) attended an average of 33 sessions with a range from 10-53, and the children showing typical development (n=34) attended an average of 21 sessions with a range from 3 to 52 sessions.

c. Results on the child measures

Pre and post program developmental screening results

The results of the child measures are based on data collected from the 56 children who attended the program between September 1999 and May of 2002. Where appropriate, the 56 children were divided into the following three groups for the analyses: 1) children who were demonstrating typical development, 2) children who were displaying speech or language delays and disorders, including the children with general developmental disorders, 3) children who had social relating challenges – both the shy and the anxious children. Analyses was also done to identified potential differences between ESL children and non-ESL children.

Since the demographics were fairly similar for the two sites, the results are presented for the whole group of children across both sites. Only the length of time the parents had lived in Canada and using English different but because preliminary analyses showed no differences between the ESL and non- ESL children it was concluded that the ESL demographic would not result in differences on the child measures for the two sites.

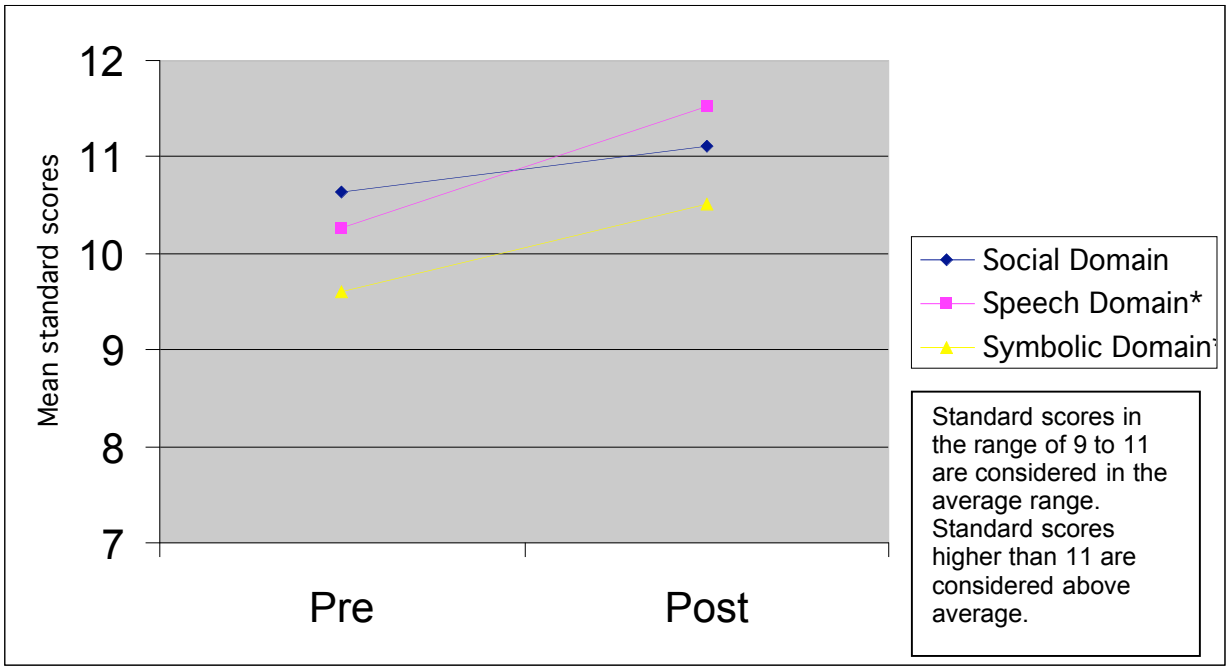
CSBS – Caregiver Questionnaire:

Fifty-one children had both pre and post scores on the CSBS-Caregiver questionnaire.

Paired t-tests were conducted to see if there were significant differences between the children's pre-test standard scores on the CSBS – Caregiver Questionnaire and their post test standard scores.

A statistically significant difference in the predicted direction was found for the speech domain $t(50)= -2.11$, $p<.05$, the symbolic domain $t(50)=-2.43$, $p<.05$, and the total score $t(50)=-2.41$, $p<.05$. A significant result in the predicted direction means that the probability of the difference being by chance is very slim, in this case, less than a 5% chance. **Therefore, the results show that the difference between the children's scores on the pre-test and post-test was great enough to be considered not to be a chance difference but an actual difference that could be attributed to the children's experience in theTLC3 Vancouver Project.** A significant difference was not found between pre and post standard scores on the social domain. The results for each domain are illustrated in Figure 1. Descriptive statistics can be seen in Table 1. It is important to note that the mean pre test standard scores for the children were in the average range for all domains but at post the mean standard scores for the social and speech domains were in the above average range.

Figure 1. CSBS Caregiver Questionnaire Results



* significant difference at p<.05

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics for the CSBS – Caregiver Questionnaire Scores

CSBS – Caregiver Questionnaire Standard Scores	**Mean (SD) Pre** (n=51)	**Mean (SD) Post** (n=51)
Social Domain	10.63 (3.41)	11.12 (3.39)
Speech Domain	10.27 (3.07)	11.53 (3.18) *
Symbolic Domain	9.61 (2.89)	10.51 (3.13) *
Total score	99.24 (14.82)	103.92 (14.43) *

*significant difference at p<.05

Although a significant difference between pre and post scores was not observed for the social domain, the trend was in the expected direction. Another finding was that for the children with typical development, the number of sessions they attended was significantly correlated with change in the CSBS- caregiver standard score in the social domain, r(30)=0.503, p<.01. This means that the more sessions the children attended the larger the positive change in the standard scores in the social domain from pre to post test.

Exploratory Analyses:

The descriptive results from the three sub groups of children (typical, language delay, and social relating) were examined to see if there were any major differences in their patterns of gains in the different domains. In general, for the symbolic and total domain the three sub groups of children had similar patterns in regards to the proportion of children that had an increase, decrease or no change in their standard scores. For the social domain, a smaller proportion of the children with *difficulties in social relating* demonstrated an increase in their standard scores compared to the other groups of children. For the speech domain, a smaller proportion of children with *language delay* showed an increase in their standard scores compared to the other groups.

A very important point to be made is that the program offered something to all of the children, not just to those who had challenges or who were showing typical development.

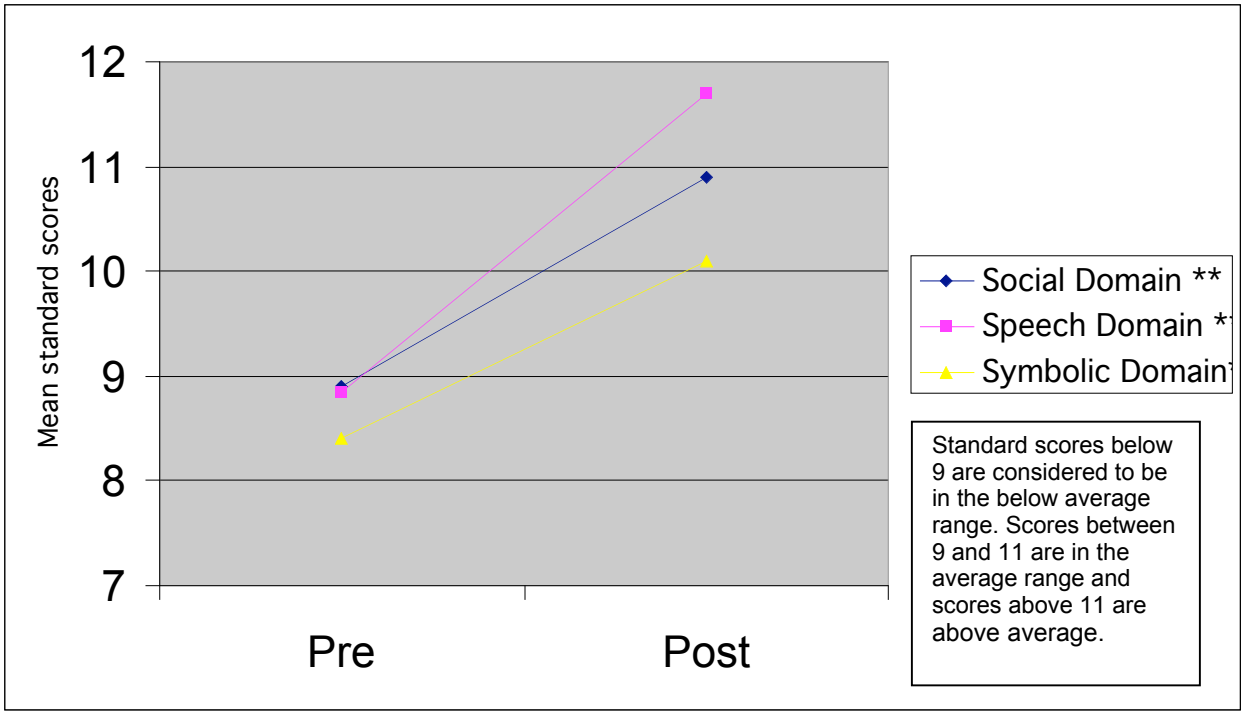
The Communication and Symbolic Behavior Scale –DP– Behavior Sample

Twenty children had a pre and post program score on the CSBS – DP –Behavior Sample completed by the staff. An additional 13 children also had CSBS - DP pre and post scores but they were under 12 months of age at entrance; at this point standards were not yet available for children under 12 months of age.

Paired t-tests were conducted to see if there were significant differences between the children's pre-test standard scores on the CSBS-DP and their post-test standard scores.

The analyses found a statistically significant difference in the predicted direction for all three domains and the total score. Specifically, a significant difference was found for the social domain, $t(19)=-3.53$, $p<.01$, the speech domain, $t(19)=-4.33$, $p<.01$, the symbolic domain, $t(19)=-2.48$, $p<.05$ and the total score $t(19)=-4.44$, $p<.01$. This means that on average, the children's standard scores were significantly higher at the end of the program compared to the beginning of the program. The results are illustrated in Figure 2. Descriptive statistics can be seen in Table 2. It is important to note that the mean standard scores for the children at the pre test were in the below average range (lower than 9) and in the average (9 to 11) or above average range (over 11) at the post test.

Figure 2. CSBS Behaviour Sample Results



*significant at $p<.05$, ** significant at $p<.01$

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics for the CSBS – DP- Behaviour Sample scores

CSBS – DP – Behavior Sample Standard Scores	**Mean (SD) Pre** (n=20)	**Mean (SD) Post** (n=20)
Social Domain	8.90 (2.63)	10.90 (2.94) **
Speech Domain	8.85 (2.46)	11.70 (3.21) **
Symbolic Domain	8.40 (3.15)	10.10 (2.83) *
Total score	92.10 (12.78)	105.40 (14.00) **

* significant at $p<.05$, ** significant at $p<.01$

Correlations between CSBS Caregiver Questionnaire and CSBS-DP.

The CSBS Caregiver Questionnaire and the CSBS-DP- Behavior sample scores were compared to see if the parents' ratings of their children and the staff ratings of the children were correlated. It was felt that comparable results from two different measures and two different respondents would strengthen our statements of findings. The analyses found the scores on the Parent Questionnaire and the CSBS-DP- Behaviour sample for 21 children at the beginning of the program to be significantly correlated for the speech domain, $r(21)=.490$, $p<.05$, the symbolic domain $r(21)=.538$, $p<.05$, and the total score, $r(21)=.548$, $p<.05$.

At the end of the program the scores on the CSBS Caregiver Questionnaire for 52 children were significantly correlated with their scores on the CSBS-DP- Behavior sample for the social domain, $r(52)=.289$, $p<.05$, the speech domain $r(52)=.576$, $p<.001$ and the total score, $r(52)=.450$, $p<.01$.

These significant correlations between the parents and the staff ratings of the children indicate that the two different respondents were judging and rating the children in a similar manner.

Keeping in Touch – Follow up Findings:

There were 24 children seen by the registered speech-language pathologist for follow-up a year after they left the program.

In this group of 24:

- 11 had been showing typical development at Exit and were still doing well.
- 3 children had been shy at Exit and 2 remained shy or very anxious at follow-up.
- 4 of the children had developmental delays at Exit and continued to show these profiles. Two of the four children were using speech-language pathology services.
- 4 of the children had speech/language delays or disorders at exit and follow-up. All were using speech-language pathology services
- 2 children had autism and were using mental health services

Language Use Inventory:

Correlation analyses were conducted between the LUI total score (converted to percentile) and the percentile score on all three domains of the CSBS – DP – Behavior Sample and the total score with 21 children. One child, who was in the autistic spectrum, was removed from the analyses because his/her scores were outliers.

The results show that there was a significant correlation between the LUI total score percentile score and the CSBS-DP-Behavior Sample social domain percentile score, $r(21) = .562$, $p < .01$, the CSBS – DP symbolic domain score, $r(21) = .610$, $p<.01$ and the CSBS – DP total score, $r(21) = .021$, $p<.05$. A significant correlation was not found between the LUI and the CSBS – DP speech domain scores.
The findings indicate that the children's scores on the CSBS- DP-Behavior sample at the end of the program were significantly correlated with their scores on the LUI one year later. This meant that the children who had

made gains in the social, symbolic and total score domains measured on the CSBS during their time in the program, appeared to have maintained these gains one year later. It was not surprising that a significant correlation between the CSBS-DP and LUI was not found for the speech domain. The LUI assessment does not ask for an inventory of the speech sound mastery or inquire about the quantity of first words used by the child, which are the aspects evaluated in the CSBS-DP speech domain.

Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test – Revised Form L

The PPVT-R (L) was used only at the Follow-up assessment and was use to provide a baseline for any future assessment of the children's receptive vocabulary abilities.

Results: The children's standard scores ranged from 70 to 121 with a mean of 98.91 and a standard deviation of 14.54
The children's percentile scores indicated that they were normally distributed relative to the test norms. Specifically 22% of the children's scores were in the bottom quartile (bottom 25%) and 27% of the children's scores were in the top quartile (top 25%).

Preschool Language Scale – III

The PLS-III was also only used at Follow-up and was also used to provide a baseline for any future assessment of the children's formal language abilities.

Results: The children's percentile scores for the two domains and total score were as follows:
- Auditory Comprehension: 21% in lowest quartile, 46% in top quartile
- Expressive Communication: 21% in lowest quartile, 42% in top quartile
- Total language score: 25% in lowest quartile, 46% in top quartile

This distribution showed that the expected number of the children performed in the lowest quartile in comparison to norms. However, an unusually large number of the children performed in the top quartile in comparison to norms. When looked at with the CSBS-DP and LUI results it would suggest that the PLS-III results fit with the gains shown in the symbolic domain at Exit and maintained at Follow-up.

Observations that Support the Quantitative Findings:

As a registered speech-language pathologist and coordinator of the TLC3 Vancouver Project in Vancouver, these positive evaluation results confirmed my observations. I observed positive changes in the children as they attended the program and obtained a good understanding of how the activities in the program affected the children's language, social and symbolic development.

During the Program:

Language Development:

The word play and repetition of phrases accompanied by gestures and whole body actions used in the Parent-Child Mother Goose Program was felt to play a significant part in exposing all of the children to the surface of language. We often heard early proto-words which were chunks of phrasing from a favourite rhyme or song. We were able to determine the intent when the child provided sounds or the intonation of the phrase. We always obliged the child and would then see an increase in their communication attempts to have it happen again. For a few children, this became a delightful group experience waiting for them to make their predicted request week

after week and then the group would laugh, look satisfied and provide the request. It was wonderful to watch the effect both for the child and the parent.

***Social Development*:**

The positive results on the CSBS-DP for the children with language differences and mental health issues were terrific to see. While these children were not as strong socially as their typical peers, the majority of them were showing nice gains on the measures even in comparison to the norms. These children were not as easy for other parents or children to engage. The attempts to make contact dropped off fairly quickly and these children did not move out socially with the other children, to the same extent that was seen by the typically developing children. It was not expected that we would see social gains for these subgroups as it seemed they were less well equipped to demonstrate their responses to the social experience. The CSBS-DP result demonstrated that while they were not able to show these skills in the group, the learning was occurring.

Symbolic Development:

The six children with mental health issues were the subgroup that showed little gain and some decrease in the symbolic domain compared to the other subgroups. It was felt that this was a valid finding for the group who were highly anxious and not comfortable in exploring their world.

For all of the other children, we saw gains that indicated they were exploring and experimenting in the world. This fit well with the experience we had with them in the program as they matured. The PCMG group provided them with a safe predictable, gentle environment to step away from their parents and try out the social world. The use of gestures and patterns in the rhymes and songs was also felt to contribute to this symbolizing of their experience.

It was interesting that when many of the children came for their developmental screening they were jarred when their parents brought them into a different room to meet with me. They clearly had an internal representation of how they and I should be relating and where this should be happening. After my session, many of the children needed to visit the room where they attended the group before they could leave, comfortable then that they were not missing the group.

***Overall Communication Development*:**

Children in all of the subgroups made strong gains in communicative development. These results enable us to say that all of the children were impacted by the program. We set out to provide a universal program and were not certain that it would be meaningful for everyone. We wondered about the children who were quite different in their development. Current philosophy about interventions for these children focused on providing targeted language and speech concepts to facilitate the learning. The results from the TLC3 Vancouver Project show that the Parent-Child Mother Goose Program offered in its universal way did have something to offer all of the children. For the children who had communication challenges, the addition of therapy so early also played a part.

It was important to report that even when my contact was less frequent with the families (when my role as a group leader ended in the third year), I was still able to know the families well enough that the developmental screening did not feel any different to provide. It was realistic to expect that a community registered speech-language pathologist who attended the group 6 times in a year could provide this service adequately.

At Follow-up:

At the time of follow-up, I anticipated seeing fairly typical scores for the children who were showing usual development and was hopeful that there would be good gains for the children with delays as they would have had a year and more of therapy.

Developmental Differences:

At follow-up, two of the children with developmental delays were socially relaxed and keen to interact even though they were still obviously behind. One of these children will likely have significant learning challenges yet she was very outgoing and cheerful and her mother was clearly enjoying her gains. This child had not been focused to the world when they began attending the group. She flitted about and despite her mother's best attempts could not stay involved for more than a brief period before becoming distracted. She had been referred for therapy at 13 months. The family attended the program and therapy regularly. The early intervention for this child had made a significant difference in how she related. At follow-up she was engaging, had a range in her vocabulary, could participate in short conversations about current activities and she loved to sing. She looked far less baffled by the world and her mother reported that it was satisfying to parent her.

Challenges in Relating Socially:

One of the very shy children on entry, who could not let go of her mother, went on to the toddler Parent-Child Mother Goose Program and became more and more confident in herself. At follow-up she was confident, chatty, and doing well in preschool. Her mother felt that the program had made the difference for her in developing social confidence.

We had two children who had autism. The high predictability in the group enabled them to participate with some degree of comfort. Both had trouble entering the group and were overwhelmed by the social noise (laughter, clapping, sudden loud talking) in the group. This continued for most of the time they were in the group.

One of these children had a parent who recognized the challenges and used the group experience to help her child develop a tolerance for social experience. She also sought out mental health services. At the conclusion of the project, this family attended the noisy, crowded celebration and the child was able to enter the unfamiliar room, sit at a table with other children (mostly unknown), and to participate in the play and crafts.

The parent of the other child with autism did not initially recognize her child's difficulties as being beyond the child's control. The parent's participation in the group helped her to see that her child was not achieving the social or communication developmental milestones of the other children. This led to her being receptive to seeking therapy for her child. It is my opinion that the experience of the group and the on-going opportunities for consultation with a speech-language pathologist helped this family to move forward in using therapy resources.

Typical Development:

Most of the children with typical development were doing better than average after participating in the program. As I watched the typical children take up the rhymes and songs I came to appreciate the benefits of the group for them. We had a very precocious child enter the program. This child was a delight to listen to as the communication skills were so advanced and the child was socially very outgoing and also gentle. The child had never been in a group experience before, loved it, and brought an energy to the experience for everyone – parents and children. The children focused on the child. The parents focused on the child. Due to being so long on a waiting list, the child was only able to be in the group for 6 months. When I saw this child a year later for follow-up, I was remembered, as were the songs and rhymes. The child was very keen to tell me all

about the things that had been brought along to show me. The child's mother reported that the child was in daycare and doing well. I expect that this child is likely to be a leader throughout life. The fact that the child remembered the group and still knew and enjoyed the songs meant the experience had a place in the child's development. It was a wonderful model for the child of being in a social group and would provide the frame for future experiences.

SUMMARY

The majority of children demonstrated gains in their communication and symbolic skills while attending the TLC3 Vancouver Project and maintained these gains a year later. The gains were most strongly demonstrated in the social and symbolic domains for the children who were developing typically and in the speech domain for the children who had communication challenges. The program appeared to be appropriate for a variety of children with differing levels of abilities and skills.

d) Results on Parent Measures:

Journals

Most families completed at least one journal tracking their use of songs, rhymes, lullabies and stories during their time in the program. Fourteen parents completed journals at both time one (soon after entering the program) and time two (on exiting the program). The descriptive statistics for the parents' journal data at time one (seen in Table 3) show that on average the parents were rhyming, singing, and telling stories very frequently. Most notably the parents reported singing to their child(ren) on average more than 10 times a day. Compared to time one, the time two journal data were similar but did show some gains in all three activity categories. Although the increase in frequency was not statistically significant it did show that the parents had maintained their high level of singing, rhyming and story telling throughout their time in the program. It is important to point out that families became enthusiastic about the program very soon after joining and that the time one journal was generally not completed until after the family had been 5-6 weeks in the program. This meant that the time one journal did not reflect pre-program activities but instead reflected the activities of the parents in the first few weeks of the program, a time when they were fresh to the experience and most likely keen on using what they were learning in the program.

Table 3. Descriptive statistics of Journal findings

Activity	**Frequency of doing the activities in one week**
Time One:	
Rhymes and Songs (n=15)	Mean: 76.2, Range: 21-127
Lullabies (n=14)	Mean: 27.6, Range: 5 – 90
Story Telling (n=14)	Mean: 25.4, Range: 2 – 85
Time Two:	
Rhymes and Songs (n=15)	Mean: 81.3, Range: 20-220
Lullabies (n=14)	Mean: 31.2, Range: 3 – 139
Story Telling (n=14)	Mean: 37.1, Range: 2 – 203

From time one to time two there were no observable differences in the number of different places or situations in which the parents sang, rhymed or told stories to their children. At time two the parents reported engaging in the following activities most often in the following situations.
Reciting Rhymes of Singing songs:

Most popular time/place = While dressing or changing child: mean = 16
Second most popular time/place = At playtime or reading time: mean = 12.7

Singing Lullabies
Most popular time/place =At bedtime/quiet time: mean = 10.8
Second most popular time/place =In the car or bus: mean = 3.1

Telling Stories
Most popular time/place = At bedtime/quiet time: mean = 6.3
Second most popular time/place = At playtime or reading time: mean = 5.8

The important thing to note was that even though there was not an increase in range or quantity, 92% of families interviewed reported that they were still using the songs, lullabies, and stories learned in the program with their children a year after leaving the program.

Parent-Child Checklist

After each session the staff rated the parents and children on a 5-point rating scale on 14 different items in regards to their participation in the session. There was a difference between the Kiwassa and Collingwood programs in how parent and child participation was ranked. Generally the Kiwassa leaders ranked parent and child participation higher than did the Collingwood leaders. However, the change across time was similar for the two sites.

For purposes of analyses the items were combined into 3 domains. The first domain was: 1) Parent's level of participation in the program and program activities, 2) Parent's socializing with other parents, and 3) Child participation and responsiveness to the program activities. Because the families varied in number of sessions they attended it was difficult to find a beginning point, mid point and end point for the whole sample. Looking at individual session scores was avoided because the rating at one session only may not have been reflective of the families' participation in the program in general. To avoid this, the domain scores were averaged across sessions 1-5, 6-10, 11-15, 16-20, 21-25 and 26-30 to see if it was possible to observe any changes over time.

The results showed that there was some improvement in the level of participation for the child and parent and in the parents level of socializing with other parents from sessions 1-5 to 11-15 but because the families were rated highly during the first 5 sessions it was difficult to see much change over time. Specifically, the average rating for the first 5 sessions for Parent Participation was 1.34 where 1 = very much, the best rating available. For the amount of engagement with other parents the average for the first five sessions was 2.76, where 3 is sometimes, and the average score for Child Participation in the first 5 sessions was 2.60 where 3 = sometimes. In this scale a lower score indicates a better rating.

Most notably the Parent's Socializing with Other Parents improved following the first 5 sessions hitting a low of 1.97 for sessions 11-15. The other two domains also improved at the 11-15 session mark.

Observations about the Qualitative Findings:

It was clear that parent participation was high when they began the program and remained high throughout the time they were in the program. Their engagement with their children was also strong to begin with, with a few exceptions, and remained strong.

It was found that the children participated increasingly more actively the longer they were in the program. Over time, children would make requests for favourite rhymes or songs. They did this through gestures used in the rhymes or songs and by using the inflection of the rhyme or song themselves. This occurred long before they

had true words to use. When they reached 20-24 months of age, they would return to their parents to share favourite rhymes, songs or lullabies but were mostly actively engaging with the other children in the program when they reached this age.

The children engaged less with their parents over time during the sessions. It was felt this was a factor of them becoming more mobile and focussed on the activities of the other children, who were also mobile. The parallel socializing of the toddlers was very interesting to behold, particularly as it was usually very gentle and calm. All leaders noted the gentleness of most of the children. While many children went through a period of pushing, pinching or biting other children, it passed quickly.

Visitors to the group commented on how well the toddlers got along and how little aggression was present in the group – particularly as the children were mobile and not always in easy mediating reach of their parents. It was felt that the group gave these children the experience of successful socializing at a very early age.

Parent interaction with other parents in the program also increased over the time they were in the program. This ties to a parents' reports from their Parent Exit Interviews that significant and sustained friendships were found within the program experience. At the Entrance Interview parents talked to leaders about how isolated they felt as new parents. As most of these parents had worked full time before parenting, the experience of being removed from the work culture had left them without supportive connections. During their Exit Interview the parents indicated that the group provided them with this opportunity. It was observed that families would begin the program with a fair amount of reserve but over time they would begin talking with the other parents within the group and then to plan for walks and outings together.

Parents varied in their use of the leaders as resource people. They often initially connected with the leaders at the break time and then as they developed some friendships with the other parents, their time talking with the leaders decreased. Parents who were very shy or uncertain about the adequacy of their English did rely on the leaders to talk with during the snack break.

Parents used the leaders for information about sleeping and eating regulation, information on typical developmental milestones, concerns about behaviour, and ideas for community resources they could access for a variety of purposes.

Parent Evaluation of the Parent-Child Mother Goose Program

A total of 201 parent feedback forms were completed by the parents. This number does not reflect the total number of families in the program during the evaluation for many parents attended more than one 10-session cycle and would have therefore completed more than one feedback form. This is a limitation for presenting the feedback for it is unclear whether the same parent is making the same comments each time or whether several different people are making the same point.

***Overall ratings of the program*.**

The parents were asked to rate their 10-session cycle of the program on a 5-point scale, where 1 = poor and 5 = excellent. Eighty-four percent (84%) of the respondents rated their 10-week cycle as a 5 meaning "excellent", 13% rated it as a 4 which means between *"good"* and *"excellent",* 2.5% rated it as a 3 which is *"good"* and one parent (.5%) rated the 10-week cycle as a 2 which is between *"poor"* and *"good"*. Not a single parent rated a cycle as "poor." The mean rating for all evaluations was 4.8 points (with 5 denoting "excellent"), reflecting a very high level of satisfaction with the program.

***What the parents liked*.**

Parents mentioned liking the **songs, rhymes, and stories**, and that it was the variety of songs, rhymes and stories that was their favourite thing about the program. A small number of parents also reported that singing in the group made them more comfortable with singing in general. In the words of one mother, *"it has given me confidence and pride to sing with my children. As a new mother I was concerned that I could not remember many songs – now that is no longer a worry."*

The **social element of the group sessions**, was described by several parents as "interaction with other adults," and was clearly an important part of the program for a substantial number of mothers. Some enjoyed *"meeting familiar faces*," while others liked "*meeting new people*." Others mentioned liking *"the diverse range of people who attend."* According to the parents, the group fostered a *"camaraderie"* and a *"sense of community."* Part of the reward of socializing with other parents was that it provided an occasion to meet "*some parents and share ideas of parenting and about their babies,"* and to learn from other parents *"about their kids' activities at home.*" In the words of one mother, *"It helps to know different ways of handling infant and toddlers."*

The words used to describe the **facilitators** were uniformly positive. The facilitators were seen as *"motivated," "very enthusiastic," "fantastic," "friendly, warm, cheerful,"* and *"very personable, creating a warm, open forum for all parents and children to meet."* They were also portrayed as *"knowledgeable, caring," "gentle"* and "*enthusiastic."* They were said to *"inspire [one] to learn the importance of singing and storytelling in order to start communications".*

Almost 90% of the families felt that the snack was an important part of the program. Half of them liked it because it provided a time to socialize, Others felt it provided a needed break in the middle of the group, and others felt very nurtured by having a healthy snack provided. Only 7% of the people who attended felt that the snack time was a waste of time and took time away from the learning of the material

Forty- two percent of the respondents reported that having childminding provided as part of the program enabled them to participate. An additional 32% said it was nice to have but was not essential for them.

What the parents did not like

Most comments about what was not liked were about the program availability. Many parents commented that they wanted the program to run for more sessions, to be offered in the summer, or to be offered at other times of day or on the weekend. Others suggested it be run as a drop-in program for it would better fit tight schedules. Some Kiwassa families did not like the cramped physical space and recommended limiting the group size to fit the space available. Some parents felt the stories were hard to tell. Some parents felt the stories should be done before the break.

Parents' ideas for change

Suggestions were made for changes to the **songs and singing** component of the program. Suggestions included: review the songs more, hand out words to songs, include more action or interactive songs for the older children and include songs in different languages.

Suggestions were also made related to the **stories and storytelling** component of the program. These suggestions included ideas to help the parents remember the stories better. For example: have shorter and simpler stories, employ some kind of mnemonic devices to help parents better remember the stories, and have stories written down for the end of the session so that they could remember them later. Another suggestion was to have the storytelling part of the session earlier on so the children would be less distracted.

SUMMARY:

Overall, the parents were very happy with this program. The richness of comments and suggestions provided by the families reflected their level of comfort in offering advice about how to further improve the program. Throughout the duration of the project, when we wanted to implement changes or discuss a problem we always took it to the group to find their own solutions. It was the respectful thing to do and it also ensured that the families felt this truly was their program.

Parents gave positive and constructive feedback about the stories and what would make this a more effective piece of the Parent-Child Mother Goose experience. Within the parent interviews more discussion is presented on the parents' discomfort with story telling and what may be underlying the discomfort. The goals of the TLC3 project were met very effectively through the provision of the Parent-Child Mother Goose Program. Parents told us that it provided a social experience for them and the children as well as providing a pleasurable time for the parents with their children. As one father wrote *"Mother Goose is as much for the parents as it is for the children"*.

Parent Interviews:

Parents were interviewed as they began the program (Entrance Interview), when they completed the program (Exit Interview) and a year after they had left the program (Keeping in Touch Interview).

Fifty-six families completed Entrance and Exit interviews and 22 families completed the KIT interview. While a tremendous amount of information was obtained from the interviews only the key questions relevant to the evaluation of the TLC3 Vancouver Project will be reported within this report. Just a reminder that it was anticipated that parents would experience the project as a supportive experience and that they would develop friendships with other families in the programs. It was thought that parents would have more confidence in their parenting role by the time they finished in the project and that they would use the leaders as sources of information about specialized and community resources. It was also expected that parents would have an increased knowledge of their children's communication development and be focussed on literacy experiences with their child.

Feeling a Part of the Community:

At Entrance, 75 % of parents reported feeling a part of their community. At Exit, this increased to 80% and a year later it was at 82%. Parent letters of support for the project frequently talked about the sense of community that the program provided for them. Nested within this was seeing that 65% of the parents met someone in the programs who became a friend. Most notable was that, at follow-up, 50% of the parents reported that they continued to have a meaningful friendship with at least one family whom they met in the programs. The importance of a sense of community was raised frequently by parents in all of the programs.

Confidence as Parent:

After they finished their participation in the program 72% of the parents indicated that participating in the TLC3 Vancouver Project had had a positive impact on their confidence as a parent.

Information on Community Resources:

On Exit, over half of the parents reported that they had used the leaders of the programs for obtaining information about community and almost a quarter of the parents reported learning about programs in the community through the leaders during the group sessions. Despite this large majority 48% of the families felt they would have liked to have received more information about community resources from the leaders. This

feedback shows that this was an area in which the TLC3 Vancouver Project could have provided more to families and was something that should be encouraged of current Parent-Child Mother Goose Leaders.

Parent Knowledge about Communication Development:

It was not possible to determine what may have changed for families in their knowledge about communication development. The fact that they participated in the evaluation and completed three extensive questionnaires related to communication and language development meant that they would have an increased awareness of this aspect of their child's development. Families reported finding the questionnaires interesting to complete and several liked receiving the questionnaires a week ahead of their interviews so that they could observe their child if there was something they were not able to answer on the questionnaire.

On follow-up, all families completed the Language Use Inventory, a measure of pragmatics. Most of the families commented on how much they learned about the complexity of their child's language through completing the questionnaire. This questionnaire was a very useful exercise for two families in particular whose children were showing very different social communication. It guided them in understanding the gaps that were present in how their children were using language. In this regard, it could be said that families had been exposed to more information about communication and had given it more focus than most parents, over the two to three years they were involved in the project.

Three quarters of the parents reported that they valued the developmental screening component of the program. This was an important finding since only 20% of the families had children with communication, developmental or social challenges.

It was interesting to note that all families came for the follow-up session. It is unusual to have 100% on follow-up. This was interpreted to mean that all of the families found this kind of consultation useful and supportive.

What Parents felt the TLC3 Vancouver Project's programs provided for families:

For their child:

- 96% of the parents felt the programs had provide their children with a social opportunity and increased social competence.
- 49% saw this experience as having been a very positive introduction to social groups
- 29% felt it had been an enjoyable time for their child and had increased the child's comfort in social situations
- 13% felt that the children had been introduced to social rules
- 9% of parents felt the experience had been overwhelming for their shy children or for children who were anxious due to tension in their home life. Three parents of very shy children had chosen this group experience to try to alleviate the shyness, which they recognized from their own experience of growing up. While it was overwhelming for their children, they felt their children had developed more comfort in social situations from being in this program with its high predictability and structure.

For the Parent:

- 46% felt the program has provided a social connection to other families
- 8% felt it offered them a learning opportunity
- 9% felt it provided an enjoyable time for them with their children
- 7% felt it provided them with information and support for parenting concerns.

For the Family:

- 47% of the parents felt that the program had brought the family together. Songs, rhyme play and storytelling had extended to the whole family.
- 6% felt that the importance of singing and story telling had been increased for the family as a result of being in the program.

What Parents Valued Most about the TLC3 Vancouver Project Programs:

At Exit, the top three things that the parents reported valuing the most about the TLC3 program were:

1) the sense of community that the program provided them
2) the learning opportunity for themselves – learning of the activities, learning English, learning parenting strategies
3) the exposure their children got to music

At follow-up, the responses were similar and the top four things the parents reported as valuing most were:

1) the socializing that took place in the session
2) the friendships they made
3) the verbal skills their children developed
4) the learning of word play as a way to interact with their child.

Eighty-two percent (82%) of the families felt that their participation in the TLC3 Vancouver Project had had a long-term impact on them and their children.

What Parents had Valued Least about the TLC3 Vancouver Project Programs:

The main thing that parents reported liking least about the sessions was the story-telling component. Many parents reported feeling uncomfortable with the story retelling, many felt the stories were too long and others felt tired out by the time the story had been retold. Interestingly, almost every parent said they liked having stories told to them and that this had been a new experience for 50% of the people as adults. The story-telling component the parents were referring to took place in the final half hour of each session. During this time the parents each took a turn retelling a short portion of a story to the group. It seemed that the anxiety of performing solo was the aspect that impacted people's comfort with the retelling. That it was a new experience as an adult also meant there was a challenge experienced in the activity. It seemed that storytelling was not an easy skill to develop as adults for us within the mainstream Canadian culture and confidence in our ability was needed.

It was not a surprise to receive this feedback from parents as the leaders themselves found storytelling the most challenging part of the program to prepare for and provide. This is an area worth further exploration by the Parent-Child Mother Goose organization. There is also a message for early childhood educators and librarians to consider the use of storytelling to focus on the use of the mind for picture making and generating the story. There is a heavy emphasis in our society on the importance of visual information – reading books- and much less on auditory information which has been proven to be a critical element in pre-literacy skill development.

Feedback from Parents for whom English was a Second Language:

- 50% of these parents reported that participation in the program had been difficult initially but that it had been a great way to improve their English

- 25% reported that they found it hard to understand the rhymes and songs because of the rapid rate and unusual words

- 63% found having the words written down made it much easier to recognize and remember the words as they listened to them

- 25% found that the high rate of repetition helped them to learn the material

- Despite these challenges – 63% reported remembering the songs and rhymes and using them at home

- 75% of these parents would not have wanted the experience in the Parent-Child Mother Goose Program to be any different than it was.

Would Parents Encourage Other Families to Use the Parent-Child Mother Goose Program?

100% reported they would recommend it to other families. 96% reported that they had already done so.

Three staff of the TLC3 Vancouver Project had had concerns about the evaluation demands made on families with young children. Families contributed approximately 14 hours over the 2-3 years they were involved in the project, including follow-up. At follow-up, parents were asked about the experience of having participated in the evaluation and three quarters responded that they were satisfied with the amount of time the evaluation had required of them. Parents were also asked if being asked to participate in the program evaluation had made them hesitant about coming to the program. All of them (100%) said they were completely comfortable with having been asked. This was important information for others who may hesitate to implement an evaluation component into their programs.

e. Results of the Staff Questionnaires:

A total of 9 leaders completed one or more of the evaluation questionnaires. The two project co-coordinators, both Speech/Language Pathologists, acted as group leaders for one 30-week cycle in the course of the three years during which the program was being evaluated. The remaining leaders were with the program for between one to three 30-week cycles. A total of 18 long version leader evaluations were completed.

Review of the Group:

There was a consensus over the three-year evaluation period among the leaders that all 30-week cycles were a success. In this respect, there was no difference between the Kiwassa and Collingwood facilitators. Assessments of the 30-week cycles ranged from *"pretty well"* to *"very well."*

General Comments About The Atmosphere Of The Groups

Leaders thought the parents enjoyed themselves very much during the sessions. With the passage of time, *"A relaxed feeling increasingly"* took hold and *"good humour and spontaneity"* becoming more frequent. Families and leaders became *"more relaxed and playful."* There was a *"Good comfort level within the group with children and parents and leaders,"* and *"sessions flowed very smoothly; there were no really big concerns."* In the words of one leader, *"it has developed into a friendly, causal place and time where parents and children have come together to share not only rhymes and songs, but quality time and an enriching experience."*

Leaders Becoming More Proficient At The Job

A Kiwassa leader noted in two evaluation forms that she had become more confident about her leadership skills. Having to demonstrate leadership in the group sessions built her confidence to be a leader in other areas. Another Kiwassa leader learned how to take more credit for the good work she brought to the program. A

Collingwood leader reported that "*I felt we went from not being so sure of our own ability to feeling confident in running the program."* Leaders also commented that they became more proficient at what they were doing. One described this as an *"improvement in the delivery."* Another reported that *she "learned to observe what goes on around [her] much more than [she] used to. The third leader developed a deeper understanding and appreciation for the capacity of very young infants to respond to simple rhymes once it becomes a familiar part of their experience, and an enhanced appreciation of the infant's capacity overall. A Kiwassa leader who gave responses pertaining to increased proficiency on two separate occasions reported that she gained more knowledge about language development in young children, and knowledge of developmental milestones in the first year of life. Another Kiwassa leader reported that she became "much better at giving instructions on how to sing the songs so the child stays entertained and interested."*

Professional Growth

Leaders felt that they had grown professionally during their association with theTLC3 Vancouver Project. A Collingwood facilitator became more comfortable including and offering her role as a Mental Health worker. Two leaders wrote that they became "more comfortable with parents around discussions about child development," such as "providing families with ideas etc. regarding their child's development, childcare, etc."

Patience and Flexibility

Two leaders stated that they learned *"increased patience for differing ways of doing things."* Another facilitator learned how to cope with changes affecting a program, *"such as change of leaders, or change in direction."* A Collingwood leader wrote that the *"facilitators are working comfortably and well together. Lot's of flexibility."*

An important aspect of the program that one leader brought up as being particularly enjoyable was the fact that *"it's an interactive program. "I'm not performing but rather sharing rhymes and songs with the toddlers and adults. And at times, they're sharing theirs with me too."*

Teamwork

When asked how well the staff teams were working together many positive responses were given. They ranged from general statements, such as *"pretty damn well," "Like clockwork,"* to very specific responses that explained the reason for which the facilitator teams worked the way they did. Several staff mentioned the enjoyment derived from collegiality and working towards a common goal with other leaders. Others commented on the enjoyment *of "working as a member of a team of several professionals,"* the *"easy, open partnership with the other leaders,"* witnessing the *"development of confidence among other program staff,"* and *"developing relationships with staff."*

Two key areas valued by the leaders in their partnerships were:

1. The willingness of colleagues to take on responsibilities. The facilitators wrote about *"pulling for each other when necessary,"* an *"easy willingness to take on pieces,"* and *"sharing responsibilities and roles."*

2. The benefits of having the teams composed of people who brought different knowledge and skills to the groups: ***"****We brought different expertise, strengths, and personalities to the job."* One Collingwood facilitator wrote, *"I find they (the other two facilitator) have a lot of experience and knowledge that I still am learning from them."* A Kiwassa facilitator expressed the opinion that "*Having three people deliver the program works well. Having three people with different backgrounds and expertise makes the program work even better."*

Factors Contributing To Good Teamwork

The factors identified by the facilitators as contributing to good teamwork were an appreciation of the various strengths brought to the program by individual facilitators, the respect each one had for the views of others, feeling comfortable sharing ideas and concerns, a sense of having common goals, and a *"matched style in looking at families."* The fact that some of the facilitators also had young children also helped bring them together. Another factor mentioned was sharing a sense of humour, *"which helped during times of frustrations."*

Things Leaders found difficult about the program and their suggestions for how the TLC3 Vancouver Project could alleviate the difficulties.

Five facilitators found learning and delivering songs, stories, and rhymes to be among the most difficult aspects of the CONNECTIONS program. Finding the ways to learn songs, stories, and rhymes was one challenge and becoming a better storyteller was another challenge. Not having props, musical instruments, or even books to assist with storytelling was another difficulty mentioned. For one facilitator, feeling confident of her memory and ability to tell a story in her second language was a challenge.

The proposed solutions to these difficulties were as follows:

- To have a resource file or binder to record new songs, rhymes, and stories.
- To clarify the approach to storytelling.
- Hold more workshops on story-telling.
- Budget some time to allow facilitators to see how other groups are doing.
- Make more tapes with stories available.
- Taping their own storytelling as part of practice. Telling each other the stories as part of practice.

Each of these suggestions was acted on and led to the creation of the "Gatherings" for on-going in-service education and support.

Parent-Toddler Mother Goose Programs

Ten parents, who had participated with their children in the TLC3 program, completed their training and ran Parent-Child Mother Goose Programs for toddlers in the two Houses. They all reported that this experience had been a positive one in which they had learned a great deal about themselves. These programs were not included in the evaluation but were viewed as a significant outcome of the project. One of these parents took on a leader role within the Collingwood Parent-Child Mother Goose Program for the last year of the TLC3 Vancouver Project. She and another parent then took over the Collingwood program at the completion of the project under the direction of the Collingwood staff member who had worked in the project.

Child Minders

Two of the childminders at Kiwassa, also completed the training and were running PCMG programs elsewhere in the community. Again, an important outcome of the project.

SUMMARY:

The leaders found working for the TLC3 project a worthwhile experience that offered them some unique learning and growth. In hindsight, it was unfortunate that we did not ask the leaders whether they had an opportunity to apply the knowledge and skills they acquired through their association with the TLC3 Vancouver Project in any other settings and/or situations, and, if they did, with what effect. However, we do know that one of the leaders extended the experience in designing the CONNECTIONS brochure to creating other brochures

for programs in the House. This same leader began to include songs and storytelling in her circles in the Family Place.

At the conclusion of the TLC3 Vancouver Project, all of the leaders had moved into positions of more responsibility in their respective agency settings. One of the leaders had become the first Regional Coordinator of the Parent-Child Mother Goose Program for BC.

f. Feedback from the Administrators of Collingwood and Kiwassa Neighbourhood Houses

The Executive Director of Collingwood Neighbourhood House, and the Program Manager for Kiwassa Neighbourhood House were interviewed at the conclusion of the project. Overall, both administrators felt that the impact of the TCL3 Vancouver Project on the Houses had been positive. It was felt that the programs offered through the project were very much a fit with the other programs offered to young families. As a result of partnering with TLC3, Kiwassa was able to provide some *"very wonderful"* programming that accorded well with its community and with what Kiwassa was already doing. In particular, the Program Manager thought that both the PCMG and the Toddler Group fit very well with the overall family oriented programming run by Kiwassa, in that the Neighbourhood Houses' goals of supporting families' and children's development was identical to that of TLC3. In her words, "it was and remains a really good fit."
The Executive Director of Collingwood Neighbourhood House described the impact of TLC3 on Collingwood as being *"in general, very positive."* There was a good match between the content and programmatic assumptions underpinning TLC3 and the array of services and programming being run by Collingwood. The House already had a lot of support groups in place. The Executive Director noted that TLC3 was far more advanced than the regular support groups that were being delivered by Collingwood at the time, in that it had many aspects absent in regular programming, such as speech and language assessments, and the tracking of children's speech and language development.

For Collingwood the partnership between TLC3 and the Neighbourhood house operated smoothly, without any major challenges. From an administrative point of view, the TLC3 Vancouver Project had a moderate impact on the House. The Executive Director thought that in part, the absence of administrative challenges had to do with the nature of TLC3 Vancouver Project funding and the accountability required by the funder. More specifically it was the TLC3 Vancouver Project, not Collingwood Neighourhood House, that was accountable to Hincks-Dellcrest Institute and, indirectly, to the Lawson Foundation**.**

For Kiwassa Neighbourhood House there were some challenges in regards to administrative issues. The challenges were primarily due to differences in organizational cultures and demands on staff time. Most of these challenges were overcome, mainly by efforts made by the partnering organizations to better understand each other.

Legacy Of the TLC3 Vancouver Project

Since the TLC3 project funded has ended both Neighbourhood Houses have continued to run the parent-infant Parent-Child Mother Goose Program, although without the speech and language component as this was not affordable.

> "We are going to continue to run the PCMG program come hell or high water. It set a kind of waterline for a lot of organisations looking for the type of program that would foster early child development and parent-child attachment. […] This definitely is a program that is going to have lots of longevity." Oscar Allueva, Executive Director, Collingwood Neighbourhood House

At the time of the interview (January 2003), Collingwood was working towards the development of a Parent-Child Mother Goose Program for use with Aboriginal families. The Executive Director thought that introducing an Aboriginal Parent-Child Mother Goose Program would have a much greater impact on how Collingwood is perceived in the community, than that of having the TLC3 Vancouver Project operate at its site.

Kiwassa began running a Parent-Child Mother Goose Program for Aboriginal Families in September 2002.

In March 2003, both Houses had restarted the parent-toddler Parent-Child Mother Goose Programs.

g. Key Findings from the Evaluation:

Overall, the children demonstrated significant positive gains in their social and symbolic development while in this program and sustained the gains a year later. These gains were observed for all types of children in the evaluation which included typically developing children as well as children with language and developmental challenges. These results show that the program had something to offer all of the children.

Parents found the program provided them with a sense of community, a source of support, and a place to share pleasure with their infants once a week. They carried the songs, rhymes and stories home and a year later a significant percentage were still using this form of interaction with their children. Parents felt the program had had an impact on them, their children and their families.

The staff involved all gained from the experience of participating in the project. They have all moved into positions of more responsibility. Some leaders, who had worked with parents and children separately, experienced the value of programs for both together.

The project provided training and mentoring for parents and child minders who wanted to learn to lead. Their participation as leaders further enriched the project and the programming at the Houses.

The administrators of the Neighbourhood Houses had valued the experience of partnership with the project. They felt it was important that the Parent-Child Mother Goose Program continue to offered and expanded for other groups in the community, specifically the First Nations communities.

h. Overall Impact:

Like the programs offered through the TLC3 Vancouver Project, the impact of the project itself was multi-layered. As mentioned throughout the evaluation section, the program had a positive impact on the **children**, the **parents,** and the **parent-child relationships** of the participants. The parents and children gained a sensed of community, felt more connected with neighbourhoods, made friends, learned songs, stories and rhymes, and spent time interacting with each other in an enjoyable and healthy way. Another impact the program had on some families was an early identification of potential language or developmental problems. Through the program these problems were recognized and the families were referred to appropriate supports and services.

As mentioned, the project also had a positive impact on the **staff** that led the programs. Specifically the staff reported that they had grown professionally through the experience of being in the TLC3 Vancouver Project. They had learned many new skills, learned about program evaluation, and felt there had been great value in working collaboratively with people from other agencies.

The **coordinators** of the project were also very impacted by the project and their comments are as follows:

Sue Formosa – My experience in the TLC3 Vancouver Project was powerful. I learned so many new administrative and personal skills. It turned out to be a bridge career on the way to my next profession. The

project work challenged me, frustrated me, scared me, thrilled me, and ultimately satisfied me. It was the most important contribution I made to the Vancouver community in my many years of working in mental health and as a registered speech-language pathologist. I completed the TLC3 Vancouver Project with a clear belief that building healthy communities is the way to health for all families.

Michelle Droettboom - Involvement in the TLC3 Vancouver Project set me on the path of "prevention" that complemented a career in "intervention" as a speech-language pathologist. In the two years I was with the project as co-coordinator, I more clearly came to realize where I had skills, and where collaboration was essential. Thank goodness Sue could manage budgets and research! Involvement as a PCMG leader gave me a personal wealth of songs, rhymes, and stories. I use these in every aspect of my life, from using the repetitive language within a song to interact with a child with autism, to teaching a group of teen moms a short rhyme to use with their new baby, to telling a story to start a meeting with professional colleagues, to singing to my new granddaughter. Involvement as a PCMG trainer allowed me to carry the enthusiasm we felt for the TLC3 Vancouver Project throughout the province. Involvement at the National Symposium allowed me to tell everyone a story just after dinner. What fun!

Another impact the program had was on the **community** as a whole. The TLC3 Vancouver Project's Parent-Child Mother Goose Program was embraced by the communities of B.C. The training, provided initially through the strong support of the Provincial Steering Committee for the Infant Development Programs of B.C., resulted in many different agencies knowing very quickly about the TLC3 Vancouver Project and its programs. Community health professionals liked the communication and developmental screening component. The university, administrators and funders all liked the evaluation component of the project and promoted the project's programs in their own work. Librarians altered how they provided services to young children. Family Places looked for ways to incorporate ideas from the Parent-Child Mother Goose Program and sought funding for their own Parent-Child Mother Goose Programs. By 1999, many people in BC, who were working with young families, knew about the TLC3 Vancouver Project and Parent-Child Mother Goose Program. That same year there were enough trained leaders within the Vancouver area to begin running "Gatherings" for continuing education and support for the leaders.

When the TLC3 Vancouver staff began seeking sustainable funding for the programs, funders and agency administrators knew of the project's programs and facilitated requests for funding. Families and Parent-Child Mother Goose Programs in the community were asked to submit letters of support if they wanted these programs supported in B.C. TLC3 received 42 letters of support. Most testified to what the Parent-Child Mother Goose Program had provided their own families or community and all stated they wanted these programs to be available to all families with young children. The quality of the TLC3 Vancouver Project's programs, the evaluation of the programs, and the connection to a National Initiative resulted in a high regard by funders and families.

The sentiments of the community professionals was articulated by a parent who is also a family therapist wrote:

"As a counsellor and family therapist, I can attest to the program's effectiveness in strengthening the attachment between parent and child. The learning at Parent-Child Mother Goose is simple and yet profound – we discovered through singing and rhyming how to enter closely into our child's world, we experienced new ways to enjoy being with them. The joy with which our infants responded enriched the circle of connection between them and ourselves. Participation in the group also provided innumerable occasions for witnessing the positive parenting of others – the mother with the colicky baby using an effective colic hold, the rambunctious toddler who was gently but effectively diverted from causing harm. Both personal experience and professional understanding concur in my assertion that the Parent-Child Mother Goose Program is a powerful and proactive early intervention from which families at all levels of functioning can benefit."

With the success of these programs focussed on wellness and capacities for the parent-child relationship, it was expected that future initiatives for families with young children in BC would follow a strength based model,

even in work with families who were currently under significant stress. It was also expected that the Ministry for Child and Family Development would look to this model when revamping its supervised access visits for families whose children were in care.

Sustainability

a. What did we mean by sustainability?

As with other aspects of the TLC3 Vancouver Project, the definition of sustainability came to have many meanings. Initially the thought was that programs would be introduced and learned by professionals in Vancouver.

Then when the project selected key sites, maintenance of the programs at those sites was wanted.

Then as others took the Parent-Child Mother Goose Program training and implemented programs, continuing education and support factored into the plan for sustaining what was started through theTLC3 Vancouver Project.

Next, as professionals within BC learned about the project and adapted it to their own work and setting, sustainability included a wide spread appreciation of supporting the parent-child relationship to stimulate language and cognition.

Not far behind this, as parents moved from being participants to being leaders within the Parent-Child Mother Goose Program, sustainability changed to conceptualizing families at the centre of it.

As children were identified for specialized services, sustainability included providing the children with the interventions they needed to be able to hold onto and use the experiences they took part in through the TLC3 Vancouver Project.

Finally, as funding was sought and it was discovered that funders already knew of the TLC3 Vancouver Project, particularly The Parent-Child Mother Goose Program. When BC Council for Families took over sponsorship of the Parent-Child Mother Goose Program sustainability meant an impact across the province well beyond the initial site of the TLC3 Vancouver Project.

b. The aspects of the TLC3 Vancouver Project that will be sustained:

Funding was obtained from The Vancouver Foundation, The United Way – Success By Six, the National Literacy Secretariat, the Lawson Foundation, and Vancouver Community Mental Health Services of Vancouver Coastal Health Authority. This funding paid for a provincial coordinator of the Parent-Child Mother Goose Program, secretarial support, continuing education for leaders, and two mentoring Parent-Child Mother Goose Programs at Kiwassa and Collingwood Neighbourhood Houses.

The coordination of the Parent-Child Mother Goose Programs in BC would continue in an enhanced manner through the newly created Provincial Coordinator for Parent-Child Mother Goose Programs within the BC Council for Families as part of the regional development of the National Network of Parent-Child Mother Goose Programs. The BC Infant Development Programs remained committed to supporting Parent-Child Mother Goose Program training and program operation throughout BC.

The Kiwassa and Collingwood Neighbourhood House parent-infant Parent-Child Mother Goose Programs would be sustained for at least another year as they evolved into mentoring sites for the coordination of Parent-Child Mother Goose Programs in BC.

The continuing education and support to leaders would be continued by the Provincial Coordinator of Parent-Child Mother Goose Programs in BC through the BC Council for Families.

The two sites for the TLC3 Vancouver Project now had strong links to the Community Health Services at North and Evergreen Health Centres. They would continue to help families in their programs with referrals for specialized services.

The Provincial Coordinator would be helping Parent-Child Mother Goose Programs around the province to connect with their community resources for young families.

New programs would continue to have support in getting started, obtaining information on possible funding sources, and consultation over their first year for the usual, and unusual, predicaments that present in running a program.

c. How the sustained activities were achieved:

The Parent-Child Mother Goose Program became very well known through the training and network of the Infant Development Programs of BC. Once programs began to be run in three of four other locations that were not part of the TLC3 Vancouver Project, the news traveled even more quickly. As already mentioned, Dr. Clyde Hertzman promoted these programs in his talks to administrators and government bureaucrats about programs of excellence. By the time we began to approach funders, the funders and community professionals were all familiar with the program. **A great program was its own best promotion for sustainability.**

Funding was sought for the coordination of Parent-Child Mother Goose Programs in BC in collaboration with the National Office of Parent-Child Mother Goose Programs and BC Council for Families on the advice of Eva Robinson, of The Vancouver Foundation. As mentioned above, in this report, a committee of community partners met over a year to define what the community of Parent-Child Mother Goose Program leaders wanted to have sustained. There was a clear message of a need for a provincial coordinator who could organize training, provide mentoring, present continuing education for leaders, and help to create links to other community services and funders. This clarity made grant searching relatively easy. All grants were written with this goal in mind. It was a goal that fit with the mandates of all of our funders.

The site staff participated with the families in helping them make referrals for specialized services. As mentoring site staff, they would encourage other programs to help their families make these links. The provincial coordinator would also be encouraging this link to specialized community resources as the broader goal of linking the Parent-Child Mother Goose Programs more closely to a network of community resources.

d. The programs that ended with the TLC3 Vancouver Project:

At the end of the TLC3 project the parent-toddler Parent-Child Mother Goose Programs had to be let go. Families were disappointed by this decision but obtaining funding for on-going programs turned out to be very difficult in BC at a time when the government was making major cuts to health care and major revisions to services through the Ministry for Child and Family Development. Non-profit funders saw the funding of on-going programs to be the mandate of government. It would seem that finding private funders was going to be necessary for programs in the near future in this province.

The communication and developmental screening was also not sustained as a formal program. While administrators and researchers valued this component, it was seen as fitting within the domain of public health and funding was not available from other sources. Resources within the Ministry of Health were very tight and though the will was definitely there from administration and line staff, the cuts dictated by the Provincial government made it impossible to sustain existing intervention programs let alone to sustain a prevention, early intervention communication program. Discussions were held with staff and administrators of the Vancouver Coastal Health Authority to encourage a link between the community health nurses and registered speech-language pathologists, who worked in Community Health Services, and leaders of the Parent-Child Mother Goose Programs in Vancouver.

As well, a presentation was made at the BC Association of Speech-Language Pathologists and Audiologists in November 2001. Registered speech-language pathologists working in other parts of the province were encouraged to find a way to link with Parent-Child Mother Goose Programs in their communities. The value of the early detection and intervention that had occurred through the TLC3 Vancouver Project's communication and developmental screening was emphasized.

It is hoped that the TLC3 results, particularly for those children who had been identified with communication or developmental challenges, will be useful to people within the Provincial Community Health Boards in arguing for this kind of inexpensive screening and referral program for infants and toddlers.

e. <u>Themes and lessons learned through our efforts to sustain valued programs:</u>

Being asked to think about and plan for sustainability right from the beginning of the TLC3 Vancouver Project was an effective strategy in keeping our eye on the long-term impact for what we were doing in the moment. It would be recommended that other projects be encouraged to do this too.

Finding funding and obtaining funding required significant amounts of time. Beginning the pursuit of funds well ahead of when money was needed gave the time needed for meeting, providing information, ensuring everyone involved shared the vision, and developing an action plan *with a budget*.

The actual application process was a minor piece of the work in fund raising.

Personal contact remained key in beginning the relationship with a funder. Knowing someone who knew the someone we needed to connect with, made the connection happen. Where we did not have this link, we looked for someone who did and asked for their help in the process.

Training in the community ensured growth of the Parent-Child Mother Goose Program.

Community knowledge of the programs was essential for promoting support for the program.

The communication and developmental screening was tied to a single profession – registered speech-language pathology – a professional group that was very overwhelmed with the demand for services. If Community Health Services had been a central player in the TLC3 Vancouver Project, the 5 years of the project might have given enough time for the early intervention/prevention piece to be experienced and be given some priority by the administrators of the Vancouver Coastal Health Authority. This may then have provided a link to other health authorities around the province. However, the TLC3 Vancouver Project was created during a time of massive bureaucratic change with accompanying downsizing. It was hoped, that when and if stability returned, Community Health Services would take a larger role in promoting this fine example of primary prevention.

The running of the programs should have been turned over to the sites (Neighbourhood Houses) earlier in the project to transfer the planning for budget to the sites and have them begin to fund raise for the programs. When

this was finally done at the end of the project, the sites had some very good ideas of how to embed costs or reduce costs of running the program, that were unique to each of their settings, without impacting on the program delivery and staffing requirements.

Collaborations

With the community:

As mentioned in the beginning of this report, the TLC3 Vancouver Project in Vancouver was a collaboration by five community partners soon after it began and this collaboration grew through the "Gatherings", trainings, and ultimately the fundraising. The key strategy for fostering successful collaborations was involving everyone connected to the project in each step of the project development and asking the members to think about outside people who would be useful for various pieces of the project. These recommended people then attended community collaboration meetings which were run like the Parent-Child Mother Goose Program – a story, a rhyme, time for everyone to say why they were there, good healthy food, and a parent to tell about the experience of the programs for their family. The purpose was to break the set of people's thinking about a meeting and to give them a bit of an experience of what they were being asked to contribute toward. At these meetings people were asked to indicate how they saw themselves contributing. No one was asked to do anything more than what they offered. It is felt that this process of canvassing the community and inviting them into the project was key in having the project be known and supported across the community. The community felt ownership of the project, especially the Parent-Child Mother Goose Program.

Others trying to establish similar relationships with community collaborators should have a clear picture of what they feel the collaborator has to offer the relationship and convey this to the person/agency in a personal contact. It is important to be sensitive to the heavy time demands on all community professionals and parents and to set up a meeting format that allows them to participate but not to have to commit additional time if it is not realistic for them. The meeting format brings everyone together, builds the energy for the work, and enhances the sense of community (especially when the people in the room would not ordinarily sit together). Parent participation is essential for making the work real. Parents should be articulate, have an easy sense of humour, have spirit for the goal, and be comfortable in a room full of professionals so that they find the experience satisfying and do not just feel used by the process. **The parents' time, transportation, and childcare costs need to be fully compensated.**

With the Research Partners:

The TLC3 Vancouver Project began with one research collaborator, changed to a second research collaborator and finished the project with a third research collaborator. The changes were made for a variety of reasons making the process very challenging for the Program Coordinator. Based on her experience collaborating with the researchers that Program Coordinator has the following advice.

i) Advice to community based programs looking for a research collaborator

- Have a clear idea of the kinds of questions you want answered before looking for a collaborator.

- Talk to those who have used the person; asking about timeliness of the work, style of working with staff, how direct the person is, whether the researcher's own agenda got in the way of the work, and what they had liked the most about the collaboration.

- Ensure the researcher has done similar work before. Community programs have limited budgets so it is not the appropriate context in which someone should be learning a new skill as a researcher.

- Have the researcher connected to the project but with some distance from the day to day working so that there is no perceived conflict in their data analysis.

- Set deadlines for pieces of the work to be done. Have these deadlines throughout the time of the project to ensure the work is being done and to a standard required by the project. When deadlines are missed, only set one additional deadline before looking for an alternate person to collaborate with on the evaluation.

ii) Advice to a researcher looking for a community partner:

- Clarify working relationships and responsibilities, including those to do with locating and developing evaluation tools.

- Clarify the possibility of publication of results and the role of the research in the project.

- Time the introduction of the evaluation so that programming is already underway and staff have a comfort/confidence in the work they are doing. Then hold meetings to ask what questions they have about the programs and the work they are doing. Staff need to have a sense of their work before they can generate questions about the work.

- Demonstrate how to use the evaluation tools and be available for frequent consultation when their use begins, then periodically review how the tools are being used through the course of the evaluation.

- Revise tools only as they require (and not for every nuance the staff want) and ensure revisions will complement previous versions to alleviate confusion during data entry.

With the Hincks-Dellcrest Institute

a. ***Hincks-Dellcrest Institute staff' style of management for the TLC3 Vancouver Project:***

The style of management of the Hincks-Dellcrest Institute staff for the TLC3 Vancouver Project would best be described as that of an optimistic parent who conveyed much confidence in the ability of the TLC3 Vancouver Project staff to find ways in the work in their own community. All of the Hincks-Dellcrest Institute staff were non-directive and reflective in their interactions with the TLC3 staff in Vancouver, in their correspondence, and during the symposia.

b. ***The impact of this style on the evolution of the TLC3 Vancouver Project in Vancouver***:

The HDI style encouraged us to own the project in our community. At times, early on, this role felt a bit overwhelming, especially knowing we were part of a national project. As time went on, it felt very supportive knowing that there were people readily available to talk things over with, who would ask the reflective questions that would guide us to solutions. It resulted in us looking for a model that truly fit with the philosophy of the early childhood community in Vancouver rather than imposing some vision that fit for the whole country (if such a vision could exist!).

We found ourselves replicating this style at every level of the work both within the TLC3 Vancouver Project's programs and with the community collaborations we formed. We believe this is why the programs became so owned by the staff, the families and the community as a whole.

This style of collaboration did not work as well for the evaluation as we felt that we needed more direction from HDI staff. The people selected to implement the TLC3 Vancouver Project had expertise in program

development and delivery. While we were all familiar with client satisfaction surveys, formal evaluation of a project was new to all of the staff. .

c. ***The personal impact of our relationships with the Hincks-Dellcrest Institute management:***

Sue Formosa-

The relationship with HDI management had a significant impact on me personally. It showed me an alternate way to guide group process that carried into other aspects of my professional work and in family decision making. The respect for my ideas and views gave me confidence to voice them and made me feel that I was capable of pulling off this huge task that was so new and different from what I had ever done before. The complementary nature of the work in the project both within our site and across the sites was very appealing to me. Ultimately, it resulted in my being able to look to a new career path where complementary work was possible. Even as I made this decision, the HDI staff expressed pleasure for me and accepted the change without trying to keep me in the project. It was the first time in my professional career that I was not pressured or persuaded to do other than what I felt I wanted to do. I would describe the relationship as having been very freeing.

Beth Hutchinson-

My one experience at the national symposium was very impressive. People came together from very different backgrounds and worked and played together in a very collegial manner. All of the HDI staff with whom I was connected were most welcoming and thoughtful.

Communications: Local

a. ***Activities used to spread knowledge about the TLC3 Vancouver Project and its programs:***

Parent-Child Mother Goose Program training was offered within the Vancouver area. Subsequently, this was provided through IDP and the National Office of Parent-Child Mother Goose Program. The trainers were linked to the TLC3 Vancouver Project so the history of how the Parent-Child Mother Goose Program came to BC was always a part of the training.

Professional conferences were used to spread the word. Posters and workshops were offered at the Canadian Association of Speech-Language Pathologists and Audiologists in 1999, The Early Years Conference in 2000 and 2002, Literacy in the Community in 2001, and British Columbia Association of Speech-Language Pathologists and Audiologists in 2001. The Infant Development Programs of BC also had speakers at their annual training sessions or arranged for training to tie in with a formal Parent-Child Mother Goose Program or You Make the Difference training.

In-services were offered to Community Services of Vancouver/Richmond Health Board in 1999 and 2000 and to the Vancouver Public Library librarians in 1998 and 1999.

Alan Cashmore Centre Parent Infant Program staff discussed the Parent-Child Mother Goose Program each time they did a ***presentation at a parent-tot drop-in.***

Demonstrations of the Parent-Child Mother Goose Program and discussion of the developmental screening was provided twice a year to the parent-tot drop ins at the Evergreen Health Centre from 1999-2002.

A ***presentation was made to Vancouver Foundation funders*** in 2001.

Administrators from a range of government ministries were invited to a meeting to discuss the TLC3 Vancouver Project and to hear from some parents about the impact of the program on their families in 2001.

b. ***Most successful communication tools***:

Word of mouth from family to family for any given program – we know this because parents told us they had come because a friend had recommended it.

Word of mouth from professional to professional across programs – we know this because professionals called for information about the programs having heard from a colleague about the programs.

Facilitating referrals for children in the programs to other specialized services in the community. This made the community professionals aware of the programs and they valued the early referrals from the programs. They recommended the programs to other families.

Parent-Child Mother Goose Program Leader Training – to ensure quality programs that were initiated with specific standards – people who set up programs used the PCMG trainers for support around negotiating for adequate space and hours for the program. Without the training, the general idea may have been conveyed but the actual replication of programs would not have taken place.

Replication of Parent-Child Mother Goose Program across the communities of BC – increased visibility made many more people aware of the program than would have occurred if the TLC3 Vancouver Project sites had remained the only places this program was offered.

Meetings with administrators that included parent spokespeople – this engaged the professionals more than having a conversation with them about the programs.

Experiencing the programs – through video or live – engaged people at an emotional level so that they were able to know what was being referred to when they were told it was a relationship based program for parents with their infants and toddlers.

c. ***Organizations and professionals trained about the TLC3 Vancouver Project's programs:***

Infant development consultants, early childhood educators, nurses, registered speech-language pathologists, social workers, librarians, child care counsellors, peer counsellors, teachers, family resource program coordinators, psychologists, counselling psychologists, psychiatrists, family support workers, and first nations workers have all been trained on topics related to the TLC3 activities and programs. Most of this training was done by as part of the Parent-Child Mother Goose Program training provided by the National Office of the Parent-Child Mother Goose Program and Infant Development Programs of BC.

i. The training focused on how to set up and run a Parent-Child Mother Goose Program, implementation of a communication and developmental screening program, or/and how to develop community collaboration for implementing universal programs.

ii. Many of these professionals used the information to recommend the establishment of these programs in their own communities. Many set up and ran Parent-Child Mother Goose Programs; in a few instances this was accomplished by a collaboration between two or more community agencies.

Some speech-language pathologists and nurses became involved in providing consultation for developmental and communication concerns in programs in their communities.

Summary and Conclusions

a. <u>Key themes in establishing and developing the TLC3 Vancouver Project programs</u>:

Sense of Community:

- By providing a program focused on wellness, families came; in abundance.
- Children and parents can have a sense of community even in a large city.
- The few parents who felt too different from the other parents also needed a sense of community. We learned from them that programs offered more selectively would probably have offered them more of a sense of community. Teen parents and parents who were struggling with their feelings of being a parent and feeling attached to their child were two groups we encountered who needed something different to feel they belonged.
- Several parents had become active in local community issues out of their contacts in the Parent-Child Mother Goose Program.
- Parents and child minders became leaders and spread the experience to an even broader community.
- Partnership was challenging and required time, openness, flexibility, strong communication skills, comfort with error and enjoyment of shared laughter. It also required excellent boundaries and a comfort with confrontation and compromise.
- Partnership was the most rewarding and effective way to work as it brought divergent views to the planning, implementation, problem solving and ultimate achievement; and the celebration of that achievement.

Support Network:

- Gather families together and they will develop support networks for themselves.
- What is simple on the surface yet resonates with so many usually indicates depth and impact on many levels.
- Families with problems do learn from being with families who are healthy. . Families with problems felt most comfortable when they were not the only ones with visible problems in the group.
- Support by leaders outside of the program time was essential in engaging and reassuring some families. It was also the most respectful way to address problems that families were having within the program.

Pleasure:

- Children showed pleasure in coming to the program
- Parents took pleasure in being with their children and seeing other children achieve and have pleasure.

- Leaders felt pleasure in watching the children grow and change, and seeing the parents have time to enjoy their children.

Growth:

- All of the children grew in their ability to interact socially and participate in the program.

- Ten of the children had received very early intervention for communication or developmental challenges. The benefits will show throughout their lives.

- Most families welcomed the consultation with the registered speech-language pathologist even when their children were doing well. They used it as a time to find out what else they could do to promote their child's development.

- Partnership invariably leads to personal growth for everyone involved. The leaders experienced this as did the administrators of the Houses and the TLC3 coordinator.

- Partnerships lead to further partnerships lead to further partnerships lead to accomplishing the growth of an idea into a realized objective. At the end of the project, a regional office for the Parent-Child Mother Goose Program had been established within the BC Council for Families. There was also an increased awareness of the benefits of developmental screening being tied to the
- Parent-Child Mother Goose Program by the speech-language pathologists in BC. It was an area that need further growth yet one we were optimistic about when funding became available for prevention early intervention programs.

b. <u>Key themes running through the evaluation findings</u>

Sense of Community:

- Parents, leaders and administrators reported on the sense of community that participation in the TLC3 Vancouver Project had provided them.

- The children demonstrated significant gains in their social communication skills and parents reported that they showed increased confidence in social experiences.

Support Network:

- Parents and leaders reported that the TLC3 Vancouver Project had provided them with support. The parents had established long-term friendship and had used the program leaders and other parents for information on resources.

- The children who had language, developmental or social challenges were referred for therapy services. Most were receiving therapy at exit and follow-up. Their communication and social skills were stronger. This early intervention would have a life long impact.

- The staff had significant support from the TLC3 National Project throughout the time of the project.

Pleasure:

- The Parent-Child Checklist showed that the children participated more the longer they were in the program.

- Parents reported on the pleasure of sharing such experiences with their child and that it had continued outside of and beyond their involvement in the program.

- Leaders reported on the pleasure of watching parents and babies play together and enjoy each other.

- Parents reported on friendships established in the program.

- Administrators reported on satisfaction in offering programs of this quality in the Neighbourhood Houses.

Growth:

- The children demonstrated significant growth in their communication and symbolic abilities.

- Parents reported on the value of the learning of the songs, rhymes and stories and how this had influenced their interactions with their children.

- Leaders reported on personal growth and demonstrated professional growth by going on to other positions of leadership within their agencies.

- The administrators were developing other kinds of programs for other groups in their Houses based on the model of the programming that the Parent-Child Mother Goose Program offered.

c. Conclusions:

Programs that have a focus on wellness and fun in the parent-child relationship resonant for most people and they will come. Parents establish support systems for themselves when gathered. Parents value having a professional watch their child's development with them and they address concerns early when they have a trust in the relationship with that professional. The parent-child relationship is impacted by this kind of an experience together and promotes secure attachment. The secure attachment contributes to the social/emotional development of the child. Babies learn how to socialize early when they are provided with a predictable model for this. Programs that promote the use of sound play and pragmatics with babies promote the development of social communication and language skills for these children. Training is the most effective way to have a program spread. Continuing education is the most effective way to have a program sustained. Programs nested within a broader base of programs for families are the most successful in being implemented and sustained. These programs need to be experienced by administrators for them to truly 'get' what is happening in the experience for parents and their infants.

The evaluation demonstrated that the children made gains in their social, symbolic and overall communication skills as a result of participating in the TLC3 Vancouver Project. Children with communication and developmental challenges made gains in their speech and overall communication skills. The Parent-Child Mother Goose Program offered something for all of the children. The evaluation also found that parents experienced the program as offering a sense of community, a support network and a time of pleasure with their children. There were long term impacts for most who participated both in the attachment with their child and in the sense of community they felt.

A year after being in the program, parents felt the program had positively influenced how they interacted with their children. They also felt that the program had offered their children a positive first social experience, and a significant number still had friendships with people they had met in the program. The staff who worked in the program went onto to positions of more responsibility at the end of the project. Parents who came as participants became leaders. Participating in such a project had helped administrators see the value of such programming and as a result the Parent-Child Mother Goose Program was still being offered and expanded in both of the Houses.

The TLC3 Vancouver Project was the result of a well-coordinated and supported national project. It brought community professionals together in a new manner and provided a new frame for work together. The reflective style of direction and guidance used at the national level was replicated throughout all levels of work in the TLC3Vancouver Project.

This project provided many different people with an enriching, life changing experience. It impacted at the level of individual participants and at the level of systems within the city of Vancouver and the province of BC. The TLC3 Vancouver Project, like its main program, the Parent-Child Mother Goose Program, looked simple on the surface and yet had such depth that a powerful, sustained outcome had been the result.

SECTION II:

Learnings from the TLC3 experience

The experience of establishing and running the TLC3 Vancouver Project in Vancouver provided many successes and some challenges. The following recommendations are offered to others who are going to start similar projects. The initial portion of this section provides recommendations focussed on the general experience of introducing a new initiative into a community. The second portion of this section provides recommendations focused on the specific experience of implementing Parent-Child Mother Goose Programs with a communication and developmental screening component.

Part 1:

Creating Lasting and Successful Partnerships

1. Community collaborations are important:

- The community knows what it needs. By involving community in the process of the development of an initiative, there will be valuable information of past work and its successes and challenges to begin from in developing the initiative. Use the community knowledge to explore where things had not worked in the past and to determine what might be done differently, particularly in the implementation stage.

- We introduced the idea of using a tried and proven program, resources to run the program, and providing mentoring by trained leaders which all increased community confidence in a new project being started in their neighbourhood. This provided the community with a starting place to build from so that there was not a long process of reviewing what was needed or looking at every possible design for the initiative.

- Community players who are invited to participate in the development of the initiative will define the roles they, or others, may be able to play in the initiative. This provides committed partners for the work and a broad based support for the initiative.

- This development by the community also facilitates the embedding of the initiative into the local neighbourhoods of the community where families will know about it. This will also ensure that the initiative is linked to other services useful to families, and long-term support for the initiative will be generated by the neighbourhood members.

- Collaboration is essential for getting families involved in the initiative through the dissemination of information about the initiative.

- Referral to more specialized services and generic community services is greatly aided when the community knows about the initiative and has participated in its development.

- Collaboration leads to the development of other community programs for young children and their families.

- Families benefit from collaboration because it decreases fragmentation and duplication of programs and services

- Collaboration increases the likelihood of program continuation and continuity for families across programs and time because of the broad base of support and participation in providing the initiative.

The TLC3 Vancouver Project in Vancouver benefited from community collaborations in the following ways:

- Collaborations were a huge benefit to staff in terms of support in creating the programs for the project.

- Well qualified staff employed by community agencies were available to the TLC3 Vancouver Project (the community agencies offered free program space, staff time was donated and there were other donations in kind e.g. staff training and learning opportunities).

- There was additional and expanded use of resources at the Houses and in the community by families because the Community Health Nurses, Registered Speech-Language Pathologists, and Librarians worked with the programs.

- Information about the TLC3 Vancouver Project's programs, especially the Parent-Child Mother Goose Programs, was disseminated to the community through our collaborators. This resulted in a broad base of support for on-going funding of the programs and was significant in securing funding for a provincial coordinator for the Parent-Child Mother Goose Programs and an additional year of funding for the Kiwassa and Collingwood Neighbourhood House parent-infant Parent-Child Mother Goose Programs.

The following people and groups are key to collaboration within the community:

- Community agencies already providing services to families with young children e.g. Public Libraries, Health Board professionals, Family Resource Programs, Neighbourhood House, YMCA. They can get information to families and provide their voices in support of the initiative. These are good agencies to invite into partnership as sites for programs as they have a long history with foundations and private funders. The Developmental Disability Association (DDA) offered administrative support for a very small fee. These other agencies may also offer this kind of support to a project.

- Parents and parent leaders – They provide information to other families, increase visibility of the program and talk about the value of the program. By building capacity for parents to lead or create these programs themselves the number of programs that could be provided was increased.

- Professional community – For referral of families most in need, for support and to lobby, to disseminate information, to sponsor training, and to provide child/family development expertise. These are also the people who have lots of different opportunities to inform families about the program.

- Government – all levels
  - Local government – To implement and provide funding for running the program,
  - Provincial government – For funding for coordination of the programs to provide consistency, for establishing policy and funding for early childhood development initiatives, for quality assurance, and for continuing education for program leaders.

- Other community organizations – Local foundations and businesses for sponsorship. These may be more stable sources of financial support than are the levels of government.

Suggestions on how to best facilitate community collaborations.

Parents:

- Parents value a good program and some may benefit from demonstrations of that program before deciding to participate. Parent-Tot Drop-Ins were used to give this demonstration. Parents were also offered the opportunity to have a participatory observation of the project's programs.

- The project was recommended by community staff in Family Resource Programs whom parents trusted.

- Parents were engaged at four levels - recruitment, participants in the program, as leaders for programs and as members of the Advisory Committee.

- Parents were full partners in the program, evaluation and in providing direction and support to staff. This partnership ensured that the feedback received from parents, who were participating, was acted upon or responded to in subsequent sessions of the program. Of course, the suggestions that were implemented fit with the philosophy and methods of the Parent-Child Mother Goose Program. This led to parents feeling ownership of the program and resulted in them being very welcoming and supportive of new families entering the program.

Community Professionals and Funders:

- The Parent-Child Mother Goose Program and the TLC3 National Project were presented at conferences and in-services. Hearing that the Parent-Child Mother Goose Program was offered all across the country lent credence to the work and value of the program. Hearing that this program was selected by three of the sites of a national TLC3 Project, focused on the enhancement of early language and cognitive development, also lent value to the local TLC3 Vancouver Project.

- The presence of an evaluation component was attractive to professionals, funding sources, government and business. It also ensured that the program leaders knew that what they were doing had meaning and purpose.

- Parents, professionals and administrators were invited to come and take part in a participatory observation of the Parent-Child Mother Goose Program. The snack break provided them with an excellent opportunity to talk with the families who were using the program.

- Opportunities were created for parents to tell their stories to the agencies, funders, and other community professionals. Their stories led to significant increase in others in the community valuing the TLC3 Vancouver Project's programs.

Agencies:

- Local resources for various cultural groups were used as places to leave information about the TLC3 Vancouver Project and the Parent-Child Mother Goose Program and to encourage the staff of these resources to help families attend the program.

- For the community agencies involved in the TLC3 Vancouver Project, written agreements/contracts ensured that miscommunications could be addressed objectively and forward planning was constructive. These contracts were very detailed and required significant time each year, however, they were worth their weight in gold. The contract sustained the working relationship when the partnership was stressed.

- A process was developed for making decisions and setting expectations for how the programs would be provided, reported on and evaluated. This ensured differences or concerns were addressed in a timely manner and with a progressive problem solving focus.

- The administrators of all of the involved agencies supported the project at a distance through support to their own staff. They demonstrated a strong confidence in the abilities of the people directly involved in the TLC3 Vancouver Project to do the work and represent the agencies well. None of the administrators of agencies choose a more hands on approach with the project and as a result the bureaucracy that can build so quickly when public agencies are involved did not take over the project. We would strongly recommend this approach for future such initiatives, with much care given to the selection of agencies to ensure the administrators have a high level of confidence in their staff.

Challenges and some solutions in developing community collaboration:

- ***Challenge***: Ensuring that all community members, who may want to participate in the planning for the initiative, are included.

  Solution: Meetings, phone calls, e-mail, notices at community agencies, and more meetings and phone calls provide opportunities for the community to know about the planning for the initiative. There will always be someone who feels like they were left out. Don't be hard on yourself. Just welcome them in when they appear and proceed.

- ***Challenge***: Helping community agency staff appreciate the depth of the initiative.

  Solution: Seeing the initiative in action or by videotape is very useful in providing a 'feel' for the program so that people are receptive to the rational for the program and an explanation of all the necessary components.

- ***Challenge***: Ensuring that the agency administration understand the depth of the program so that they do not short change the staff time required to provide the full program. This challenge is a very common difficulty for many Parent-Child Mother Goose Programs.

  Solution: There is a confirmation of the value of, or a positive change in valuing, the program by having the administration attend the program(s) and talk with families who are participating.

- ***Challenge***: Having spaces that fit the program needs.

  Solution: Again, if the administration comes and participates in a session of the program, then they understand the physical plant needs of the program better.

2. An effective working group is essential for any community-based initiative

Defining a good working group for a community initiative like theTLC3 Vancouver Project in Vancouver:

At the beginning of the project, giving thought to who will participate in the working group and what the roles of each member/agency will be is essential for minimizing conflicts and missed opportunities as the work together proceeds.

The TLC3 Vancouver Project in Vancouver began as an idea with people in the Infant Development Programs of BC. It then included a person from the Vancouver Community Mental Health Services. These three people then conceived of the idea of using the Parent-Child Mother Goose Program, the You Make the Difference Program and language screening as the services they wanted to have provided through TLC3 to the community. Both IDP and VCMHS are specialized services. It was felt that the most effective way to implement these programs, in Vancouver, would be to partner with Neighbourhood Houses.

The plan was for all agencies to be equal partners and to contribute staff to the project. Each agency had different structures in place for staffing and for benefits for these staff. The TLC3 National Project had an agreement with two of the agencies and, initially, the staff from these two agencies, while thinking they were operating in an equal partnership with the other two agencies, were in fact making decisions and authoring reports without consulting everyone before the final event/report. This was not an issue of control but one of wanting to ensure the load was not heavy on the community agencies who had agreed to participate as sites for the project.

Added into this was the need to ensure that the Parent-Child Mother Goose Program National Office and The Hanen Centre (for You Make The Difference) were informed and had opportunities to give support and feedback at all stages of the project. (You Make the Difference was dropped from the project in the second year due to low numbers of parents being able to take the time to attend it in addition to participating in the PCMG program each week.)

All of these players made it inevitable that there would be challenges in implementing and offering these programs.

We found that the following defined a good working group in implementing the TCL3 project's programs:

- A mix of people who provide the program and guide the program.
- Included were:
  - parent representatives on the Advisory Committee,
  - program leaders,
  - program coordinators,
  - evaluation consultant and assistant
  - and other members of the Advisory Committee, which for us included:
    - Infant Development Programs
    - Neighbourhood House staff
    - Community Health Nurse,
    - Mental Health Worker,
    - Registered Speech-Language Pathologist

  Members were chosen because they favoured a collaborative, consensual working style, and had a demonstrated history of this style.
- All involved had close working connections with their colleagues and strong links across many sectors within the neighbourhood. They brought perspectives on language, acculturation, income level, and mental and physical health, and most had experience as parents themselves.

Some strategies and tips for building/forming a good working group are:

- Time must be allocated:
  - to ensure the right people are selected - goal is to share ownership
  - to make a working plan

- to create decision making processes,
- to resolve conflict
- to have fun and have a place for humour
- to address issues as they arise
- to respect and embrace everyone's ideas
- to be sure everyone feels an equal opportunity to participate - this needs close attention when there is a mix of parents and professionals in a working group.
- to replicate the experience of all aspects of the initiative in the work together. Live what it is that your initiative is striving to realize in the community. For us this was a story, a joke, some food, and time to hear from everyone present on the topic at hand.
- to provide aspects of the initiative in your meetings with bureaucrats. For us this was healthy food and story telling. Bureaucrats attend a meeting with a mindset for how the meeting will be conducted. Bureaucrats will often not be familiar with the mechanics or philosophy of the initiative that you are implementing. Having these aspects surround the meeting seems to help everyone step out of the traditional conduct in a meeting, opens thinking and gives clarity about the initiative which you are asking them to help support.
- to allow yourself to make mistakes (you will anyway) and acknowledge them – if you have time to try things and repair them then the impact of a wrong path is lessened and in fact helps all partners feel ownership of the process.
- to ensure senior levels of management/board are on board. Front line staff can't develop sustainable programs by themselves. Have management and the board involved from the beginning and talk about evaluation and sustainability right from the beginning.

The challenges in building/forming a good working group were:

An achievement of the TLC3 Vancouver Project was that at the completion of the project, almost all of the original professionals and all of the original agencies were still involved and enjoying the work together. This was not because we did everything right! This success was because everyone had high regard for everyone else and held the belief that all were striving for the best. When there was a misunderstanding, the focus was on solutions. Some challenges which we faced were:

- Time was always a challenge. Initially we did battle with it and then accepted that it would be a constant factor in the work and began planning for it in all decision making to ensure everyone had input and there was adequate time to consider the decisions before implementing them.

- We didn't take time to build a bridge with a key partner initially. It then took lots of time after the fact to repair this omission. Giving careful thought to everyone who may want to participate before beginning the development and inviting this input would have been a more productive way to proceed at the outset.

- The model TLC3 in Vancouver used meant that all agencies were contributing staff to the project – not seconding them. We naively proceeded as if every agency would have a similar set of staff benefits and means of budgeting for these benefits. Even to the last few months of the project we were finding different expectations from different partners about benefits and costs for these. The reality of donating staff time and having adequate compensation to ensure staff benefits were met within each agency should have been given much more discussion at the outset. This needed to be discussed very concretely in terms of who covers sick time, holidays, and workers compensation. It also meant the different agencies needed to define what they meant by benefits – what was covered and how.

We didn't do this initially either with the management or staff involved. Only as staff asked did we realize the missed pieces. The model of donation was effective and avoided all of the pitfalls of secondment, however, the logistics do need to be carefully discussed to ensure no agency is out of pocket in the process of participating.

- As a corollary to the above point, we also did not clarify for the staff just what their relationship was to the project and to the coordinators of the project. Once, we had ensured that the staff knew their work was part of their job at the Neighbourhood House, IDP or Alan Cashmore Centre and that they represented their organization on the project this also clarified who their boss was – the supervisor at their organization. Once we did this, the sense of equal ownership of the program developed significantly and resulted in much more thorough discussion of plans, evaluation, and solutions to problems by all staff across all participating agencies.

- Shared knowledge was assumed a great deal initially. We did not take the time to ensure all members were "on the same page"; if they were present for the discussion then it was assumed that they had the same understanding of the outcomes. This was a very unrealistic view, especially with the evaluation, where there were so many pieces to coordinate and different people collecting the information. If there was a different understanding by some of the group or even one of the groups, then the information given to families or organizations differed and ultimately slowed or weakened the work together. By the third year, we were much more in-step with each other because we had begun to take the time to hear from each person about their understanding of the discussion and decisions. Time up front was time saved in the end.

- We initially had a core group working on the TLC3 National Project that developed the programming and the structure for how the advisory and evaluation committees would function. The motive for this was to ensure that the community agencies that were participating were not loaded down with the operations of the project. This motive was unspoken, though, and resulted in a sense of insider and outsider for the various participant agencies; particularly within the structure of a contract for service that we used.
  Only when we had problems and developed structures – policy and procedures – was it apparent that these should have been developed by the committee members at the initiation of the work together or when new activities presented. Once we began to do this, a sense of "we" became very evident in our work together. Ultimately, this resulted in us achieving the original goal of the community agencies not having to be involved in the daily administration of the project. Again, time at the front would have saved time and wear and tear on relationships later.

Part II.

Zoom, Zoom, Zoom, Going to the Moon with Mother Goose

Starting a Parent-Child Mother Goose Program in Your Community

The following provides information about what we found was required to bring Parent-Child Mother Goose Programs into a community and to provide Parent-Child Mother Goose Programs.

Administration for coordination:

Bare essentials:

- Registered non-profit or public agencies to ensure the program is available at no cost to the families
- Coordinator
- Secretarial support

Tips/Advice:

- Coordinator needs to have:
    - PCMG Program training and be an experienced PCMG Program leader,
    - budget experience,
    - project management experience,
    - human resource experience,
    - support from senior management in sponsoring society (or at least non-interfering),
    - the ability to educate agency management about the requirements of staffing, housing and supporting PCMG programs
    - the skill to support the ability of program leaders to encourage parents and others to become leaders themselves.

Human Resources (skills, training etc.)

Bare essentials for coordination:

- Connection with the National PCMG Program office
- Commitment to the PCMG Program philosophy

Bare essentials for program provision:

- Management of agencies running programs need to have a clear understanding of the philosophy of program and the requirements for running the program; including space requirements, adequate staff time to prepare and debrief the program each week, and the importance of providing the program for a full 30 week session.

- Program leaders need to be:
    - Trained as Parent-Child Mother Goose Program leaders
    - Experienced with young families
    - Insightful
    - Inviting of people and keen to facilitate connections in the community

- Training available for parents and community professionals to become leaders

- Child minders who have experience with infants and young children

Tips/Advice:

For Program Provision:

- Ensure that agencies employ the program staff and see the PCMG Program as their own. Simply using a space in an agency will not develop the agency's sense of ownership. Include the agency management in all decisions from the beginning of setting up the program, to day to day funding needs, to evaluation and annual reports.

- Someone in the agency management has to be familiar with the PCMG Program and supportive of it.

- PCMG Programs are best set up as a 30-week program. Funding needs to be secured for the full 30 weeks to ensure continuity in staffing, quality of the program, and continuity for the families.

- Agencies need to be encouraged to provide the recommended number of hours for staff to be able to provide the PCMG Program adequately

  - Number of hours needed for leaders is 6 hours X 2 leaders/program for 30 weeks +6 hrs X 2 leaders for preparing the program + 3 hrs X2 leaders for reviewing the program after each set of 10 sessions = 378 hours per year
  - Number of hours needed for child care providers is 4 hours X 2 child minders for 30 weeks = 240 hours per year

- Staff must have prior experience with parents and young children.

- As part of the 6 hours a week, leaders must plan time to call each family the day before each session.

- Leaders need to have on-going training available to broaden their knowledge and skills and obtain support in the work.

- Agencies need to have strategies in place to minimize staff turnover in the leadership of the program

- Agencies need to anticipate staff changes by ensuring other staff are trained as PCMG Program leaders.

Materials/Resources

Bare essentials for coordination:

- PCMG training manual
- 4-5 CDs of rhymes, lullabies, and songs
- 6-10 books of stories
- connection to a storytelling group for training and consultation

Bare essentials for programs:

- Brochures and posters for display at the sites and to distribute to community professionals. These materials should promote the agency/centre that is providing the program to strengthen that sense of ownership of the program.
- Healthy snacks and food serving utensils (i.e. plates, cutlery, cups etc.)
- A place/table to serve the snack above toddler level
- PCMG Resource materials
- Story-telling training
- Mats/rugs to seat 15 families, two leaders, and 2-3 visitors comfortably
- Cushions to go around the edge of the mats/rug
- Adequate play materials for a range of preschool children in the child minding space
- Arts and crafts materials for the child minding space

Tips/Advice:

- There needs to be money for renewing resource materials/equipment every two to three years

- There needs to be a connection with community health nurses for information on safety and appropriate snacks when infants and toddlers are also eating.

Office/Program Space, Equipment

Bare essentials for coordination:

- An office at a central location for information to be shared with other resource programs.
- Basic office equipment, including phone, storage shelving, computer and internet connection

Bare essentials for program provision:

- A comfortable space on the floor for up to 35 people (15 parents, 15 children, 2 leaders, visitors).
- A fairly bare room with carpeting
- Adequate storage space for the mats/rugs and cushions
- Adequate space for strollers, coats and shoes outside the program space
- Adequate facility for child minding older preschool children
- Changing facility for infants/toddlers
- Kitchen facility to prepare and clean up snack
- A close partnership with the people at the reception desk of the centre so that they will know about, and value, the program when there are inquiries about the program.

Tips/Advice:

- Ensure the space used for the program does not contain toys or books that could distract the children
- Ensure the program space is close to the child minding space
- Ensure the leaders have a secured place to leave the debriefing notes and petty cash for the program

- Ensure that the snack can be prepared outside of the session and be brought in only during snack time

Community Resources/Support

Bare essentials for coordination and program provision:

- An advisory board/committee is needed to give direction and support to the coordinator and individual programs
- Parent representation must be included on the advisory board/committee
- "Gatherings" are needed for on-going training and support of PCMG Program leaders
- Mentoring programs are needed for new leaders and community professionals to attend and use as a resource over the initial 1-2 years of implementing a program
- Links to community professionals are needed to facilitate early identification and referral of children and families to specialized service
- An ongoing relationship with story telling circle is needed for resources and practice in the storytelling aspects of the program
- Community professionals and agencies need to have familiarity with the PCMG Program to give the PCMG Program a sense of connection to the community and to help families find their way to the programs.

Tips/Advice:

- Anticipate that community professionals will feel they should have had a role in introducing the PCMG program. No matter how hard you try to include all people, someone will feel they weren't consulted. When this happens, welcome them in and offer them lots of ways they can still contribute. If you have made the offer it mends the fence and leaves opportunity for future collaboration.

- When programs are provided with more than a single agency involved, then discussion about miscommunication needs to be up-front and timely. The focus of the discussion needs to be on how to repair the error and what changes to make in future to avoid the errors. Once this frame is set, new situations are more rapidly dealt with and there is less tension present.

Other things that could help to contribute to the provision of a successful program:

- Having a coordinator, for the programs, to provide consultation to the leaders around the mechanics of providing the program – how to balance the group, how to handle waiting lists, ways to establish policy on program availability for new parents versus parents returning with subsequent children.

- Having community professionals and agencies' staff helping more isolated clients come to the group

- Having leaders who are from the cultural groups represented in the communities where the programs are being run

- Having money in place for the full 30 weeks of the program and ideally on a permanent basis so that leaders and families feel a confidence in the continuity of the program

- Having a developmental screening component to identify young children who have delays/differences and to provide all families with information on social and communication development.

- Training parents for PCMG leader positions to allow for growth of the program as the children age beyond the initial program age.

- Building toward long-term sustainability; including on-going training of new leaders for the PCMG Program. Parents who have taken part in the program have been a great source of leadership for subsequent development of PCMG Programs.

- Staying in touch with the National Office of Parent-Child Mother Goose Programs through telephone calls, e-mail, reports, membership and further training.

Some of the major challenges or barriers to setting up or enhancing a program and the practices that have proven successful in overcoming these challenges.

The actual running of the Parent-Child Mother Goose Program did not present many major challenges. The challenges lay in the mechanics of staffing the programs and in managing the high demand for the programs (this latter a definite positive problem!).

- ***Challenge***: Opening the doors as a universal program and being full within the first two weeks.

  Solution: Being able to sit and talk as a group – coordinator, leaders, and advisory committee - to determine how to best address waiting lists and balancing who is participating in the program is important to ensure that everyone contributes to and is comfortable with the policy that is set.

- ***Challenge***: Welcoming one and all and then being full up very quickly without any clear guidelines for selecting who can attend

  Solution: Anticipate long term success and develop plans and policies for waiting lists based on expectations 2-3 years out. Set limits early in accordance with the long-term goals for the program at your site/agency.

- ***Challenge***: Maintaining consistent childcare provision when the hours are limited.

  Solution: The agency management need information about how important the child care role is to the program so that they can take action to create ways to nest these hours into a larger position to give stability for the people providing this service. Making this part of a larger position within the agency was the most effective approach we found.

iv. <u>Resources for Families and Professionals -</u> As well as learning how to set up community partnerships and a working group and how to address the challenges in proving any program, we also learned of resources that families and professionals told us were useful.

Some readily available resources for effective language and cognitive stimulation by any adult are:

- Community based programs for parents with their infants/toddlers – Parent-Child Mother Goose Program, You Make The Difference, Parents and Tots Gym programs, Library Circles for parents with their infants and toddlers.

- CDs of songs, rhymes and lullabies – Smooth Road to London Town (from National Office of P-CMGP), Tickles and Tunes, More Tickles and Tunes, To Market To Market, Global Lullaby, popular children's singers.

- Books of rhymes and finger plays – The Moon Is Round, Bounce Me Tickle Me, Around the Garden, I'm a Little Tea Pot

- Anthologies of folk tales and taped stories to create the sense of story telling rather than reading a book supported by pictures – the libraries are rich with these. Telling Tales is an excellent source book on how to build family stories and on various kinds of story telling materials. In addition, 10 Small Tales from Parent-Child Mother Goose sets a good frame for the type of tale that lends itself to storytelling.

- Shared pretend play with imagining demonstrated and scaffolded by the adult – from simple daily routines to elaborate adventures as the children mature in their ability to create pictures in their minds. Begin with "me" tales about the child's day/experiences.

- Activities that use the language of math – block building, tea parties, mud pies, sand castles, cooking, science and art activities that show change in appearance and quantity from start to finish.

- Websites –

  BC Council *for* Families: www.bccf.bc.ca email: bccf@bccf.bc.ca
  204-2590 Granville Street, Vancouver, BC, V6H 3H1
  phone 604-660-0675
  fax 604-732-4813

  Parent-Child Mother Goose Program in BC
  at BCCF address
  phone 604-738-0568
  fax 604-732-4813
  email: mgoosebc@telus.net
  (a part of the Early and Middle Years Office of the BC Council *for* Families)

  BC Infant Development Programs: www.IDPofBC.ca
  phone 604-822-4014
  2765 Osoyoos Crescent
  Vancouver, BC
  V6T 1X7

  Parent-Child Mother Goose Program: www.nald.ca/mothergooseprogram
  720 Bathurst Street, Suite 402, Toronto, Ontario, M5S 2R4
  phone 416-588-5234
  fax 416-588-1355
  email: mgoose@web.net

The Hanen Centre: www.hanen.org email: info@hanen.org
1075 Bay Street, Suite 403, Toronto, Ontario, M5S 2B1
tel: 416-921-1073, fax 416-921-1225

Vancouver Society of Storytelling: email: storytelling@netrover.com
1411 Cartwright Street
Vancouver, BC, V6H 3R7
phone 604-876-2272

v. The above activities can all be easily integrated into childcare settings and community based programs as well as at home to provide language and cognitive stimulation. Whether done with an individual child or within a group, children attend to these experiences, develop language around the experiences, and come to predict the order of things even when new instances of a rhyme, lullaby or story are introduced. This develops an organizational set for learning and relating to their social world. The more often similar kinds of activities are done across settings for a child, the more these become a part of the thinking, and so play, of the child. All of these activities involve ***action*** and *interaction*. If professionals and parents keep these two concepts in their awareness when selecting activities and materials, then the children will thrive in their social communication and interactions with the world.

e. Themes and lessons learned through the experience of establishing the TLC3 Vancouver Project

- Well respected and tested programs for working with families and young children are available already. Using these and the experience gathered ensured that TLC3 began quickly and was effective right from the beginning.
- Provide a program focused on wellness, and families will come, in abundance.
- Gather families together and they will develop support networks for themselves.
- What is simple on the surface, yet resonates with so many, usually indicates depth and impact on many levels.
- Families with problems do learn from being with families who are healthy.
- Families with problems feel most comfortable when they are not the only ones with visible problems in the group.
- Support by leaders outside of the program time is essential in engaging and reassuring some families. It is also the most respectful way to address problems that families are having within the program.
- All families welcome the consultation with the registered speech-language pathologist even when their children are doing well.

- An addition of a focus on communication development increases family knowledge of communication development and helps them to better understand the benefits of the sound and word play and story telling that the Parent-Child Mother Goose Program provides.

- Children love to play with their parents. Parents love to play with their children.

- Children and parents can have a sense of community even in a large city.

- Children identified early can have primary problems addressed without the challenge of secondary behaviours and compensatory strategies getting in the way of speedy remediation.

- Partnership is challenging and requires time, openness, flexibility, strong communication skills, comfort with error and enjoyment of shared laughter. It also requires excellent boundaries and a comfort with confrontation and compromise.

- Partnership is the most rewarding and effective way to work as it brings divers views to the planning, implementation, problem solving and ultimate achievement; and the celebration of that achievement.

- Partnership invariably leads to personal growth for everyone involved.

- Partnerships lead to further partnerships lead to further partnerships lead to accomplishing the growth of an idea into a realized objective.

Appendix A

Formal Language Measures Used

1. Communication and Symbolic Behavioral Scales – Developmental Profile, Paul Brookes Publisher, 2002

1. Language Use Inventory – not yet published. Contact Dr. Daniela O'Neill, Associate Professor, Department of Psychology, University of Waterloo.

2. Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test- Revised (Form L), American Guidance Service, Inc, 1981.

3. Preschool Language Scale – 3, The Psychological Corporation, 1991

4. Rossetti Infant-Toddler Language Scale, Linguisystems, 1990.

5. Vineland Adaptive Behavior Scales, American Guidance Services, 1984.