



# Government of Yukon

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# NEWS *release*

FOR RELEASE #09-042  
March 2, 2009

### Support for Early Years Transition Initiative Announced

WHITEHORSE – Funding for an Early Years Transition Initiative has been announced by Education Minister Patrick Rouble.

“Our government has set aside \$150,000, subject to legislative approval, to support a holistic, integrated approach to address the needs of children transitioning into the Yukon school system,” Rouble said.

The Early Years Transition Initiative will target pre-kindergarten to Grade Three students by identifying learning vulnerabilities using the Early Development Instrument (EDI), a widely used tool to measure children's pre-kindergarten development. The EDI is a checklist that teachers complete for each child in their classroom. It is a holistic measure of children's development across five key areas including physical health and well-being, social competence, emotional maturity, language and cognitive development, communication skills and general knowledge.

While teachers complete the EDI for each child, the results are grouped geographically, rather than being used for identification of individuals.

“Establishing a baseline estimate of the state of our children’s development when they enter school will allow educators to develop and implement a program to address the performance gap in both First Nation and non-First Nation children,” Rouble said. “These measures will also inform the community about how the programs, policies and social environments combine to support young children in their development.”

Early Years Transition Initiative funding will also assist the Education department to work with the Health and Social Services Early Childhood Development team in an integrated approach. Bridging the gap between childcare and kindergarten will ensure that care and education are delivered as one seamless program.

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