

**OKANAGAN SIMILKAMEEN  
COMMUNITY ACTION PROGRAM FOR CHILDREN**

**PROGRESS REPORT  
2003-2004**

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**Section 1: Introduction**

This progress report provides an evaluation of the Okanagan Similkameen Community Action Program for Children (OSCAPC) from April 2003 through March 2004. Program activities, outputs, outcomes, participation and successes are discussed. Comparisons are made with evaluations from previous years (OS-CAPC Evaluation Report 2002, Progress Report 2003).

OSCAPC continues to be organized into six community sites: Kelowna, Penticton, Oliver-Osoyoos, Keremeos, Princeton and Central Okanagan Off Reserve Aboriginal.

This year, evaluation data collection tools were further refined. Several previously used monthly data collection tools for the three program areas, were combined into one tool, piloted, refined and now are working well. This met a long held goal to simplify data collection. The end of year data summary form was shortened. The Questions for Parents tool was used at all sites to obtain participant feedback. And staff continued to collect participant stories, news clippings and photos about CAP-C activities. The evaluators also kept field notes when attending regional meetings and visiting sites.

**Section 2: Program Activities , Outputs and Indicators**

In 2003-2004, the OS-CAPC project continued to focus on three program areas:

- family support, education and resources
- support for women having babies
- building community capacity

**Activities:**

Activities were carried out as planned at all six community sites, with adjustments as needed to meet immediate issues and to take advantage of special opportunities. This flexibility enabled staff to be responsive to current parent/child issues and interests as well as changing community contexts. As in other years, the creativity and initiative of the staff and parents were impressive.

At most sites, literacy and dental care activities were increased along with more fundraising to support CAP-C programs.

One community site was challenged by having to adjust activities for parents who were sent to CAPC to learn parenting after their children were apprehended.

Previous changes in the food certificate program continued to challenge some sites; some sites engaged in fund raising for certificates and other sites offered alternate food security activities (eg providing lunch instead of snack). Three sites managed their own certificate programs. At one site, absence of food certificates was associated with a drop in pregnant participants, however those who did come engaged fully in activities and child minding pressures were reduced.

At one site the presence of infant development specialists on site reduced the need for referrals and improved follow up.

Management of volunteers continues to be a challenge at some sites; this will be a training topic next year.

Another challenge was helping parents deal with transitions and frustrations, and have “voice” without being aggressive; this also will be a training session topic next year.

Staff are becoming more skilled in group facilitation and are ready for further group training (and of course new staff also would benefit).

One to one support continues to be requested by some participants but at most program sites limited resources restrict access to this kind of support.

The table that follows lists the kinds of programs offered at each of the six community sites.

TABLE 1: KINDS OF PROGRAMS

| COMMUNITY SITE  | PROGRAMS  |
|---|---|
| Central Okanagan Off Reserve Aboriginal<br>Ki Low Na Friendship Society | Parenting Circles (3) at Friendship Centre,<br>Westbank, and Rutland (with children)<br>Community Kitchen (with child minding)<br>Native Language component   |
| Kelowna<br>Okanagan Families Society                                    | Giggles and Hugs Westside, Rutland and<br>Downtown Kelowna (parent support)<br>Tots Making Tracks (parent education/ECE<br>support with child minding), Meal in a Bag<br>Special Deliveries (pregnancy support/<br>prenatal nutrition/ child minding) |
| Keremeos<br>Lower Similkameen Community Services                        | Moms’ Fitness Program (with high energy<br>child minding), Parent & Child Drop In   |

|   |   |
|---|---|
| Society/South Similkameen Family Centre                     | Group, Pre-school Story Time<br>Moms and Tots Play Group Drop In<br>Bridging the Generations Program (elders, babies and parents join at care centre)<br>Toys and Book Exchange<br>Community Garden                                       |
| Oliver-Osoyoos<br>Desert Sun Counseling and Resource Centre | Oliver Parent Support Group<br>Osoyoos Parent Support Group<br>Community Kitchens Oliver and Osoyoos<br>Oliver Community Garden/ Preserving<br>Helping Hands (parents helping parents in community)                                       |
| Princeton<br>Princeton Child Care Services Society          | Time for Play (parent education drop-in)<br>Brunch Program  |
| Penticton<br>Families First Resource Society                | Muffin Mix (parent/child drop in)<br>The Family Special (parent/child sign up)<br>Positively Pregnant (pre/post natal education and nutrition), Community Kitchen, Dine and Dash<br>Bargain Buyers Club (food co-op)<br>Clothing Exchange |

In addition to the activities associated with the programs listed in Table 1, every site was involved in community capacity building activities that involved parents, community members and staff. Many previous community partnerships were maintained and new partnerships formed.

Some examples were:

1. Keremeos: Literacy initiatives, Coats for Kids, Your Developing Child Health Fair, Community Family Parties x 4, Children’s Festival, Good Food Box implementation, National Child’s Day at Lower Indian Band, Legal Aid Seminars, working on multi-cultural cookbook.
2. Oliver-Osoyoos: Osoyoos Community for Kids, Osoyoos Lake Water Quality Society, distribution of CAP-C bookmarks and posters, Disaster Task Force, Arts Council Concert Series, fund raising cook book, meetings/presentations x 7, community fairs x 3, participation in literacy initiatives (LAPS)
3. Penticton: community presentations and meetings, child health fair/Safe Kids, Raising Resilient Children workshop, Mother Goose training, Books for Babies fundraising, Good Food Box Tour Vernon, Low Birth Weight meeting, Breastfeeding Conference, Community Mapping (Hertzman), Parenting Conference (for parents), partnership with Penticton and District Community Resources Society to expand Muffin Mix, Food Security conference, volunteer recognition party, Services to Aboriginal Families workshop
4. Princeton: Communities for Kids (many parents), Infant Child Care Committee, community meetings/presentations, literacy initiatives.
5. Kelowna: Literacy and parenting (LAPS) Mission Creek Family BBQ, meetings with PHN re improving collaboration, CATCH coalition, Steering committee x 4 re capacity building,

Boys and Girls Club, community presentations, Art Gallery exhibit re sexually exploited youth.

6. Central Okanagan Off Reserve Aboriginal: assisted with Aboriginal Career Fair, National Aboriginal Day, monthly family nights, Fetal Alcohol Syndrome conference, Aboriginal Healing Conference, new van increases community access

### Outputs and Indicators:

Outputs and outcome indicators are listed in the three Work-Evaluation Plans 2003-2006. Based on data from the monthly and year end summary tools, actual outputs and indicator measurements for 2004 are displayed in Table 2. Values from 2002 and 2003 are provided for comparison. No significant changes were made to indicators, though adjustments were made to accommodate program realities and to account for pregnancy support within CAP-C rather than CPNP e.g. numbers of newborns, breastfeeding and low birth weights.

TABLE 2: YEAR END SUMMARY TOOL: QUANTITATIVE RESULTS

| OUTPUTS/INDICATORS   | VALUES      |          |          |
|--|-------------|----------|----------|
|  | 2004        | 2003     | 2002     |
| Number of different parent participants                                | 494         | 640      | 568      |
| Parent attendance  | 5945        | 7035     |          |
| Number of different child participants                                 | 683         | 787      | 654      |
| Child attendance   | 7417        | 7744     |          |
| Number of pregnant participants (pre-natal)(Not including Ki-Low-Na)   | 111         | 157      | 145      |
| Newborns   | 60          |          |          |
| Breastfed  | 55          |          |          |
| Low birth weight (4# 12oz & 3# 14oz)                                   | 2           |          |          |
| Adult participants in addition to mothers (fathers, grandparents etc.) | 134 (fa=84) | 282      |          |
| Group program hours  | 2379.5      | 2950     | 2162     |
| Number of Community volunteers for groups (non parent participant)     | 77          |          |          |
| Community volunteer hours for groups                                   | 2625        |          |          |
| Community building volunteer hours (Oliver-Osoyoos missing)            | 2695        |          |          |
| Community volunteer hours (not separated by focus)                     | 5320        | 5056     | 2173     |
| Grants (not regular funding)   | \$54,622    | \$25,700 | \$27,575 |
| Donations in-kind (value of donated space, food, clothes, books, toys) | \$48,515    | \$57,482 | \$40,323 |

### Discussion of Outputs and Indicators:

Overall, parent and child participation decreased along with numbers of group hours offered. Decreases may be attributed to decreased government funding after the end of community development and food security grants, increasing program costs (e.g. salaries, food) and more competition for local community donations. Other possible reasons for decreased group hours and parent and child participation need to be explored (e.g. inconsistencies in use of data collection tools, change in program infrastructure/staffing/programming). Grant funding doubled, largely due to funding from literacy initiatives, community groups such as Kiwanis and Rotary, churches (e.g. United), businesses and organizations such as Family Resource Program, Community Foundations and United Way.

Community volunteerism increased in some communities, most notably Keremeos. The increase in volunteer hours is associated with overall community action as well as community activity by parents and staff. Parent volunteerism was not counted due to difficulties getting accurate numbers. Nevertheless, parent volunteer involvement in program and community activities is evident in the qualitative data.

Staff reported more examples of parent involvement in advisory groups and program planning and implementation. Staff also reported that to some extent parent participation is related to longevity in the program. Also, staff reported more parents asking for help to increase their political advocacy skills in view of provincial funding cuts to many social and health programs.

Referrals from CAPC programs to other agencies were not counted this year because staff focused on groups rather than individuals, and on increasing parents exposure to community services (e.g. many guests from community) to enable parents to make their own connections (“bridging”).

In 2004, in addition to quantitative data about outputs and indicators, qualitative data were collected monthly. Table 3 provides a summation.

**TABLE 3: YEAR END SUMMARY TOOL: QUALITATIVE RESULTS**

| INDICATORS   | RESPONSES   |
|--|---|
| Guest speaker topics                               | Occipital flattening, infant/child development, language development, child safety, pre-reading skills and early reading, dental care, food safety, immunization, common child illnesses and care, substance use effects, care, child sexual development, self care, pregnancy care/nutrition, fitness/yoga, fathers’ roles, child nutrition (eg iron), recreation, preschool, FAS/FAE, outdoor play spaces, sleep routines, home and street safety, healthy relationships, conflict resolution, financial planning, car seat safety, child find, communication, firemen & police as friends, cultural teaching, aboriginal traditional parenting and ceremonies, first aid, breastfeeding, birth control, pregnancy care, midwifery, violence prevention and management. |
| Parent volunteer activities to support programs    | Planned and led activities, child minding, worked on cookbooks/recipes, worked in garden, prepared newsletters/flyers/posters, attended community and program advisory and planning meetings, attending conferences/training and reported back, playroom maintenance, provided transportation, clean up, food preparation, organized clothing/toy/book exchanges and donated items, organized events, assisted with food initiatives (e.g. co-op) assisted with grant applications, wrote letters, fund raising, sharing house cleaning, yard maintenance, served on hiring committee   |
| Community volunteer activities to support programs | Child minding/art/music/stories, food preparation, maintenance of facilities, program set up and clean up, transportation, gardening, shopping, car maintenance, participation at community events  |
| Community changes which support young families     | Active Community for Kids group re early literacy. A local business started a moms and tots craft time, community bus for young families, new rec centre program for moms and tots, family literacy program with in home support for pre-school families, new community park in Cawston (parents are working on it), Book Share Boxes around town, a Communities for Kids facilitator, Good Food Box program, new child play space in elderly care  |

|                                  |  |
|----------------------------------|--|
| Community changes<br>(continued) | centre, new aboriginal pre-school, Traditional Parenting Workshop, emergency housing for young families, Community Healthy Harvest Box, ballet instruction started (via parents), program, Safe Kids family events with many community partners, Terrific toddlers parties, temporary assistance for single moms and low income families by local disaster relief after forest fires |
|----------------------------------|--|

### Section 3: Outcomes

Outcomes remained the same this year:

***Program Area: Family Support, Education and Resources***

*Outcome: Parents have increased knowledge about parenting and child development.*

*Outcome: Parents use community resources that support parenting of young children.*

*Outcome: Parents experience increased parenting support.*

***Program Area: Support for Women Having Babies***

*Outcome: Pregnant women and new mothers have increased knowledge of the impact of their health, on the development of their infants.*

*Outcome: Pregnant women and new mothers have increased skills in budgeting, shopping, meal preparation, gardening and food preparation.*

*Outcome: Pregnant women and new mothers have increased access to nutritious and economical food.*

***Community Capacity Building***

*Outcome: Community awareness has increased about shared responsibility to support families with young children living in conditions of risk.*

*Outcome: Community support for families with young children has increased.*

*Outcome: Community structures and policies have become more supportive of young families (increased access and decreased barriers to resources and opportunities).*

Changes in outcomes were not anticipated except perhaps in food security where some programs had to eliminate food certificates due to lack of funding, Nevertheless all sites had program activities to increase parent access to nutritious food.

Progress toward outcomes was achieved in each of the three program areas, as indicated by evaluation findings described in Tables 2, 3, 4, 5. The use of the Questions for Parents tool, via surveys and focus groups, is a primary way that outcome data are collected in accordance with Work-Evaluation Plans. For outcome comparisons, Table 5 provides 2002-03 Questions for Parents results.

TABLE 4: 2003-04 QUESTIONS FOR PARENTS: QUANTITATIVE RESULTS

2004 Sample: n = 127 parents

| QUESTION*  | 1-3 times |     | 4-9 times |    | 10 or more |    |
|--|-----------|-----|-----------|----|------------|----|
| 1.Number of times you have come to program in past 3 months  | 21%       | 25  | 29%       | 34 | 48%        | 57 |
| QUESTIONS  | YES       |     | NO        |    |            |    |
| 2. Staff treated you with respect                            | 98%       | 116 | 2%        | 2  |            |    |
| 3.Helped by coming to program                                | 97%       | 114 | 1.5%      | 2  |            |    |
| 4.Learned about helpful things/places in community           | 87%       | 110 | 9%        | 11 |            |    |
| 5.Used these things/places in community                      | 81%       | 95  | 13%       | 15 |            |    |
| 6.Learned about baby care**                                  | 65%       | 77  | 19%       | 22 |            |    |
| 7.Learned about child development**                          | 75%       | 95  | 11%       | 14 |            |    |
| 8.Learned about being a parent**                             | 87%       | 110 | 7%        | 9  |            |    |
| 9.Used what you have learned at home                         | 85%       | 108 | 7%        | 9  |            |    |
| 10.Learned about food and nutrition                          | 85%       | 100 | 8%        | 10 |            |    |
| 11.Feel supported by other parents here                      | 95%       | 121 | 4%        | 6  |            |    |
| 12.Become friends with any parents here                      | 84%       | 107 | 11%       | 14 |            |    |
| 13.Feel more supported as a parent in community since coming | 89%       | 105 | 7%        | 8  |            |    |
| 14.Feel comfortable in program n=58                          | 90%       | 52  | 7%        | 4  |            |    |

*(note that Keremeos used a different tool for 9 parents which included only 6 of the 14 items for Questions for Parents, items 4, 7, 8, 9, 11, 12, thus the sample size for those items is n=118)*

\*Percentages do not always add to 100% because missing values are not on table.

\*\* Some groups such as Community Kitchens did not have babies nor specific child development activities, but parents were asked these questions (6,7,8) anyway, in contrast to 2002, thus lower percentages were anticipated.

TABLE 5: 2002-03 QUESTIONS FOR PARENTS: QUANTITATIVE RESULTS

2002 Sample n=130

| QUESTION   | 1-3 times |     | 4-9 times |    | 10 or more |    |
|--|-----------|-----|-----------|----|------------|----|
| 1.Number of times you have come to program in past 3 months  | 17%       | 23  | 28%       | 37 | 55%        | 67 |
| QUESTIONS  | YES       |     | NO        |    |            |    |
| 2. Staff treated you with respect                            | 97%       | 126 | 0         |    |            |    |
| 3.Helped by coming to program                                | 98%       | 128 | 1%        | 1  |            |    |
| 4.Learned about helpful things/places in community           | 87%       | 113 | 11%       | 14 |            |    |
| 5.Used these things/places in community                      | 76%       | 99  | 21%       | 27 |            |    |
| 6.Learned about baby care*                                   | 79%       | 94  | 20%       | 24 |            |    |
| 7.Learned about child development                            | 90%       | 107 | 9%        | 11 |            |    |
| 8.Learned about being a parent                               | 95%       | 117 | 3%        | 4  |            |    |
| 9.Used what you have learned at home                         | 91%       | 118 | 7%        | 9  |            |    |
| 10.Learned about food and nutrition                          | 90%       | 117 | 9%        | 12 |            |    |
| 11.Feel supported by other parents here                      | 95%       | 123 | 2%        | 3  |            |    |
| 12.Become friends with any parents here                      | 87%       | 113 | 11%       | 14 |            |    |
| 13.Feel more supported as a parent in community since coming | 89%       | 116 | 8%        | 10 |            |    |
| 14.Feel comfortable in program                               | 94%       | 74  | 4%        | 3  |            |    |

\*questions 6, 7, 8, have different sample size as these questions were not asked in some kitchen groups

The Questions for Parents tool also collected qualitative data about outcomes. Parents were able to describe very well that which was helpful to them in the program, specifically what they learned and how they were using much of their learning at home. Parents described their community involvement with parents they met in the program. This involvement was sometimes social and other times helping each other with such tasks as moving or yard maintenance. Parents were also articulate about the most important things they learned about being Moms and Dads. These results directly link to outcomes.

#### **Section 4: Participation**

Present parent participation in the OS-CAPC program is described in Table 3 (see parent volunteer activities). Present parent participation was similar across sites. Regarding past parent participation, involvement varied from site to site. At one site, 2 past participants became paid child minders and one became a staff replacement for holidays and illness. No other sites had paid past participants. At two sites past participants became (un-paid) volunteers (see Table 3 for community volunteer activities). One site had no past participants involved and one had past participants who continued to drop in.

#### **Section 5: Successes**

Staff described many successes. All sites were unique and are perhaps best represented by the words of the staff:

“The fact that our program is open to all families (because it is a very small and isolated town), at risk families are being accepted and supported by mothers who can offer positive role modeling. This allows at risk mothers to realize they are not alone in dealing with the challenges of raising kids. More at risk parents are attending because they don’t feel the group is just for them. No stigma.”

“We have great staff who have been working together for a long time...strong community ties and the community is becoming more aware and supportive of the program...Our parents are very supportive of the program. One parent made gifts for all the volunteers at Christmas. Patents are always willing to pitch in, from cleaning to planning to fundraising...We are developing more community partnerships.”

“The new rec centre program (fitness for moms and tots). The Bridging the Generations program, based on a firm collaboration with Interior Health, is working well. The toy/clothing/book exchange is more used than ever...”

“Community Kitchen Plus is (our) food security program plus meets other needs such as supplying furniture, household items, clothing and baby equipment. It is working well because of the involvement of the participants and the overwhelming support of the community.”

“Feeding people a meal, vouchers and community kitchen builds confidence. Being part of a larger (aboriginal) organization providing culturally relevant programming.”

“Public Health Nurse and Community Nutritionist support...food certificates and vitamin supplements are excellent support especially during this current environment of fiscal restraint at provincial government...(given fiscal restraint) the availability of this

parenting support program is a success...parents are very willing to participate...Early Childhood Educator support has provided concrete structure and routine for children..."

"Developing support systems for parents outside of group with other participants ...Building relationships with families to the point where there is a high level of trust allowing some parenting work to be done...The length of time the participants can be involved is the key...consistent staff and volunteers, providing food...offering different modes of teaching to meet a variety of needs."

For parent success stories see documents attached to this report.

## **Section 6: Conclusion**

In conclusion, OS-CAPC programming is progressing very well. Progress has been made toward the achievement of all program outcomes specified in Work-Evaluation Plans. The success of the project continues to be strongly related to the motivation and multiple talents of parents, staff, communities and Coalition members. Staff commitment to the well being of young families is truly impressive, as is the commitment of parents to learning better ways to care for their children, themselves and each other.

Staff and Coalition members observed more poverty and homelessness in their communities, and sought connections with more "community friendly" businesses and organizations to build community support for young families and CAPC (e.g. local Credit Unions rather than national banks). Staff noted an increased sense of desperation expressed by participants. OS-CAPC has formed new partnerships to increase program hours, improve access to food, create administrative efficiencies (e.g. shared space), and also, obtain other funding for the programs. Nevertheless, staff and Coalition members continue to be very concerned about the socio-economic pressures on young families and perpetuation of conditions that put young children and pregnant women at risk.

In 2004-2005 OS-CAPC staff have chosen to continue to focus on the three program areas outlined in their Work-Evaluation Plans because the areas are priorities in their communities, and program activities are resulting in positive outcomes.

## **Section 7: Suggestions for Health Canada Consultant**

1. Earlier distribution of questions of interest for the progress report would be helpful. Consistency in format is also helpful.
2. Regional visits are appreciated.
3. Advice and support regarding wage increase for unionized staff in some CAPC projects would be helpful.