

**OUTCOMES OF A CANADIAN
NATIONAL PROJECT:
ENHANCING CHILDREN'S
LANGUAGE AND COGNITIVE
DEVELOPMENT IN COMMUNITY-
BASED PROGRAMS**

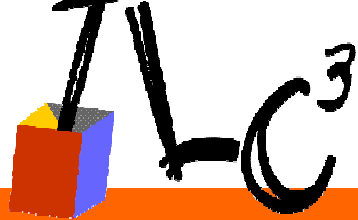
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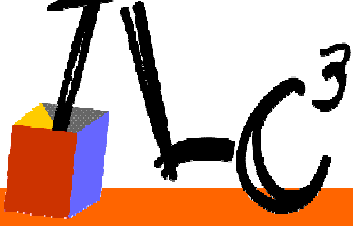
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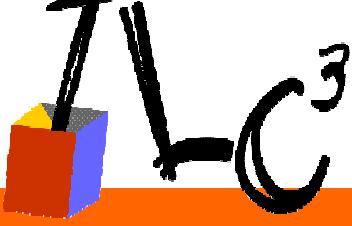
ABSTRACT

This poster is about the TLC³ Project, carried out in 7 communities across Canada. The goal of the project was to promote children's early language and cognitive development in a positive relational context. Each site developed a program for children, aged 0 - 5 years, based on best practices that were consistent with the individual community's characteristics and needs. This poster describes project goals and sites' programs. It also discusses the evaluation and summarizes some of the findings regarding child and parent outcomes. Overall, findings indicate that both children and their parents benefited from participation.



INTRODUCTION

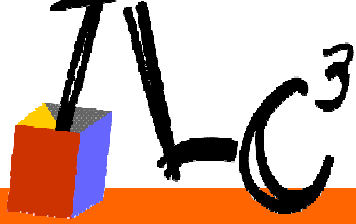
Support for local solutions to national problems has grown in recent years. The promise of such community-based initiatives is that they offer more relevant, integrated, and sustainable programs than centrally planned services. This poster describes the TLC³ Project that was carried out in 7 community sites across Canada over a 5-year period. In each community the project built on existing quality programs, mostly in low income neighbourhoods, with the short-term goal of enhancing children's language and cognitive development in the context of important relationships. The long-term goal was to foster positive development through program enrichment and to help parents provide the optimal environment to promote learning for their children. This poster summarizes the TLC³ project goals, the evaluation elements, the findings of the evaluation and the follow-up study of the children just prior to entry to Grade 1.



AND GOALS

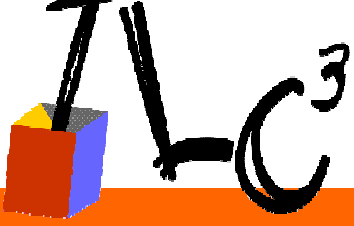
TLC³ refers to three meanings for the letters T, L, and C and summarizes the project aims: Thinking, Listening, and Communicating (Tandem: Langage et Cognition), Tender Loving Care in the learning environment (Tendresse, Lien et Communication) and The Learning Centres (Théorie en Liaison avec la Communauté). The sites represented different cultural demographics (new immigrant, First Nations, French Canadian, English Canadian), and types of communities (urban, rural, First Nations reserve) and served 350 to 400 children per year.

Each of the 7 TLC³ sites designed programs or enhancements to their existing community-based programs for children aged 0 to 5 years that would foster language and cognitive development within a relational context. All programs focused on early language and cognitive intervention based on accepted theory and/or practice. The focus was on promotion of early learning and school readiness rather than treatment of children with identified delays. The most common approaches were parent-child interactional approaches, classroom approaches and classroom consultation. In many cases, packaged programs, such as *Parent-Child Mother Goose*, and *Your Make the Difference* were implemented. Staff worked collaboratively to provide practical teaching tools for parents and professionals, and created collaborative links between interested partners at the local, provincial and national levels. Supplementary activities such as parent groups, caregiver training, and adult literacy programs also were offered at some of the sites.

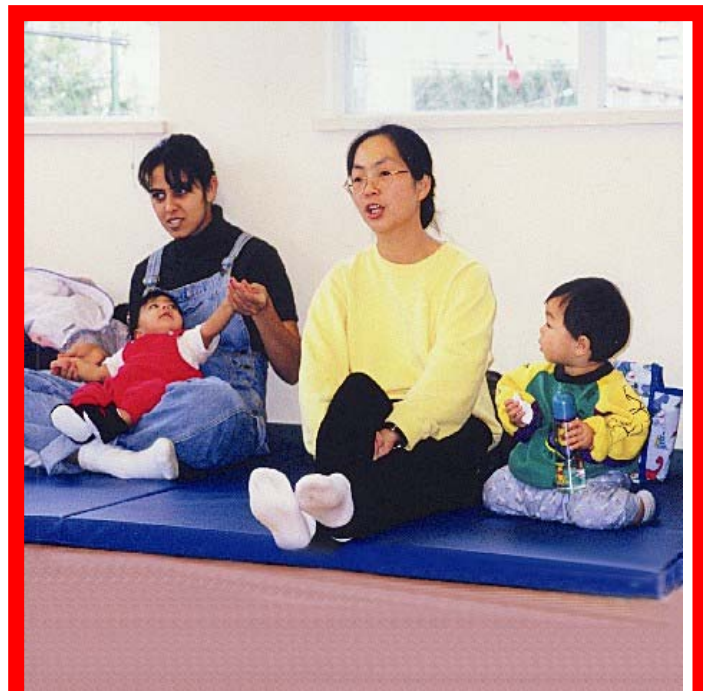
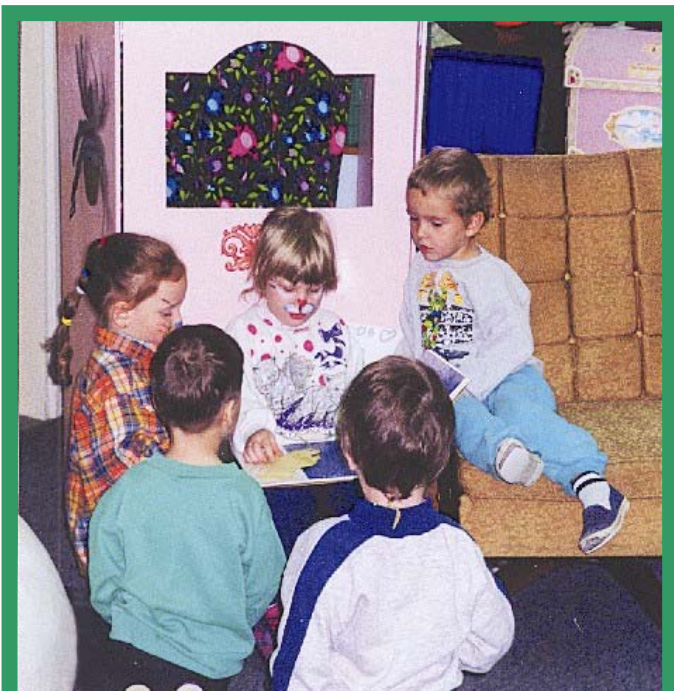


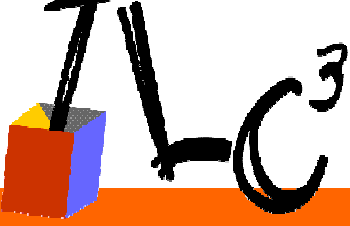
EVALUATION

Each site developed and implemented a program evaluation plan sensitive to their individual programs and contexts. The evaluation plans were designed in collaboration with a local university-based researcher or member of the project National Advisory Committee. Sites used various tools and techniques to evaluate their program including standardized measures of changes in language and cognitive development, parent feedback forms, key informant interviews, observation and teacher ratings.



MOMENTS





PROGRAM OUTCOMES: CHILDREN

Because of the diversity in site programs and age groups of children served, different developmental measures were used at each site. Taken together, however, on standardized measures children showed:

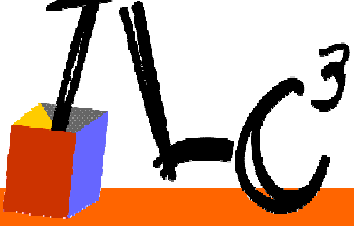
- ◆ **improvements on direct tests of language and cognition.**

On qualitative measures parents reported that their children showed:

- ◆ **increased social skills (e.g. cooperation, respect)**
- ◆ **increased knowledge and language skills**
- ◆ **improved self-esteem and confidence**

On qualitative measures staff/teachers reported that the children showed:

- ◆ **more initiative for learning and literacy activities**
- ◆ **improved problems solving skills**
- ◆ **increased social competence and social skills**

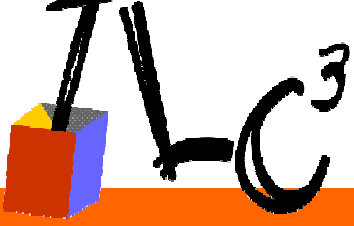


Parents learned about:

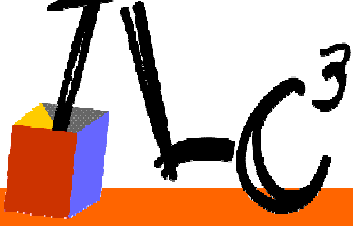
- ◆ how they can help their child develop
- ◆ how to engage in a more responsive parent-child interactional style

Parents also:

- ◆ gained confidence in parenting
- ◆ established positive relationships with other parents
- ◆ sought and received training to become program leaders and home visitors
- ◆ gained more respect for their child
- ◆ experienced pleasure in parenting
- ◆ shared more experiences with their child



The ultimate goal of TLC³ was to prepare children for school. 128 children who had been involved in 6 of the 7 TLC³ project sites and 105 comparison children of similar age, SES, and socio-cultural background from the same communities were compared on measures of language and school readiness. All the children were completing kindergarten at the time of the study and were going into Grade 1 the following September.



MEASURES

Administered to Child

Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test-Revised to measure receptive language.

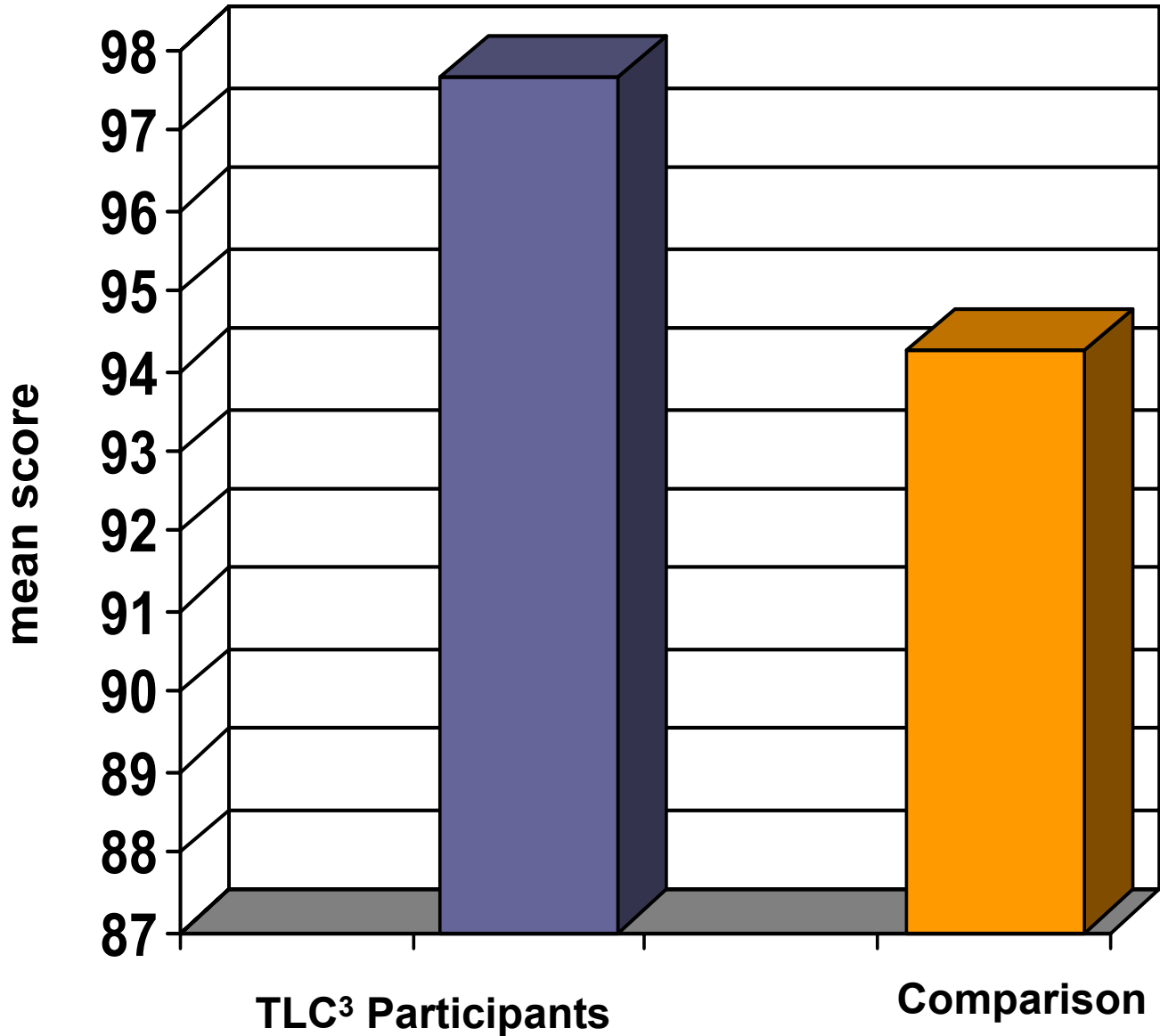
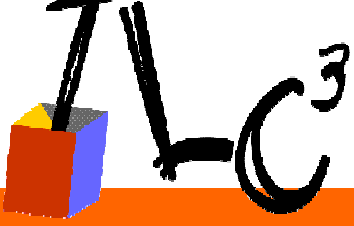
Rosner Auditory Analysis Test to measure children's phonological awareness, an important precursor to learning to read.

Administered to Kindergarten Teacher

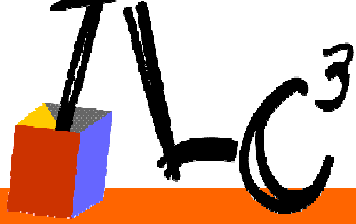
Kindergarten teachers completed the ***Early Development Inventory***. This Inventory provides ratings in 5 areas of child functioning shown to be related to school readiness:

- **Physical Well-Being**
- **Social Competence**
- **Emotional Maturity**
- **Language & Cognitive Development**
- **Communication & General Knowledge**
(Janus & Offord, 2001).

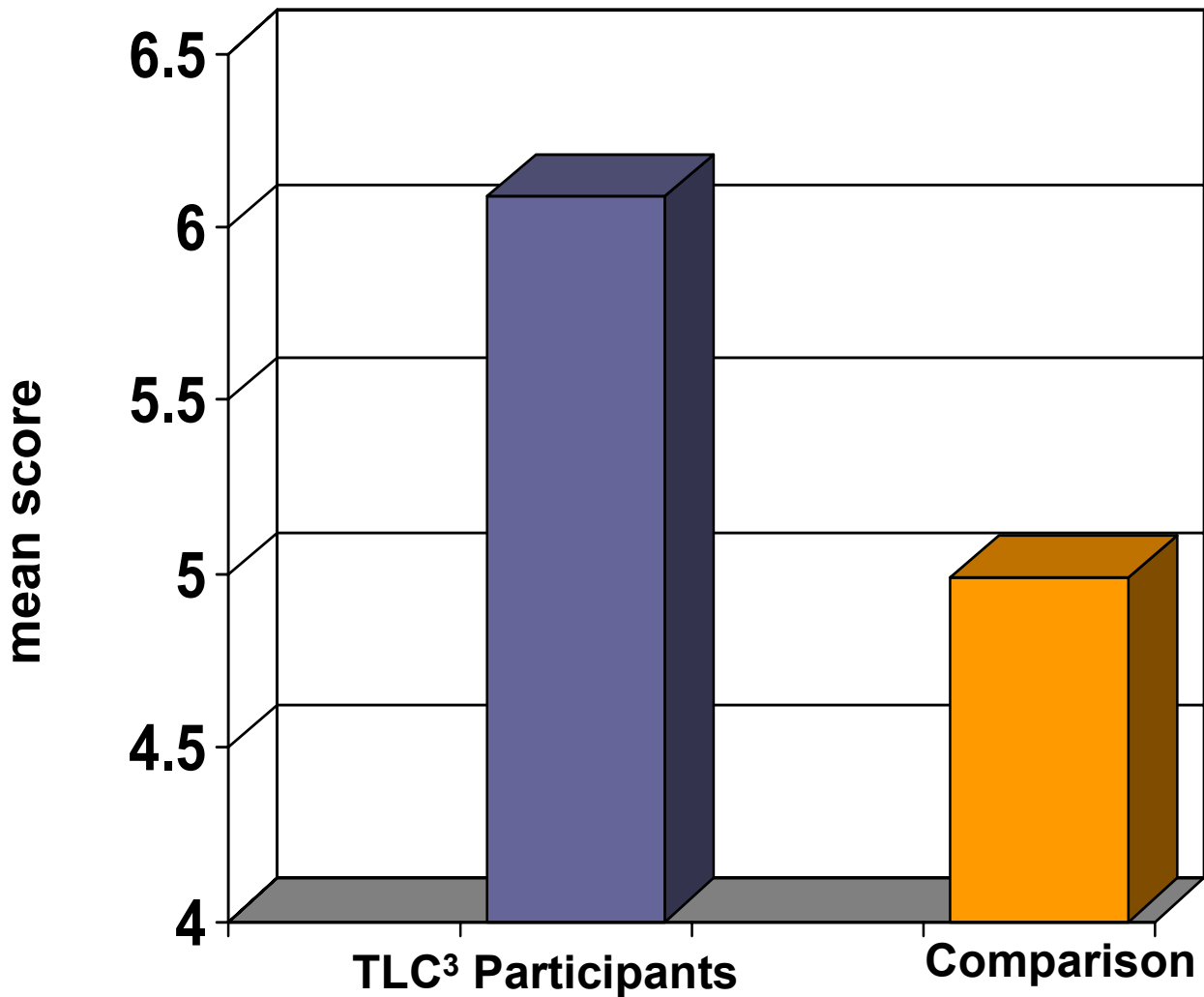
Results - Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test-Revised



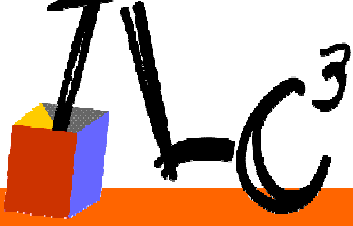
There was a non-significant trend ($p < .08$) on the *Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test-Revised*. Children in the TLC³ intervention group's mean score was higher than comparison children's mean score on this measure of receptive vocabulary.



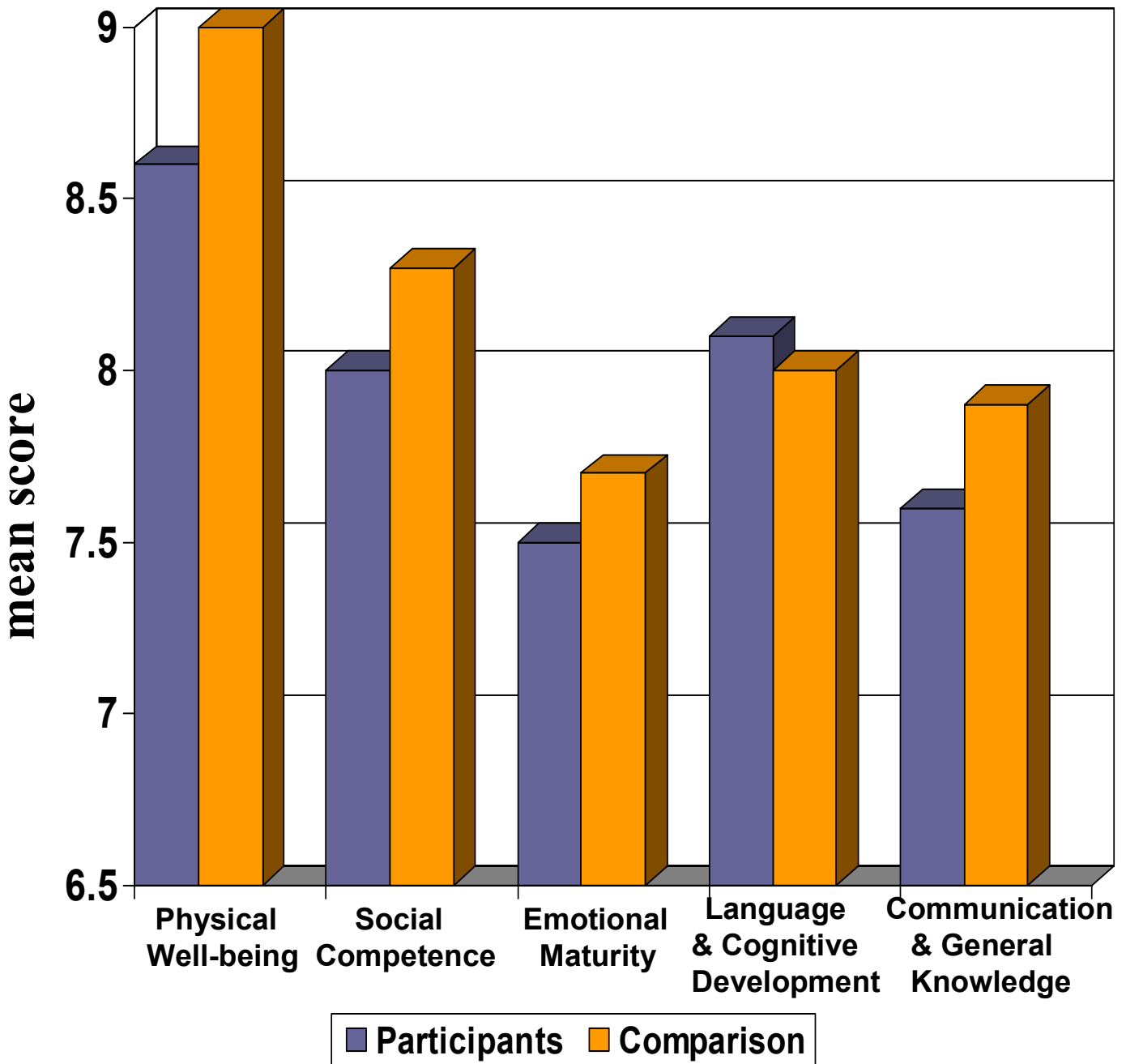
Results - Rosner Auditory Analysis Test



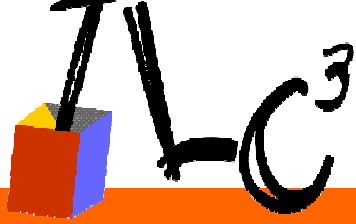
Children that participated in the TLC³ programs had significantly higher scores on the *Rosner Auditory Analysis Test* than comparison children ($p < .05$).



Early Development Inventory



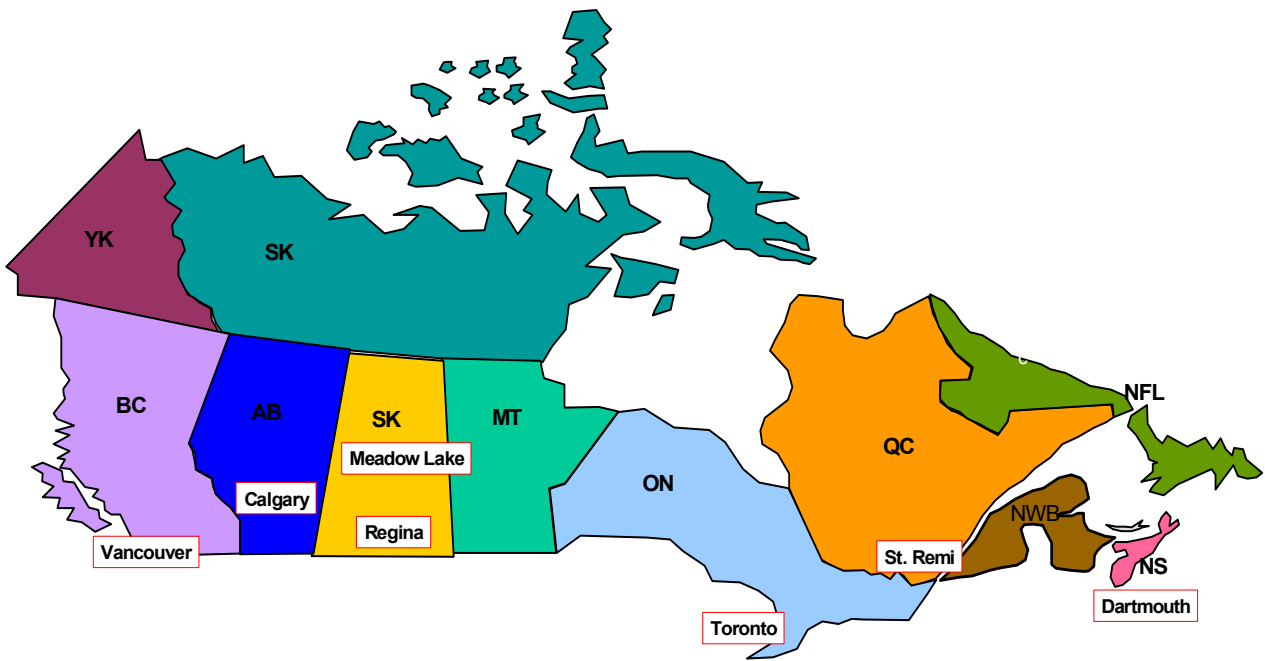
On all subscales of the *Early Development Inventory*, except for the Language and Cognitive Development Scale, the TLC³ participants' scores were lower than those of the comparison children. However, none of these differences were statistically significant.



CONCLUSION

TLC³ was a complex and ambitious project. It presented both tremendous possibilities and tremendous challenges. Many of the possibilities and challenges stemmed from the same sources, the diversity of models and populations, the complications of embedding a program into an already complex organization and community context, forging community-university collaborations, and the difficulties of evaluating the outcomes of a multi-faceted process. At the same time, quantitative and qualitative findings show that both children and their families exhibited positive changes that are important for children's well-being and readiness for school.

SITE LOCATIONS



DARTMOUTH - SEMI-URBAN

CHILD & FAMILY POPULATION SERVED

AGE: 4-5 years (Preschool)
(Family resource Centre)

Low income, high risk

Semi-urban

BASE PROGRAM & TLC³ ACTIVITIES

BASE: Dartmouth Boys & Girls Club Preschool & Dartmouth Family Resource Centre

TLC³ ACTIVITIES:

Enhanced Preschool Program

Parent-Child Interactive Programs:

- Parent/Tot Interactive Rhyming Program
- Baby Talk (based on Keys to Caregiving)

Parent Education Programs:

- You Make the Difference

Speech-Pathology Consultations

CHILD & FAMILY POPULATION SERVED	BASE PROGRAM & TLC³ ACTIVITIES
AGE: 0 - 5 years French Canadian Low income Rural	BASE: 1,2,3 GO! St. Remi (community-based, early intervention program) TLC³ ACTIVITIES: Parent-Child Interactional Programs (Didactic Interactive Reading Programs): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▸ ALI - Bébé (0-15 months) ▸ ALI - Bambin (15-36 onths) ▸ ALI - Explorateur (3-5 years) Developmental Assessments and Corrective Action Program: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▸ ALI - DAC (Detection-Action-Corrective) Community Action Program: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▸ Resource Library ▸ Training for interventionists

TORONTO - URBAN

CHILD & FAMILY POPULATION SERVED	BASE PROGRAM & TLC³ ACTIVITIES
AGE: 0-4 years Immigrant (largely from Sri Lanka, Phillippines and India) Low Income, High Risk, children with identified delays Urban	BASE: Growing Together (Community-based and health promotion) TLC³ ACTIVITIES: Developmental Assessment Preschool Program Parent-Child Interactional Program: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▸ <i>Parent-Child Mother Goose</i> Parent Education Programs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▸ <i>You Make the Difference</i> Home visits

MEADOW LAKE - RURAL

CHILD & FAMILY POPULATION SERVED	BASE PROGRAM & TLC³ ACTIVITIES
AGE: 0 - 5 years First Nations Low income, high risk Rural	BASE: Meadow Lake Tribal Council-First Nations' Child Care Program TLC³ ACTIVITIES: Developmental Screening Parent-Child Programs: <ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ You Make the Difference▶ It Takes Two To Talk▶ Come Read With Me▶ Parent-Child Mother Goose Parent Education Program: <ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ Nobody's Perfect▶ Second Step (violence prevention) Parent Education Meetings Child and Parent Components <ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ Bright Start Resources: <ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ Toy and book lending library▶ Book and toy resource fairs

REGINA – URBAN

CHILD & FAMILY POPULATION SERVED	BASE PROGRAM & TLC³ ACTIVITIES
AGE: 0 - 5 years First Nations (largely Metis) Low income, high risk	BASE: Regina Early Learning Centre TLC³ ACTIVITIES: Enhanced Preschool Program with Strategies From <i>High/Scope Curriculum</i> Family Literacy Programs: <ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ <i>Parents' Role Interacting with Teacher Support (PRINTS)</i>▶ <i>Come Read With Me</i>

CALGARY – URBAN**CHILD & FAMILY POPULATION SERVED****BASE PROGRAM & TLC³ ACTIVITIES****Age: 6 months - 5 years****English Canadian****Middle to upper middle income, low risk****Urban****BASE: University of Calgary Child Care Centre****TLC³ ACTIVITIES:****Parent-Child Interactional program:**

- Parent-Child Mother Goose

Toy and Resource Lending Library**Home Visiting and Parent****Education Program****Parents as Teachers****Community Outreach:**

- Parent-Child Mother Goose training
- Knowing and Growing Together Lecture Series
- Child as Scientist
- Story Crafting & Story Telling

VANCOUVER**CHILD & FAMILY POPULATION SERVED****BASE PROGRAM & TLC³ ACTIVITIES****AGE: 0-2 years****Multicultural, Urban****Low to middle income, moderate risk****BASE: Parent-Infant Program****TLC³ ACTIVITIES:****Parent-Child Interactional Programs:**

- Parent-Child Mother Goose
- You Make the Difference

Language Screening and Follow-Up

- First Look at Talking
- Further Look at Talking
- Keeping in Touch