THE Yorkton Process Model of Community Development

Final Report

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For the Yorkton KidsFirst Management Committee

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Foreword

The purpose of this handbook is to describe the processes and outcomes of the community development model used to plan, implement and deliver Yorkton’s KidsFirst program.

In May 2002, the Management Committee (MC) of the program asked the Saskatchewan Instructional Development and Research Unit (SIDRU), Faculty of Education, University of Regina, to study and document the processes that they used in Yorkton to implement a successful KidsFirst program. The Committee wanted to share what happened in Yorkton so that other agencies/groups could benefit from the lessons learned around community program implementation. The results of the study are presented here in handbook form so as to be of most use to others.

This handbook will be of use to people interested in learning more about community development processes that are the basis for planning, implementation and delivery of any program. While the focus of the handbook is on the processes of community development, the Yorkton KidsFirst program provides the examples for each process that resulted in a successful community development project. These examples tell the story of what is possible in a community working together to develop an effective program.

The material in the handbook is a modified version of a longer report prepared by SIDRU. The Yorkton Process Model of Community Development: Interim Report (August 2004) contains a more detailed account of the study and is available from Yorkton KidsFirst. The Interim Report is available from Yorkton KidsFirst at (email) kidsfirst@sasktel.net or (telephone) 306-783-1946.
Introduction

Who is the handbook for?

The content of the handbook comes from the people who participated in the planning, implementation and delivery of Yorkton KidsFirst. These participants generously shared their knowledge and experiences during a study that examined the processes used to develop and to deliver the program. This handbook is intended for individuals and groups interested in how community development processes can lead to a successful program. It provides a model that shows how these processes build on community strengths.

What this handbook will do

This handbook offers information about the processes needed for sound partnerships that plan, implement and deliver community services. To do this, the handbook describes what happened in the Yorkton community after the KidsFirst program was announced. The handbook presents information and examples of each process as the program evolved during the planning, development and implementation stages. Helpful tips, lessons learned and recommendations are designed to assist readers when considering their own circumstances.

By reading this handbook, you will develop an understanding of:

- community development
- processes that contribute to community development
- connections among the processes
- next steps in successful planning, implementation and delivery of programs

Let's begin with community development:

Community development brings people together for a common purpose. In community development, people value and respect the abilities and contributions of all participants. Together, people build on their strengths to improve conditions for everyone.

Community development values the following:

- capacity building
- collaboration
- respect
- hope
- participation
- flexibility
- integration
- sustainability
- cooperation
- equity
- inclusion
- innovation
- cultural sensitivity

As one MC member said “Good community development happens when people don’t know that you are there.”

Lessons Learned

The study showed that combining the key processes of planning, consultation, leadership, communication, relationships, integration, building on strengths, and partnerships over time builds the community and program capacity to deliver a multitude of services and supports when and where needed. With its holistic nature, the process model of community development includes complex interactions of people, agencies, organizations and actions as the program is implemented. The result is successful implementation and empowerment of all participants.
The Management Committee of the Yorkton KidsFirst program asked for an evaluation that describes how community development processes assisted them during the first two and a half years of operation. Interviews with partners and Management Committee members revealed how the processes built strong community relationships and commitment to the program. A model was developed to show how these processes worked together in Yorkton.

What is a Model?

A model is a picture that represents many ideas as simply as possible. The picture tries to show what is happening between key parts of the model.

The Yorkton model attempts to explain how the people, the organizations and the community development processes interacted in the design and delivery of the KidsFirst program in Yorkton.

What does the Model look like?

The model resembles a target with several rings surrounding the KidsFirst program at the centre. Each ring represents the various layers of people and structures that affected what happened in Yorkton. This model helps to describe the interactions among the processes and the participants while the program was being planned and delivered. At the same time, the model shows how the program and the entire community were brought together to support the KidsFirst program.

How is the model built?

The model is constructed by using concentric rings to represent the important influences on the program. In this case, there are four rings, moving from largest to smallest. The centre ring or target is the Yorkton KidsFirst program.

- The distance each circle is from the centre of the target indicates the program's range of contact and interactions.
- The arrows represent the processes used by participants as they worked together to achieve the program goals.

What does each ring represent?

Ring 1: The Broader Setting
The largest ring, Ring 1 the Broader Setting, is farthest from the target's centre. Nearby towns and reserves as well as the provincial guidelines for Yorkton KidsFirst are part of this ring.

Ring 2: The Community Context
The next ring, Ring 2, consists of the local organizations and agencies that exist to serve people in the community.

Ring 3: The Partners
Surrounding the centre is Ring 3 made up of the partners who work with the program to help deliver the services. These partners may be formal, informal or potential partners.

Ring 4: The Target
The Yorkton KidsFirst program is the focus at the centre of the target. All of the processes and interactions in the model come together in the program to support families in KidsFirst.

As you continue through the handbook, the principles and processes that influenced the Yorkton program plans and delivery will be explained.
Figure 1  The Yorkton Process Model of Community Development

- **Consultation**
  - Broader Settings
  - Close towns and reserves, Provincial Government
  - Saskatchewan KidsFirst vision

- **Community Context/ Community Services**
  - History/ Agencies/ Organizations

- **Formal/ Informal/ Potential Partners**

- **KidsFirst Program Components**
  - Administration/ Management
  - Services/ Clients/ Employees
  - Program Outcomes

- **Leadership**

- **Integration**

- **Partnerships**

- **Planning**

- **Communication**

- **Relationships**

- **TIME**
  - Initiative Announced

- **Delivery of Services**
**Timeframe for Planning, Implementation & Delivery:**

Beside the model is an arrow labeled “Time” showing that the processes continue over a lengthy period of time. The Yorkton KidsFirst timeframe is unique in that the community development processes were deliberately incorporated into the timeframe.

The timeframe was affected by both provincial and local community plans. Here is a rough scheme of how the timeframe progressed:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td>Saskatchewan Action Plan for Children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>Federal/Provincial agreement to add a targeted program, KidsFirst, to Saskatchewan’s Action Plan for Children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001 Spring</td>
<td>Saskatchewan KidsFirst announced. Yorkton planning begins.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001 Fall</td>
<td>Program Manager appointed. Community plan is completed. Five year plan is developed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>Study commissioned to document processes used to date</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**NOTES**

At first people tended to focus on their own situations but now everyone takes a broader view.
The Broader Setting Ring exists within the framework of the overall provincial KidsFirst program. The following section describes some of the broad program expectations with an accompanying example of how Yorkton KidsFirst (YKF) has adapted or gone beyond expectations to meet the needs of their community.

Where Might a Community Begin?

❖ **Strength Based**
The intent of the KidsFirst program is to offer support to vulnerable families and their children. An important belief of the KidsFirst program is that parents want to be the best possible parents.

*YKF: Building on the strengths of the family, additional supports are provided to assist parents to nurture their children.*

❖ **Built on existing services**
KidsFirst begins with the existing services that are found in a community. These services are enhanced by additional programs.

*YKF initiated several planning opportunities to build on current services and to develop new ones. SIGN (Society for the Involvement of Good Neighbours) provided an existing mechanism of service delivery in the targeted area.*

❖ **Inclusion of Aboriginal organizations**
KidsFirst involves the Aboriginal community of the targeted area.

*YKF has a contractual relationship for child spaces with the Aboriginal Head Start program; no formal participation on the Management Committee has been achieved at the time of this publication.*

❖ **Intersectoral and Integrated**
Services are planned and delivered in an integrated format.

*The YKF Management Committee represents programs that contribute to supporting the growth and well being of children.*

The Yorkton KidsFirst program has successfully integrated its program offerings with existing community agencies. Establishing partnerships contributed to shared training sessions for home visitors and childcare personnel. Home visitors along with other agencies create a seamless approach for families who receive services for older children. The home visitor facilitates access to all supports that a family may require. Additionally, shared financial contributions provided for a Child Care Consultant position.

**Points to Ponder**

- How do the expectations of the provincial program match the needs of your community?
- What adaptations to the provincial framework are necessary to meet the needs of your community?
- What are the existing networks of service providers in your community?
- How do you see the service providers integrating their services?
What is the role of the Management Committee?

The primary role of the Management Committee is to provide local intersectoral leadership in the development, implementation, delivery and accountability for the KidsFirst program.

The Yorkton Management Committee uses the community development process to ensure effective program implementation.

Who?
Major decision makers represent key community organizations. These members of the Management Committee contribute to program development and implementation.

What?
Each major community organization contributes time and other resources to the management of the KidsFirst program. Governance and decision-making is located in the Management Committee.

When?
The committee conducts monthly meetings and corresponds through email and telephone conversations.

How?
The Management Committee identified the following components as essential to the success of the program:
- Sufficient sustained funding to support the program
- Strength-based values
- Collaborative approach
- High quality of leadership, skills and attitudes of the key decision makers.

In addition to the Management Committee, some communities create a Local Community Planning Committee. The primary role is to ensure that planning occurs at the broader community level. In some communities, existing committee structures are used while in others a committee will need to be formed.

Yorkton KidsFirst has used existing committee structures to establish networks for delivering services to families. When gaps in services are evident, Yorkton KidsFirst organizes Local Community Planning Committees (LCPC) to consider how best to fill the void through existing community agencies. If the void continues to exist, the LCPC assists in the development of a new service. For example, to address food security issues, Yorkton KidsFirst hosted community kitchen sessions (an existing community service) and participated in planning the Good Food Box program (a new community initiative).

What is the role of the Regional Intersectoral Committee?

The Regional Intersectoral Committee (RIC) Coordinator provides support and leadership to the KidsFirst program. The coordinator:
- Provides planning and collegial support to the Program Manager
- Shares information about local early childhood community actions and integration activities
- Encourages participation from all sectors and partners through relationships with the Regional Intersectoral Committee
- Promotes the integration of new initiatives with existing services.

Bonus:
Yorkton KidsFirst benefits from the strong support of the RIC coordinator who works closely with the Program Manager. Together they ensure integration with and communication links to other community agencies and partners involved in the RIC.
Why is the Program Manager the Key Role?
Each targeted community receives support for a Program Manager. The person who fills this role is responsible for the day-to-day implementation, operations, realignment negotiations, community-based agency services, contract maintenance, and community development with respect to the KidsFirst program.

The Yorkton Program Manager capably carries out the complex array of responsibilities for overseeing day to day operations, planning, reporting, and communicating or consulting with agencies, employees, the Management Committee, and the RIC Coordinator.

The Broader Setting...
Summary Points

To begin...a community focus on
- strengths
- existing services
- Aboriginal organizations
- ways to integrate services

Role of Management Committee
- provide local intersectoral leadership in the development, implementation, delivery, and accountability for the program

Role of Regional Intersectoral Committee
- provide planning and collegial support to Program Manager
- share information about local early childhood community actions/integrated activities
- encourage participation from all sectors and partners
- promote integration of services

Key Role...Program Manager
Responsible for:
- day-to-day implementation
- operations
- ongoing negotiations
- community-based agency services
- contract maintenance
- community development around program
This section of the handbook describes the processes that contributed to the successful delivery of Yorkton KidsFirst. These processes were used during the planning, implementation and delivery of the program in the community.

The processes in this section include:
- Preliminary planning
- Community plan
- Consultations
- Communication
- Relationship development
- Leadership
- Seamless integration
- Building on community history

As you read this section, keep in mind that each process is presented individually. The processes, however, actually work together. The model attempts to show that these processes are interacting across all of the rings and with each other.

Working together helps us to identify families who would benefit from community services.
The initial planning group understood how important it was to allow adequate time to develop a good plan. The planning group began with the belief that community members are capable, strong people interested in working together for the good of all citizens.

The preliminary planners put together a list of principles that would guide all processes in the program. These principles reflect the values and strengths of the community.

The list of principles for Yorkton KidsFirst included the following:
- Child-centred
- Community-based
- Strength-based
- Preventive
- Collaborative
- Comprehensive
- Equitable
- Empowering
- Culturally affirming
- Accountable

The planning group invited community agencies to share their experiences and knowledge through consultation sessions. This involvement opened the way for future partnerships to share resources and to deliver services to families.

Which values are important in your community?

List additional principles here:

Who would you invite to a consultation?
The preliminary planning serves as a first step in the planning process. The consultations that follow open more communication links between the Management Committee and community partners. Information is used by the Management Committee to prepare their plan for KidsFirst.

The Management Committee gathered information about which community programs were most effective and about the best ways to achieve integration of services. Through the planning process, the Management Committee created a community early childhood plan.

The plan had three objectives:

1. Identification of community and human service strengths and capacities

2. Review of the human service delivery system to seek ways to increase accessibility as well as opportunities for integration

3. Development of a communication plan.

The result of the planning and the consultations was a list of services for KidsFirst families. These include:

- Prenatal Outreach
- Universal Screening
- Assessment
- Home-visiting
- Mental health and addiction services
- Early learning, childcare and family supports

What are effective community programs?
- Achieve goals
- Share services
- Easy to access
- Offer all needed services

How can you build on existing services?
Process 3: Consultation Process

Point to Ponder
Community consultations invite and engage community participation.

The Yorkton KidsFirst principles were used to plan the community consultations. These consultations had three objectives:

1. to increase awareness about the program goals
2. to gather information and ideas from community members to help in planning
3. to engage members of the community and organizations in a series of sessions and events.

These consultations brought together a variety of people and groups to share information and to exchange ideas.

Perhaps the major outcome of these consultations is the working relationship between the KidsFirst planning group and the wider community.

Lessons Learned
through the consultations:

- community members share common values such as respect for all members
- importance of working together to expand existing partnerships
- gaps in services such as access to quality child care
- ways to bring together agencies to avoid duplication of services
- beginnings of a common vision for supporting community families
- criteria for selecting the additional members for the Yorkton KidsFirst Management Committee

What contributes to good relationships across community programs?

- People feeling comfortable together
- Respect for other views
- Shared values
- Willingness to try new ways of working
- Blurring the boundaries between agencies
- Focus on family needs and not on the agency’s needs

Let’s look at how the Management Committee was put together:
KidsFirst was required to set up a Management Committee. The consultation process was guided by key community members who were named to the Management Committee by the provincial guidelines. The consultations provided other characteristics for selecting additional members as follows:

- voluntary involvement in community activities and organizations
- leadership in related fields
- demonstrated commitment to community values
- willingness to take risks
- ability to make decisions that will make a difference
- capable and responsible
- clear understanding of community needs
- collaborative and consultative
- representative of diverse community groups
- belief in building capacity based on community strengths

Some members of the Management Committee had worked together in other programs. They had developed strong relationships through these activities. New relationships developed through the community consultations. Several key people were invited to become members of the Management Committee.
List characteristics that you think are important in managing programs.

Lessons Learned
People must be willing to look beyond their own agencies’ roles.

Process 4: Communication

Point to Ponder
Consultation and communications are present at the beginning of the program and continue throughout the life of the program.

A communication network that keeps people informed about the program is important throughout the life of the program. It needs attention on a daily basis.

In KidsFirst, the Management Committee and the Program Manager use a variety of communication methods to keep people connected to the program.

Internal communication is well-established among Management Committee members, the Program Manager and other employees. This helps everyone to keep in touch with what is happening and what is planned.

Internal communications:
• Regularly scheduled group meetings
• Email messages
• Telephone calls
• Individual face to face meetings
• Written reports

External groups or individuals also benefit from regular communication. These contacts might be formal at times or informal depending on the purpose of the communication.

External communications:
• Invitations to participate in workshops sponsored by KidsFirst
• Participation in professional development activities to enhance knowledge and skills
• Meetings for specific purposes
• Formal reports
Process 5: Relationships

Add your ideas to the list:

Point to Ponder

Program success rests on a foundation of respectful and trusting relationships among the key stakeholders and the wider community.

The Management Committee developed respectful and trusting relationships through:
- community consultations
- ongoing communications
- raising community awareness of the program
- encouraging community involvement in the program
- modeling the program values in their work

Management Committee members have developed a cohesive working relationship. With the Program Manager, they share and model the values of respect, trust, equity, cultural sensitivity, collaboration and prevention. The delivery of the program reflects these common values. These values are shared by their partners and by the community.

The early consultations by the Management Committee raised awareness about these values. Community interest in the program encouraged organizations and small groups to become involved in the program.

The relationships helped the Management Committee and its partners to move beyond traditional boundaries. Following are two examples of innovative relationships:

- Services contracts were designed to share employee skills and time across organizations. For example, the KidsFirst Home Visitor program uses home visitors employed by SIGN in other programs.
How are community relationships supported?

• Flexible arrangements
• Creative approaches
• Involving people
• Communicating
• Gathering together
• Sharing resources

Why are relationships important?

• Mutual support
• Good use of resources
• Economically sound programs
• Increased reach into community
• Appreciation of other’s contributions
• Access to new skills and approaches

Process 6: Leadership

**Point to Ponder**

Management Committee members represent key community organizations and accept the responsibility of providing leadership, direction and accountability to the program.

Why was leadership important?

The leadership of the Management Committee was central to the development of the KidsFirst program in Yorkton. The Management Committee accepted the responsibility to plan the consultations that invited community support.

The Management Committee worked together to set the directions for the program. They showed how it was possible to involve other partners in the delivery of the program. They saw the opportunity to try new ways of using resources to the benefit of all community members. They appreciated and valued the contributions of all participants in the delivery of the program.

Members of the Management Committee are committed to sharing their knowledge, skills and experiences for the success of the program and the community. Many described a sense of other-oriented process thinking as opposed to self-serving ideas. This way of working encourages the group to use their collective strengths flexibly and creatively.

Leadership is a shared leadership within the group and with the Program Manager. The Program Manager benefits from the wise advice and caring support for the program delivery. At the same time, the Program Manager has a voice on the Management Committee.
What are the characteristics of good leadership?

- Trustworthy
- Flexible
- Understanding
- Creative thinking
- Risk taking
- Sharing control
- Collegial
- Collaborative
- Supportive

Roles of the Management Committee:

- Planning
- Guiding
- Evaluating
- Deciding
- Reporting
- Listening
- Responding
- Acting

What would you add to the list?

Process 7: Seamless Integration

Point to Ponder

New initiatives are integrated into existing services.

Integration of the new program into the community service delivery system builds on past success.

Community consultations revealed gaps in services for families. The working relationships that grew out of the consultations assisted Yorkton KidsFirst to cooperate with existing partners.

KidsFirst funding added to services already part of the community. Additional services expanded access for a new group of families. Families were able to access these supports within the KidsFirst program. This integration eliminated the need for more layers of administration.

What is seamless integration?

Seamless integration of services occurs when services are inserted into existing programs without additional administration. Integration is possible through cooperation among partners. In this approach, people receive the needed service without having to deal with another program or agency.

Integration also encourages consistency in delivery of services. For example, home visitors associated with KidsFirst may also be associated with the family through the school visitor program. The same home visitor who is trusted by the family, will work with the parents, their infants and their school age children as a unit.

Integration also means that families receive all of the necessary services through one program. Families experience the supports conveniently and without the complication of dealing with multiple agencies. This integration is also known as an ‘integrated wrap-around approach’.
Agencies working together can eliminate barriers for families.

Cooperation can make access easier for families in stress.

Trust is built over time.

The focus is on serving the family unit rather than the agency.

All agencies achieve their goals through the integrated approach.

Partners work together more effectively when territory is less important than service.

Artificial barriers of different agencies delivering services to a family unit can be eliminated.

Process 8: Building on Community History

Point to Ponder

When establishing a new program, planners must honour and build from past accomplishments of community agencies.

Yorkton has a history of organizations working together to deliver community services. For example, the Society for the Involvement of Good Neighbours (SIGN) delivers a number of services from a common building site. Over many years, SIGN has encouraged community partnerships. The community has benefited from this cooperative approach. This early foundation of integrating services gave KidsFirst a sound beginning.

SIGN’s Board of Directors practices the community development processes that are also part of the KidsFirst’s vision. Several members of the KidsFirst Management Committee gained valuable experience using these processes while serving on SIGN’s Board.

Working with SIGN and other agencies with similar histories of collaboration, KidsFirst has been able to deliver a multitude of integrated services to families.

What are integrated services?

Integrating services changes the focus from individual agencies to a focus on family needs. Several organizations work together to share resources in delivering the services needed by families. Who delivers the service is less important than making sure the family has access to convenient and prompt services. Duplication of services is avoided. More resources can then be devoted to the services than to the delivery processes.
What happened in the community context to support KidsFirst?

1. The KidsFirst Management Committee accepted the leadership role.

2. They built on the community’s successful past.

3. They organized community consultations to discuss what services existed, what was needed, and what gaps existed.

4. They initiated and nurtured relationships.

5. They continued communication through educational sessions and information sharing.

6. They scheduled adequate time for effective planning.

7. They identified potential partnerships.

8. They agreed to integrate services within existing programs.

The second Ring 2, Community Context, was the starting point for the Yorkton KidsFirst program. Most of the processes that support the program’s success began in the community context and overflowed into the next ring, Ring 3, Partnerships. The model shows how the processes move across all of the components that contribute to KidsFirst.
Steps to success:

- Planning
- Consultation
- Communication
- Relationships
- Leadership
- Integration
- Build on past success
- Partnerships

Lessons Learned about timelines:

- Begin with adequate time to plan. Yorkton KidsFirst took several months to develop the community plan.
- Use other processes to contribute to planning.
- Assess the strengths of your community.
- Build on community strengths.
- Keep communication open and regular.
Ring 3 consists of three types of partnerships: formal, informal and potential partners. Each of these types may occur throughout the life of the program. Each partnership is equally important to the success of the program. Some partnerships may contribute small details to the program, but are seen to be of equal importance.

**Formal** partnerships have a legal agreement.

**Informal** partnerships may have a moral aspect to them.

Examples of informal partnerships: City of Yorkton Recreational Programs; Big Brothers, Big Sisters; Grocery Stores.

**Potential** partnerships arise when gaps in services or connections become evident.

**Point to Ponder**

Partnerships should be established to avoid duplication of services.

**Process 9: Formal Partnerships**

- New initiatives create formal partnerships with community agencies to deliver services

Formal partnerships are established with trusted community agencies that expand their services to assist the new initiative to fulfill its goals. Contracts or formal service agreements define the arrangements of the service.

Agencies with formal service agreements or contracts to deliver services to Yorkton KidsFirst families or to the Yorkton KidsFirst program are considered formal partners. Key agencies, such as Childcare and Aboriginal Head Start are examples of formal partnerships. Additionally the infant care centre at the Yorkton Regional High School and the toddler centre at the Parkland Community College set aside spaces for the children of KidsFirst families.

**Point to Ponder**

The Boys and Girls Club has grown as a result of involvement in KidsFirst.
Process 10: Informal Partnerships

Service delivery can involve informal arrangements between existing programs and the new initiative.

Community service groups exist to serve community members in defined ways. When a new program enters the system, cooperation with the established group helps to build awareness and opportunities for broadening participation.

In Yorkton KidsFirst, contacts with an array of programs such as the City of Yorkton recreational programs, Big Brother, Big Sister organizations, and grocery stores opened the possibility to families to participate in community services through informal arrangements.

Unsolicited offers of support are received from various community organizations such as Church women offering to knit mittens for those in need.

Process 11: Potential Partnerships

Formal assessment of the effectiveness of partnerships and of new opportunities leads to identification of potential new partners.

The program should scan the community for other opportunities to link with groups or services to supplement current services. For example, Yorkton KidsFirst is seeking to encourage Aboriginal involvement in the management and delivery of services to families who move between the urban setting and the reserve community. With collaboration between Aboriginal organizations and Yorkton KidsFirst, a seamless service for Aboriginal families may be possible.

NOTES
Potential Partner Possibilities

- Local Library
- Childcare Centres
- Local Vegetable Gardens
- 
- 
- 

Problem Solving

How can needs of families be met when movement occurs between an urban setting and the reserve or rural community?

List the organizations in your community that could become partnerships to benefit your program.

Identify a contact person in each organization with whom you could establish a relationship.
The Fourth Ring (4):
The Program

SECTION 5

The Community Development model includes the following processes:
- planning
- consultation
- leadership
- communication
- relationships
- integration
- partnerships
- building on strengths

Each of the above processes is needed to achieve the program goals and outcomes. In the Yorkton KidsFirst program, the Management Committee accepted the challenge to introduce a new initiative to the community.

Decisions were taken that allowed the Management Committee time to plan the program, to consult with the community, and to establish relationships with key organizations and individuals. The Management Committee developed a communication network, employed a Program Manager who assisted with the planning and networking, and wove the new program’s services into the community fabric.

Results:
Through assessing the impact on the community, the Management Committee was able to note
- There were improvements in community conditions
- Families were empowered to take charge of their own situations
- Parents used the services that the program established to support their families
- Childcare spaces and transportation were important provisions for participants
- Parent comments testified to the positive impact of program services such as childcare on parents’ ability to support their families
- Home visitors received referrals for other families who have seen the positive differences that Yorkton KidsFirst has made in friends’ lives
- Seamless services, accessible through Yorkton KidsFirst, were appealing to families who have multiple challenges

Point to Ponder
What are the effects of using community development processes to support a program initiative?
Program Issues

While carefully developed and implemented processes are cause for celebration, all programs will experience challenges.

Lessons Learned

The Management Committee and the Program Manager must pay attention to subtle nuances that may signal concerns from partners, employees, or participants.

Communication is important on an on-going basis with all the partners involved with KidsFirst. An example of the need to develop on-going communication comes from a former contract holder who was not informed that the contract would not be renewed.

KidsFirst supports the inclusion of the Aboriginal community. Presently, Yorkton KidsFirst has a contractual partnership with the Yorkton Aboriginal Head Start program, but there is no Aboriginal representation at the Management Committee level. Stakeholders noted that the Management Committee would welcome an Aboriginal representative on the Management Committee.

Yorkton KidsFirst’s problem-solving approach includes key individuals or agencies that identify the issue in order to build on their strengths and to empower them in working toward a solution. One example of this approach was demonstrated when the nursing staff who administer the In-Hospital Universal Screening Tool were invited to discuss the importance of using the tool to identify families for Yorkton KidsFirst.
The Saskatchewan Instructional Development and Research Unit conducted a study in May 2004 to identify and describe the processes and outcomes important to the community development model in Yorkton KidsFirst. Researchers organized 24 sessions to gather the perspectives of the Management Committee, community partners, and other professionals.

Once the information was reviewed, the researchers designed a model that represents the various influences on the program and the processes that the Management Committee used in their community development. The model resembles a target with three rings surrounding the KidsFirst program at the target's centre.

Ring 1 represents the Broader Setting beyond the local community, in this case, Yorkton. Ring 2 consists of the Community Context that directly influences the new program, here KidsFirst. Ring 3 describes the kind of Partnerships that are possible in the program. And finally, Ring 4 in the centre, focuses on the Program itself; the example in this handbook is Yorkton KidsFirst.

Each ring is influenced by the following 8 processes:

- planning (preliminary and community planning)
- consultation
- communication
- relationships
- leadership
- seamless integration
- building on community history
- partnerships (formal, informal and potential)

These processes interact and affect the planning, implementation and delivery of the program at the centre of the model. Program outcomes are influenced by these processes.

**What were the successful outcomes of the processes?**

The Management Committee wanted to know how well the processes worked in the Yorkton project so that other groups would see what was possible if they used the processes. The following list presents the successes that this study revealed:

1. Effective use of the 8 processes beginning in the initial planning stage and continuing throughout the implementation and delivery stages

2. The time invested in a planning period that resulted in sound partner relationships and community commitment to the program

3. Appointment to the Management Committee of community leaders who work cooperatively to achieve common goals

4. Including a member from another community on the Management Committee

5. Establishing strong partnerships willing to work across agency boundaries to bring services to families

6. On-going review of services to address new areas of need

7. The strengthening other community services through the new program partnerships
8. Collaboration with a community outside of Yorkton to ensure that transient families continue to have access to services

9. The use of effective problem-solving approaches with partners to ensure easy family access to services

10. The sharing of workshops, information sessions and educational material with community partners

11. The linking of the process model with new community initiatives such as SchoolPLUS

12. Regular communication with partners, with staff, with Management Committee and with the community

13. The openness to creative ideas that may involve some risk

14. Thinking beyond the self to others

**What needs attention?**
**What were the gaps?**

The Management Committee also wanted to know what might be improved.

Challenge areas to consider include:

1. Beginning and ending contracts in a positive way

2. Ensuring Aboriginal representation on the Management Committee

3. Being sensitive to established programs that have less available funding than the new initiative

4. Assuring people who are invited to deliver a short program that it takes time to attract families to participate

**Next steps:**

**Next Steps for Management Committees:**

1. Ensure that short-term contractual arrangements are concluded in conversation with the person or group who was responsible for the service.

2. Ensure that an Aboriginal person is included on the Management Committee. A First Nations Elder might be an appropriate person to add cultural perspectives to the management of the program.

3. Discuss with other programs the contrast between the level of funding available to KidsFirst and the amount of funding that these programs receive from their funding source. The perception of the imbalance of funds between programs needs to be addressed and clarified.

4. Continue to provide new partners educational opportunities that help them to understand the importance of taking time to build trust with families using a new service.

The community development process has educated all of us.
When using the Yorkton process model of community development, other groups might benefit from considering the following questions:

1. Which leaders can you identify who hold decision-making roles in your community and work well together?

2. What are your community’s past successes with agencies cooperating to deliver services?

3. Who would you invite to community consultations to discuss the services that now exist to fill the needs?

4. What steps would you take to establish strong relationships between the new program and the existing community structures?

5. How would you use educational materials and information sessions to communicate with people and groups?

6. What would you consider an adequate time period to devote to developing the community plan for the program?

7. Who are your potential partners?

8. How would you go about bringing together new and existing services that can be integrated for simple and convenient delivery to program participants?

The Yorkton Process Model of Community Development offers people choices and decision-making opportunities to build stronger communities for everyone. The successes presented above show that these processes have the power to encourage, establish and maintain partnerships that support people’s needs in an all-encompassing way. The model represents the interactions between the rings and the target program. It demonstrates the power of the processes to bring together and empower many individuals and groups as they work together for the good of all.
APPENDIX A

Glossary of Terms

Certain terms in this report require further clarification, either because they were used in a vague manner or because they may not be known to everyone in the community. We attempt here to provide what clarification is possible at this time.

**Accountable**
efficient and effective use of formal and informal government and community resources and monitoring of progress toward outcomes

**Child-centred**
primary focus on children in the context of family and community

**Comprehensive**
supports and services are holistic, coordinated, integrated and developmentally sequential

**Community Development**
the integration of problem-solving and planning between various community and governmental agencies to build on strength and sustain direction

**Cooperative, Collaborative and Shared Responsibility**
inclusive processes, shared responsibility and partnerships

**Culturally Affirming**
responsive to and respectful of cultural contributions

**Equitable**
equal opportunity and benefit regardless of background, family situation, etc.

**Empowering**
family and community relationships are protected and supported

**Preventable**
emphasis is on prevention and early intervention
APPENDIX B

Agencies in Partnership with Yorkton KidsFirst

Boys and Girls Club of Yorkton Inc.
Department of Community Resources and Employment
Dr. Brass Daycare Centre
Eastland Lakes School Division
Invest in Kids
KidsZone
Licensed Family Home Child Care Providers
Parkland Early Childhood Intervention Program (PECIP)
Parkland Regional College
Society for the Involvement of Good Neighbours (SIGN)
Southeast Early Childhood Intervention Program (SEECIP)
Southeast Intersectoral Committee
Sunrise Health Region
Territory Housing Operations
York School Division
Yorkton Catholic School Division
Yorkton Community Kitchens
Yorkton First Steps, Aboriginal Head Start Program
Yorkton Municipal RCMP Detachment
Yorkton Regional Infant Care Centre