Linking Research and Policy for the Sake of our Children

November 23, 2001 – It takes a family PLUS a village to raise a child.

CPRN President, Judith Maxwell, made that point in a key-note presentation today to a conference sponsored by the Canadian Child Care Federation, the Canadian School Boards Association, and the Centre of Excellence for Early Childhood Development.

Mrs. Maxwell was drawing attention to the evidence of the social importance of both parenting and community supports for healthy child development.

In spite of the weight of research findings in that regard, governments have been more inclined to focus on the third key ingredient for properly nurturing children - adequate income. According to Maxwell, governments remain highly conflicted about their role in relation to the other two: strengthening parenting and communities.

In her presentation, she highlights the importance of making the link between research findings and policy implementation. She analyzes the challenge of "knowledge transfer" by examining the conditions that have given rise to successful translation of knowledge into policy and examples where barriers prevented that transfer from taking place.

Finally, she counsels researchers to watch for "windows of opportunity" and to seize upon the emergence of new themes, new institutions and new governance models to make the links needed to bring employers and the state back into action on behalf of children.

You can access a Powerpoint version of her remarks by clicking here.

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