

# **Universal Early Childhood Interventions: What is the Evidence Base?**

Michael Baker  
University of Toronto

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## **Abstract**

Universality is a hallmark of Canadian social policy for very young children. The evidence base for these policies is small, non-experimental and offers mixed results. In contrast the evidence base for targeted early childhood interventions is largely experimental and offers strong guidance. Policy makers and advocates often cite the research on targeted programs in support of universal programs, although this is problematic for a number of reasons. Universal programs require a better understanding of the developmental trajectories of more advantaged children. Evidence from the NLSCY suggests there are some potentially important differences in the association of early and later childhood developmental outcomes by family economic resources.

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