

# *EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION PROGRAMS IN QUEBEC: HOW CAN WE RAISE THE BAR?*

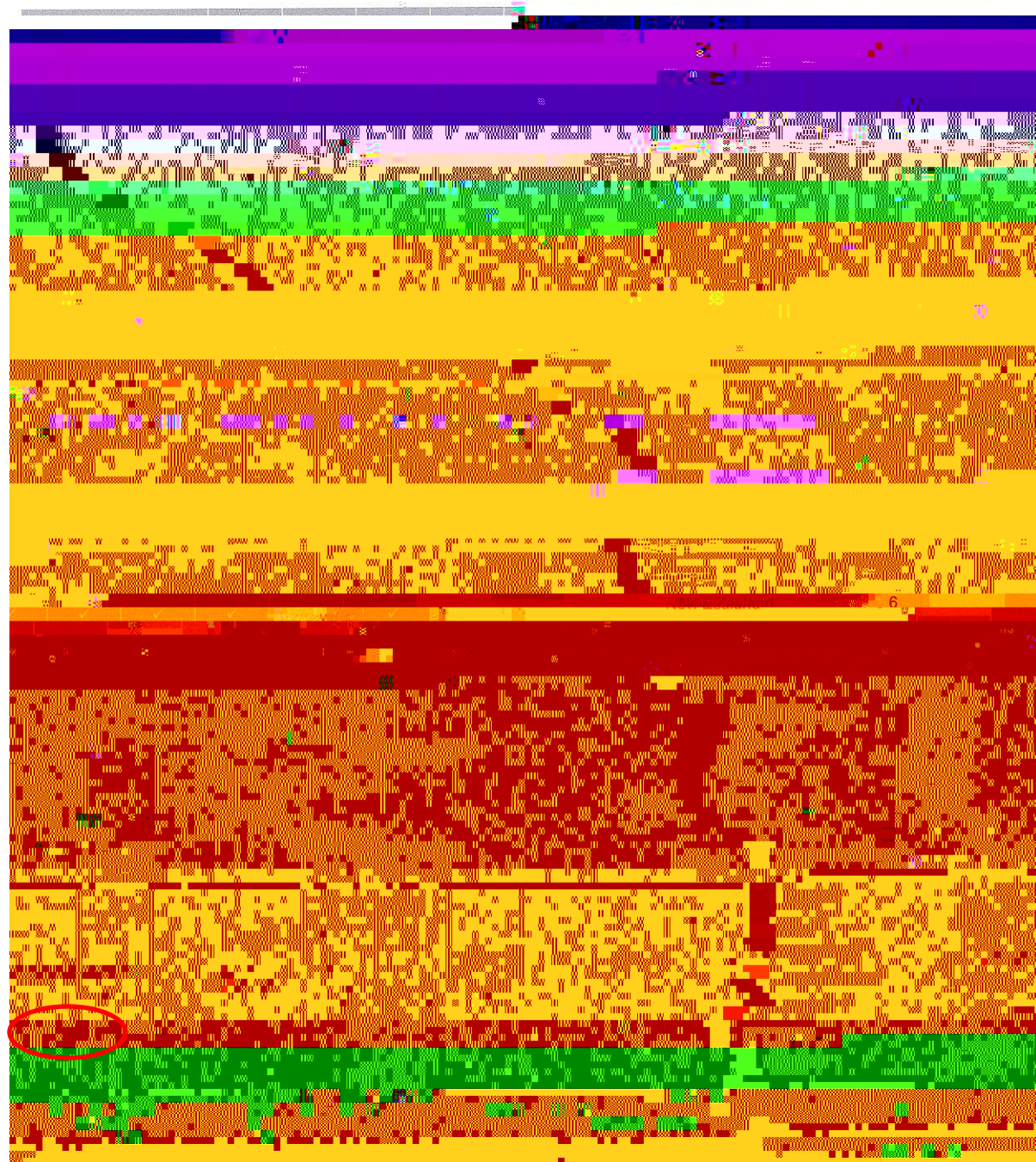
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*ATKINSON CENTRE  
OISE-UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO  
Toronto, May 3<sup>rd</sup> 2010*

UNICEF-Innocenti  
report in 2008:  
Canada ranked second  
to last – met only one  
of the ten important





# *Before*

1970:

- half-day pre-kindergarten classes for 4-year-olds in low-income neighbourhoods in Montreal - *Opération Renouveau* inspired by *Head Start* (targeted intervention)
- Half-day kindergarten for 5-year-olds

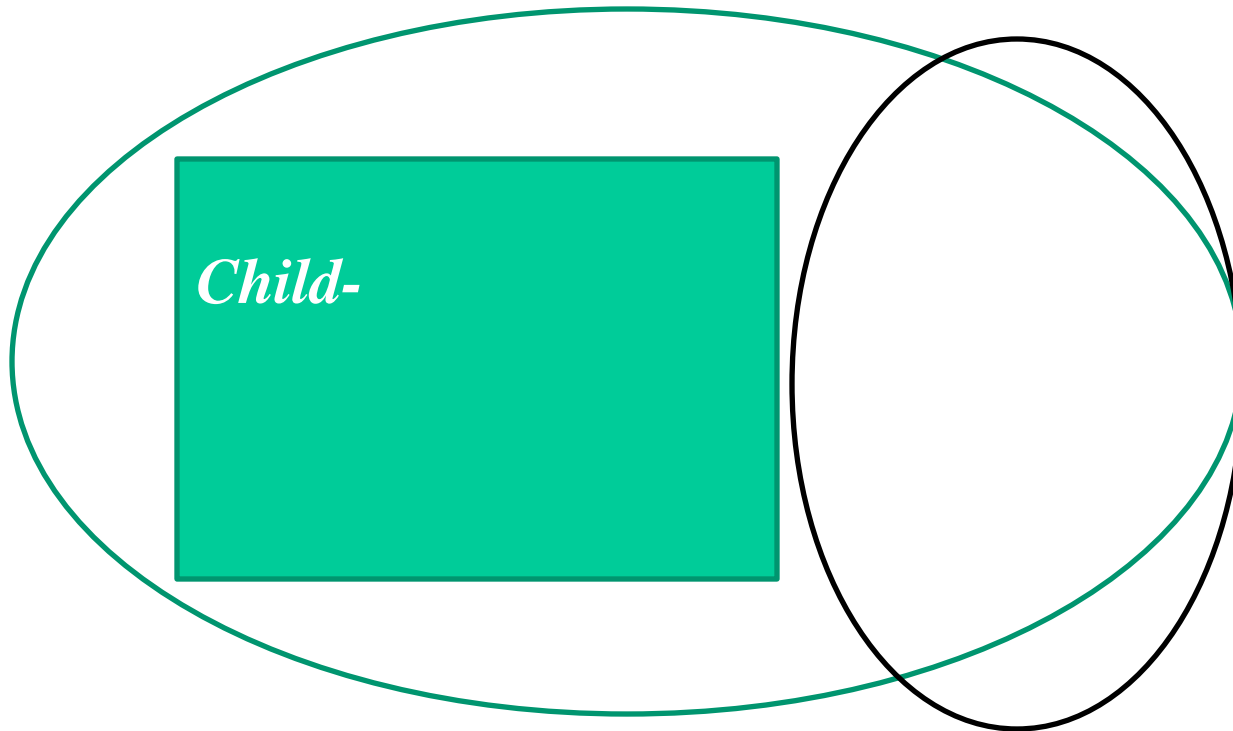
1990:

- Full-day kindergarten for 5-year-olds (universal intervention)

1997-99

Implementation of preschool curriculum 'Jouer c'est magique' (HighScope curriculum) – play-based learning

*At present*



- Almost universal kindergarten attendance at age 5

- Where are the 4-year –olds?

About 80 percent of 4-year-olds are in some kind of preschool setting

- Early Childhood Centres (CPE) – 30%
- For-profit centres – 13%
- Home-based care – 18%
- Pre-k (public and private) – 20%

*What do we know about the quality  
of these preschool settings?*

# *Three surveys*

- **You Bet I Care! (2000)**
  - 234 centre-based groups – 48 in Québec
  - 231 family child care settings – 42 in Québec
- **Québec Longitudinal Study of Child Development (2000 - 2003)**
  - 728 centre-based CPEs
  - 337 home-based CPEs
  - 296 for-profit daycares
  - 179 unregulated home-based settings
- **Grandir en qualité (2004)**
  - 356 centre-based CPEs
  - 200 home-based CPEs
  - 349 for-profit daycares



## ***ITERS-R***

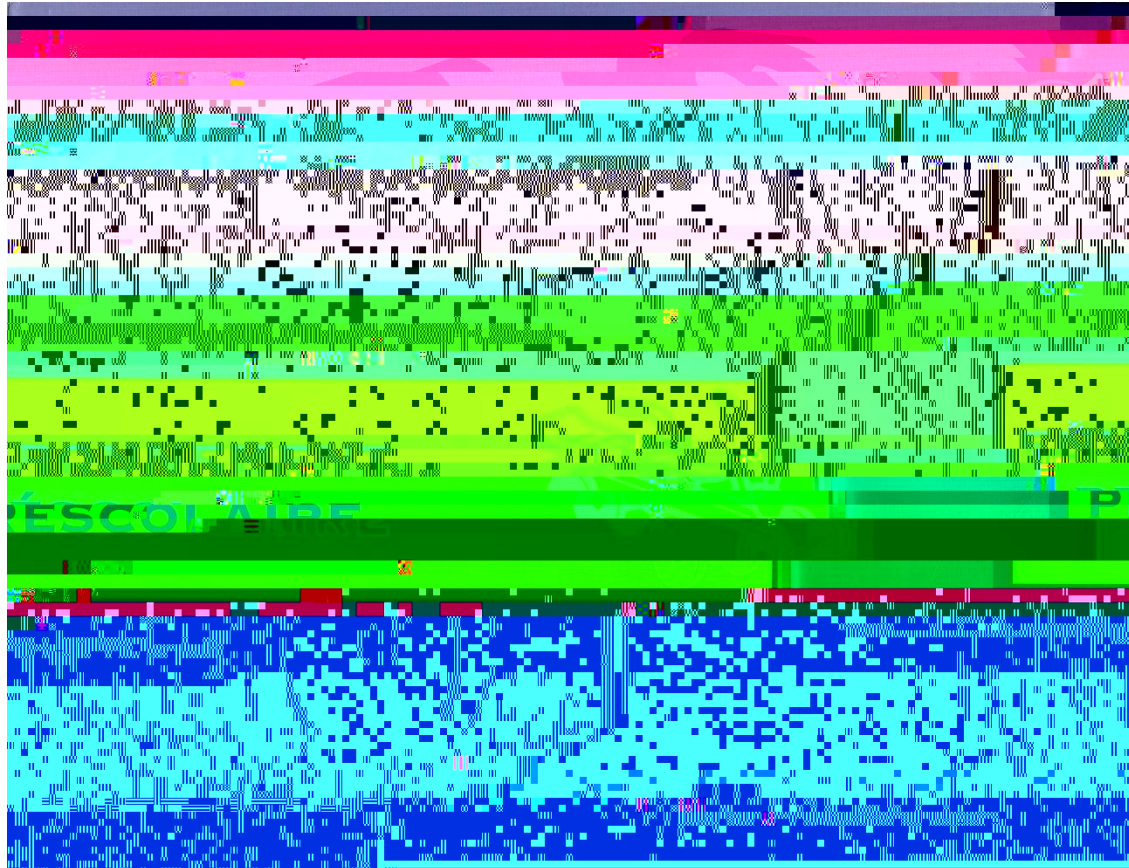
- 467 descriptors
- 39 items
- 7 subscales
- for children 0 to 2 1/2 years

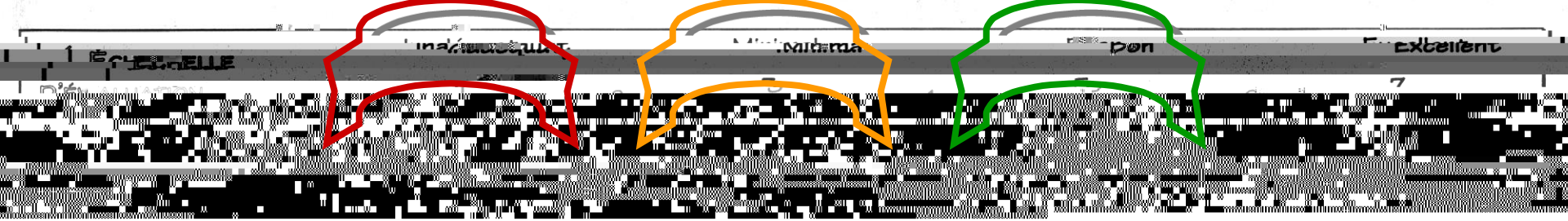


## ***ECERS-R***

470 descriptors

- 43 items
- 7 subscales
- for children 2 ½ to 5 years





1 - 2.9

38 + 4

25 = 7

# *Quality scores*

YBIC and QLSCD – ITERS, ECERS-R, FDCRS (score 1 -7)

Grandir en qualité – different instrument (score 1- 4)

Survey	Total score
YBIC – ITERS (N=16)	3.6
YBIC – ECERS-R (N=32)	4.7
QLSCD – ECERS-R CPE (N=728)	4.6
QLSCD – ECERS-R For-profit (N=296)	3.7
YBIC – FDCRS (N=42)	4.5
QLSCD – FDCRS Home-based CPE (N=337)	4.4
QLSCD – FDCRS Unregulated home-based (N=179)	3.6
Grandir en qualité CPE (0 to 18 months) (N=128)	3.05
Grandir en qualité CPE (18 monts- 5 years) (N=228)	2.93
Grandir en qualité For-profit daycares (0 to 18 months) (N=124)	2.62
Grandir en qualité For-profit daycares (18 monts- 5 years) (N=225)	

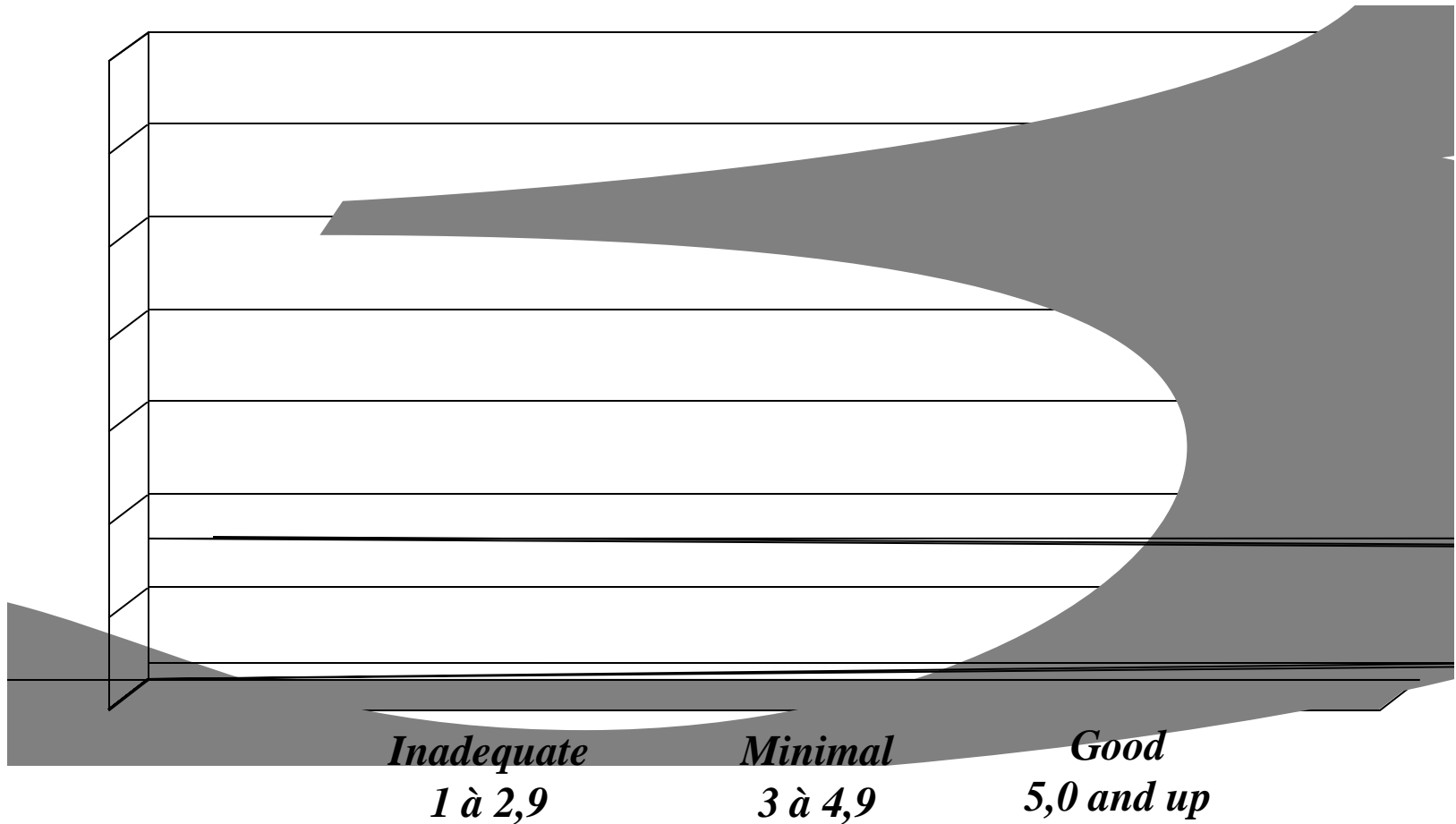


# ÉLDEQ

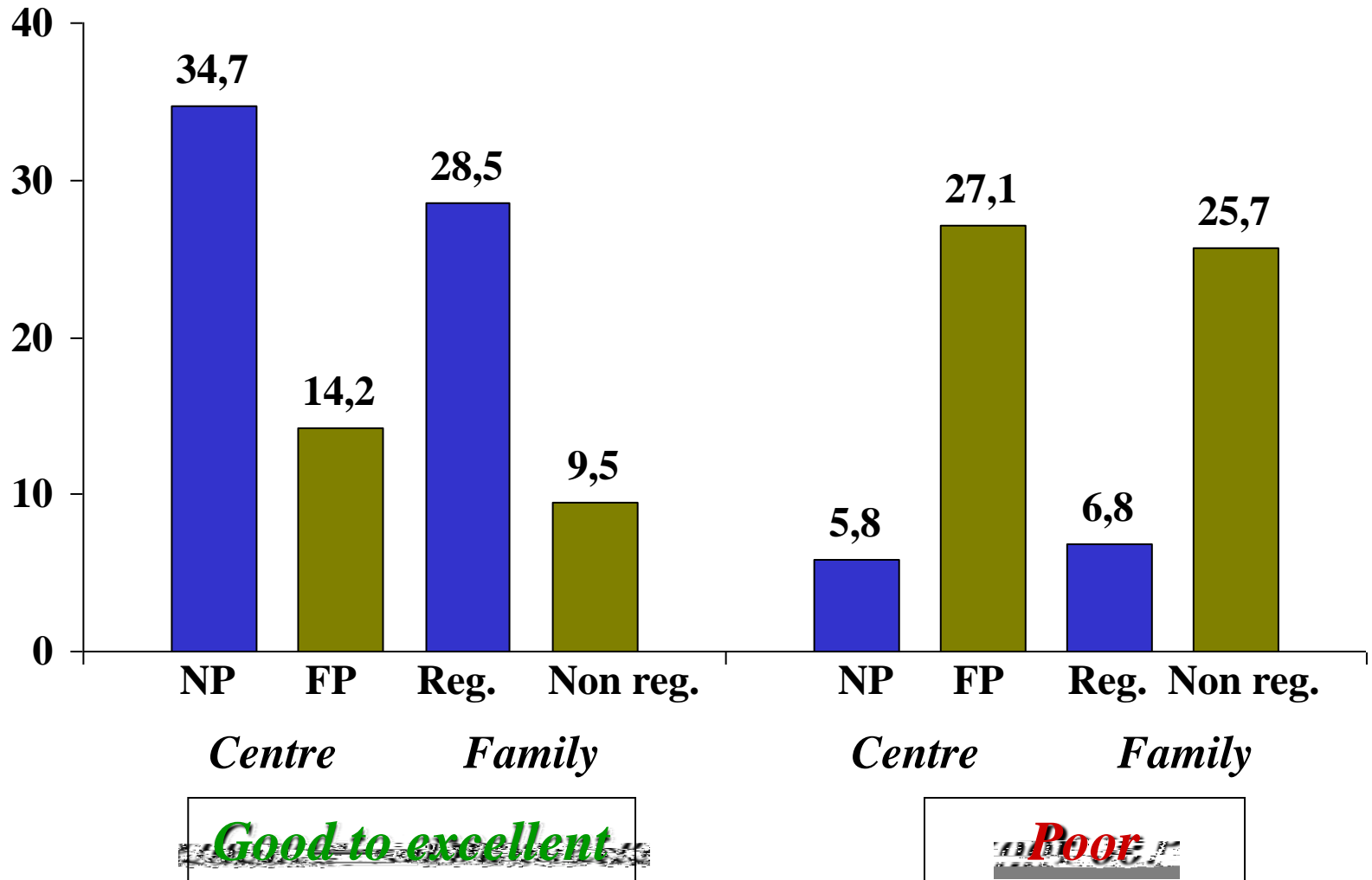
*Longitudinal Study of Child Development  
in Québec*

- 2 223 children born in 1997/98
- representative provincial sample
- annual evaluations since 1998
- first evaluation at age 5 months
- daycare visits started at age 2 ½
- presently in grade 6

*Quality of child care settings evaluated  
from 2000 to 2003  
(N = 1574)*



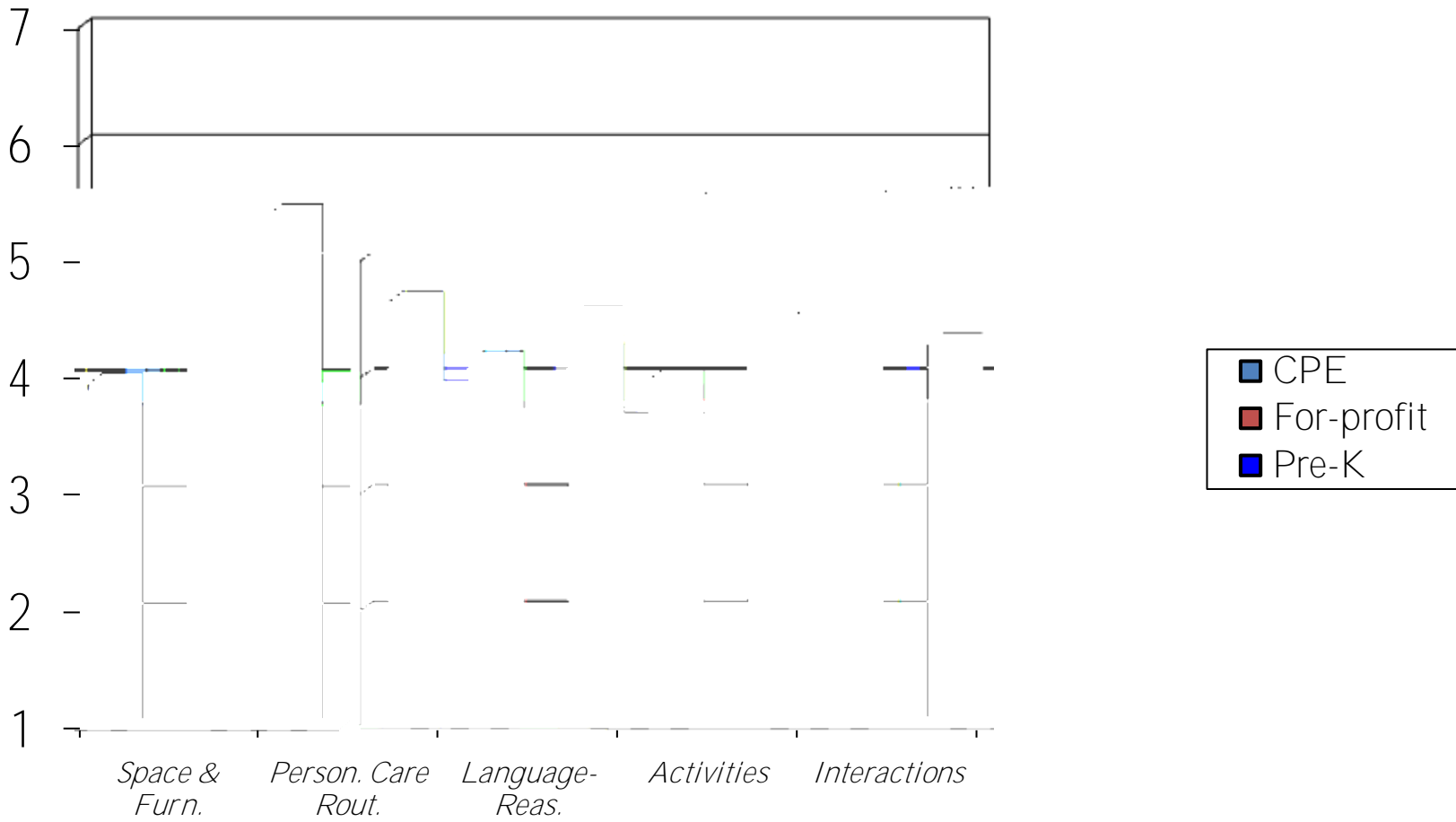
*Quality of child care services (N = 1538)*  
*Total score ECERS and FDCRS*



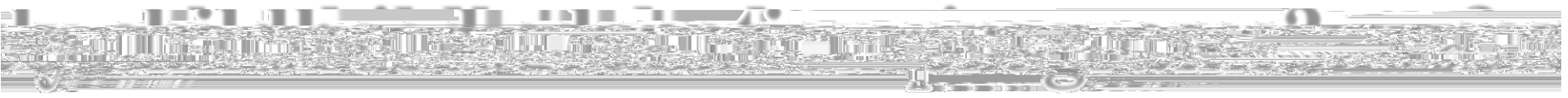




# Quality of settings attended by 4-year-olds in Québec (ECERS-R)



Source : ÉLDEQ 2003



# **Various initiatives to enhance quality in the child care sector**

- ODYSSÉE

*How can we enhance  
child care quality?*

*Results from a standard-based  
pilot project*

*Necessary condition to ensure QUAD*

High quality educator-child interaction

Structural characteristics that provide a safe and enriched environment

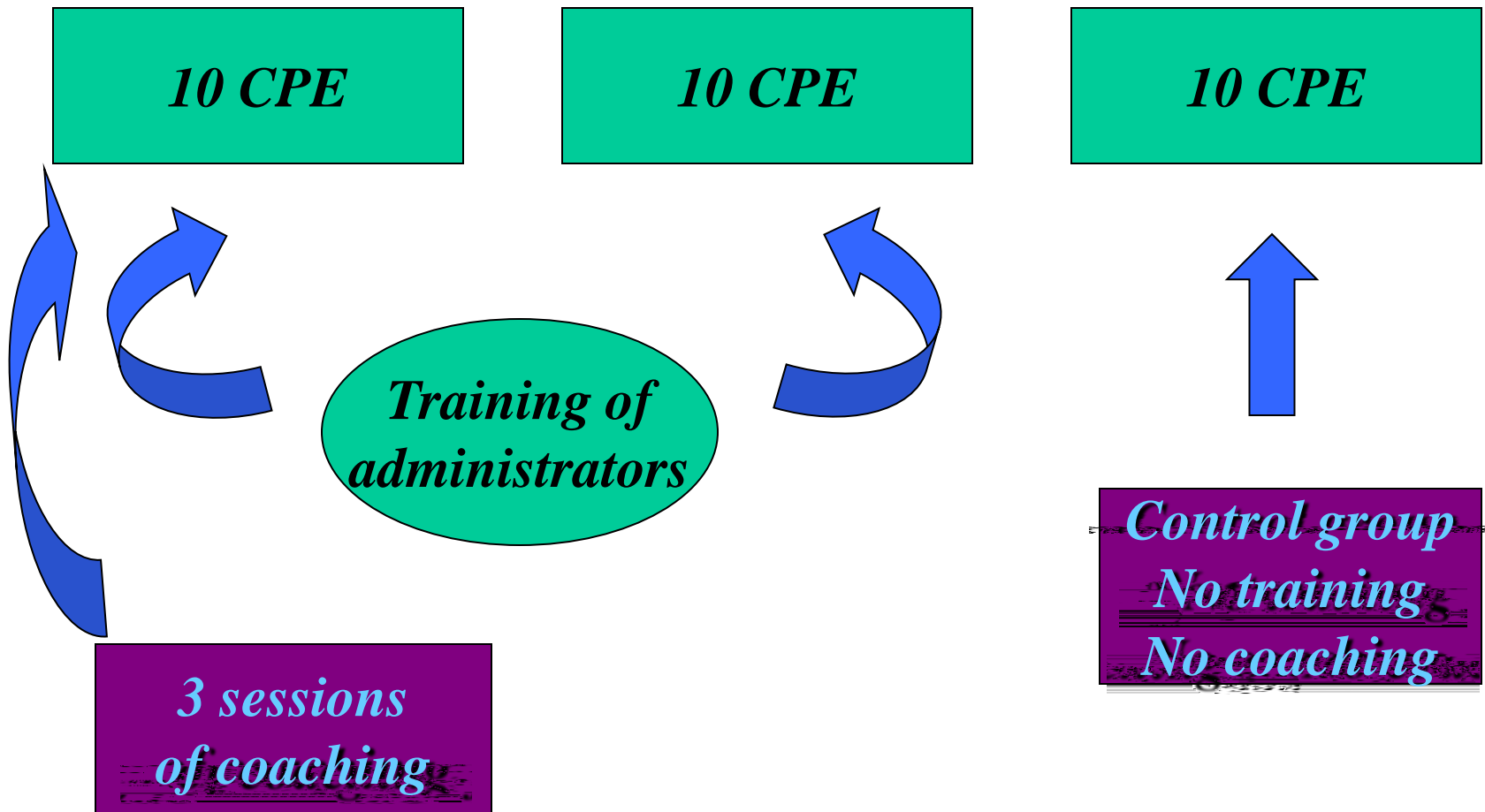
Rules and regulations that ensure quality

Social policies that recognize the importance of quality child care

# *Methodology*

- *Evaluation of 30 early childhood centres (CPE) located in the Eastern Townships of Québec*
- *ECERS-R (Harms, Clifford, & Cryer, 1998)*
- *The CPEs receive the results of the evaluation*
- *Coaching based on the results of ECERS-R (10 centres)*
- *Second evaluation after 3 months to verify short-term impact of intervention*
- *Evaluation of all 30 CPEs about one year after initial evaluation*

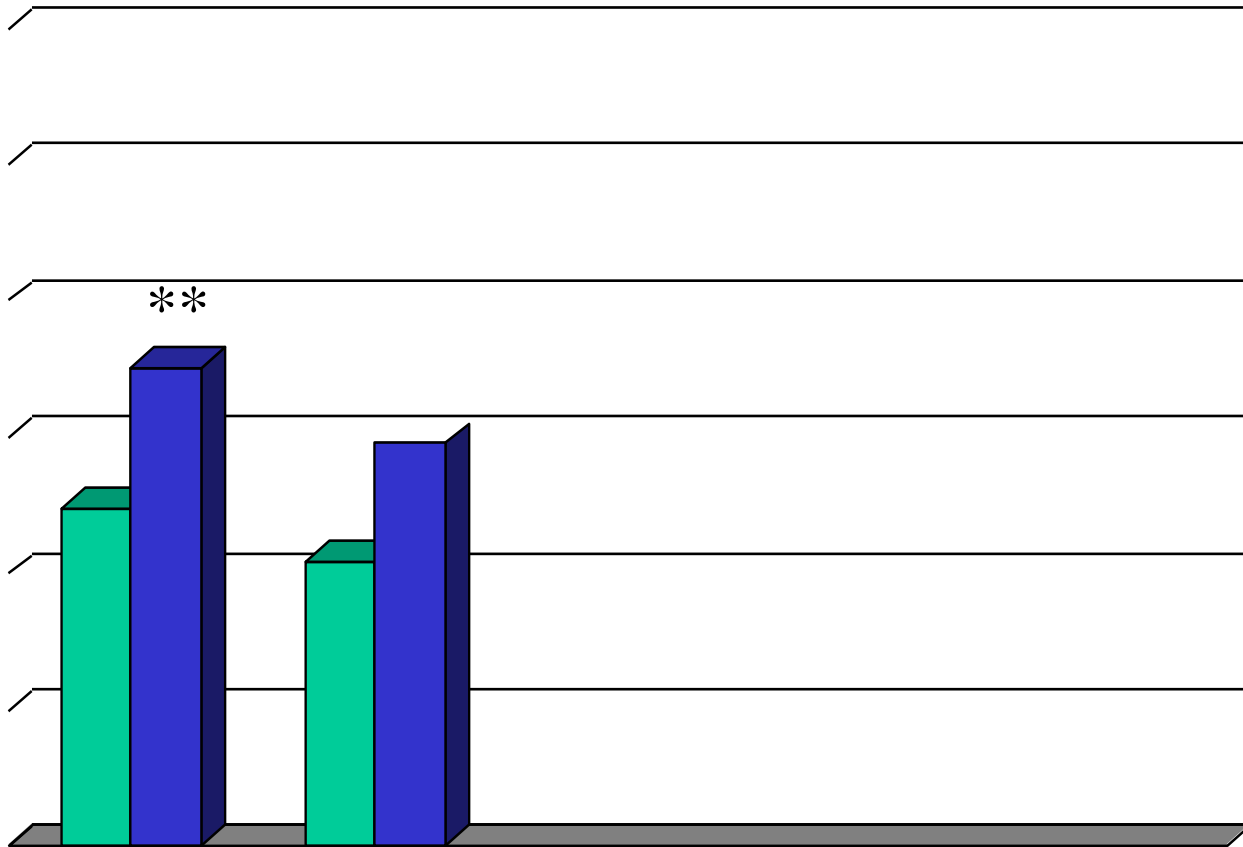
# *Measuring Success*







# *Short-term results for the 10 CPEs (intervention group)*

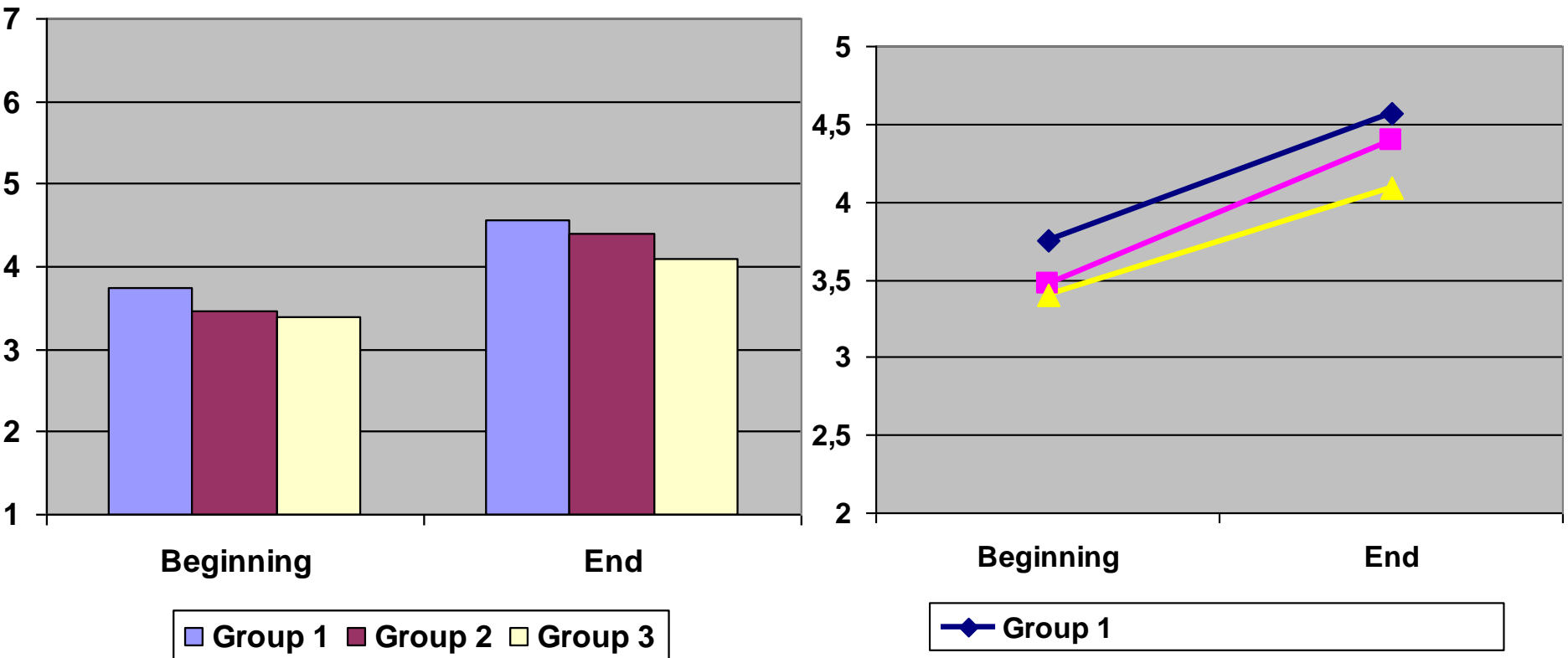


## *Average quality score (ECERS-R)*

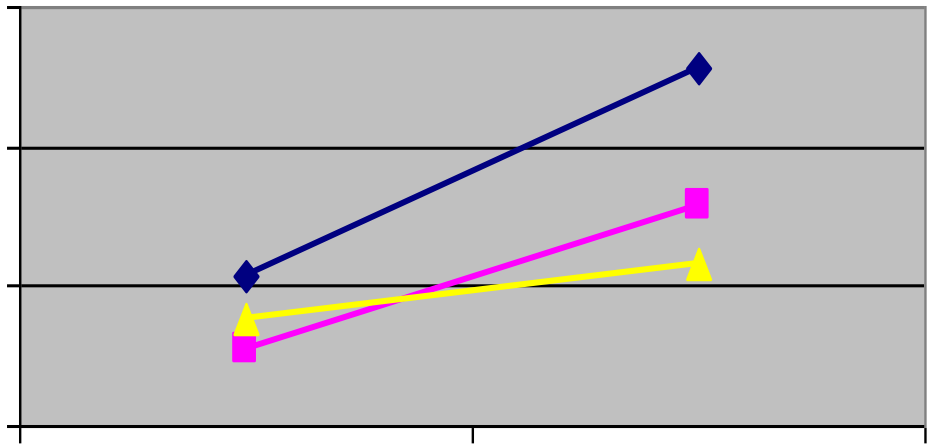
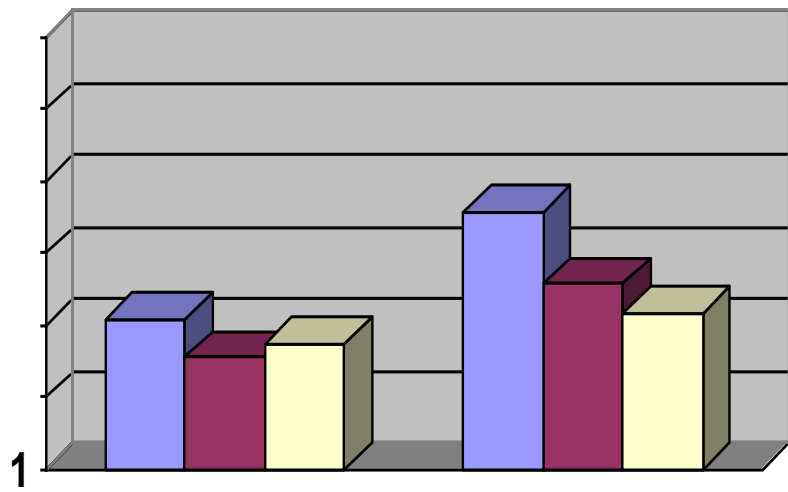
	<b>Time 1</b> Before intervention	<b>Time 2</b> 3 months after intervention	<b>Time 3</b> One year after intervention
<b>Group 1</b> Training of administrators plus 3 sessions of <i>coaching</i>	3.75	4.28 <sup>b</sup>	4.57*
<b>Group 2</b> Training of administrators	3.47		4.39*
<b>Group 3</b> No training, no coaching	3.40		4.09*

\* $p < .001$ ; <sup>b</sup> = .10

# Average quality score (ECERS-R) at the beginning and the end of the project







# *Conclusions*

- **The majority of daycare settings in Québec is of minimal quality. However, we observe important variations in quality according to non profit/for profit and regulated/non regulated status.**
- **At-risk children are less likely to receive nonparental care during the preschool years – and if they do, they are more likely to be in settings of lower quality.**
- **Children’s degree of school readiness is associated with the number of years spent in daycare during the preschool years.**
- **We observe particular benefits of being in daycare for at-risk children : full-time attendance associated with better cognitive performance; early attendance associated with lower levels of physical aggression.**
- **The quality of daycare settings can be improved through in-service training.**
- **Results of a pilot project show that standard-based training of educators yields promising results with respect to increased quality of children’s educational and social environment.**

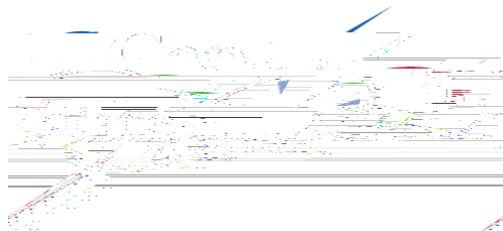
# The project continues....



*Regroupement des Centres de la petite*

Phase 2 – *Un coaching pour la qualité*  
– includes all CPEs and all age groups

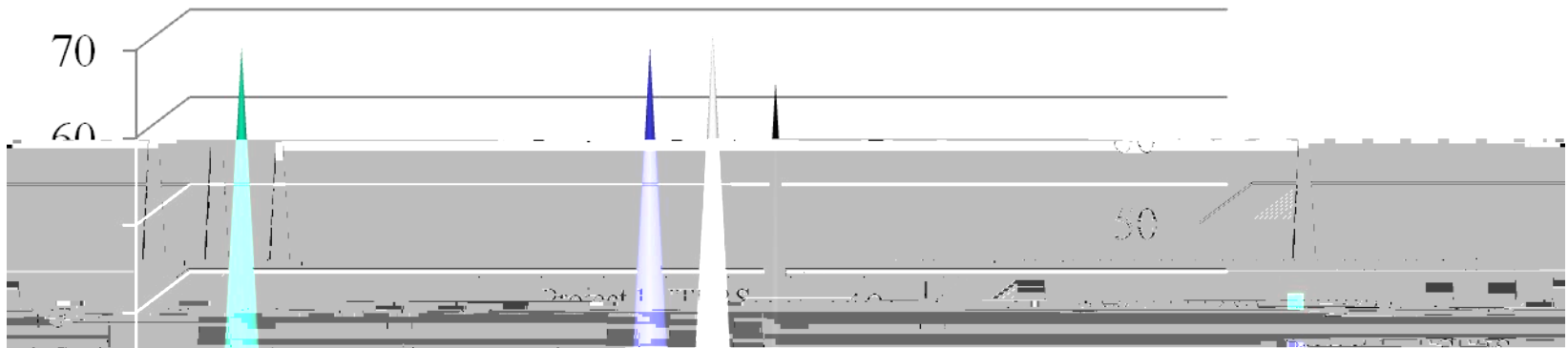
Phase 3 – offer services to home care  
providers



*Regroupement des Centres de la petite  
enfance des régions de Québec et  
Chaudière -Appalaches*

Since 2007 quality coaching project

*Has child care quality in Québec improved over the past five years?*





# The challenges

- Training of observers
- Inter-rater reliability
- Supervision of observers
- Reluctant participants
- Significant staff turnover
- Lack of knowledge and leadership among administrators
- How can we finance an ongoing quality improvement project?

## *What is essential to efficiently monitor and improve quality in early childhood education programs?*

- Leadership on every level
- Qualified educators and teachers
- Measures that meet validity and reliability standards
- Assessments by well-trained third-party observers
- Monitoring on an ongoing basis
- On-site assessments and training
- Financial commitment to integrate a process of monitoring and training into all preschool programs

# MERCI BEAUCOUP

