



Early Childhood Development Instrument

The Early Development Instrument (EDI) provides information about the development of children in Kindergarten to assess their developmental readiness for learning in school prior to entering Grade 1.

Kindergarten teachers complete EDI surveys in February-March of the school year. This annual data provides information to guide decision-making, monitor trends and measure the impacts of changes to programs and services provided for children in the early years. The EDI is similar to a census; it is not a diagnostic tool and does not report findings on individual children. This fact sheet looks at EDI results over time in the Northwest Territories (NWT), with a focus on the 2021-22 school year.

The EDI includes five areas of development:

- Physical health and well-being
- Social competence
- Emotional maturity
- Language, numbers and memory
- Communication skills and general knowledge.

How children are doing in each of these areas is used to determine if they are *ON TRACK*, *VULNERABLE*, or *IN FLUX*.

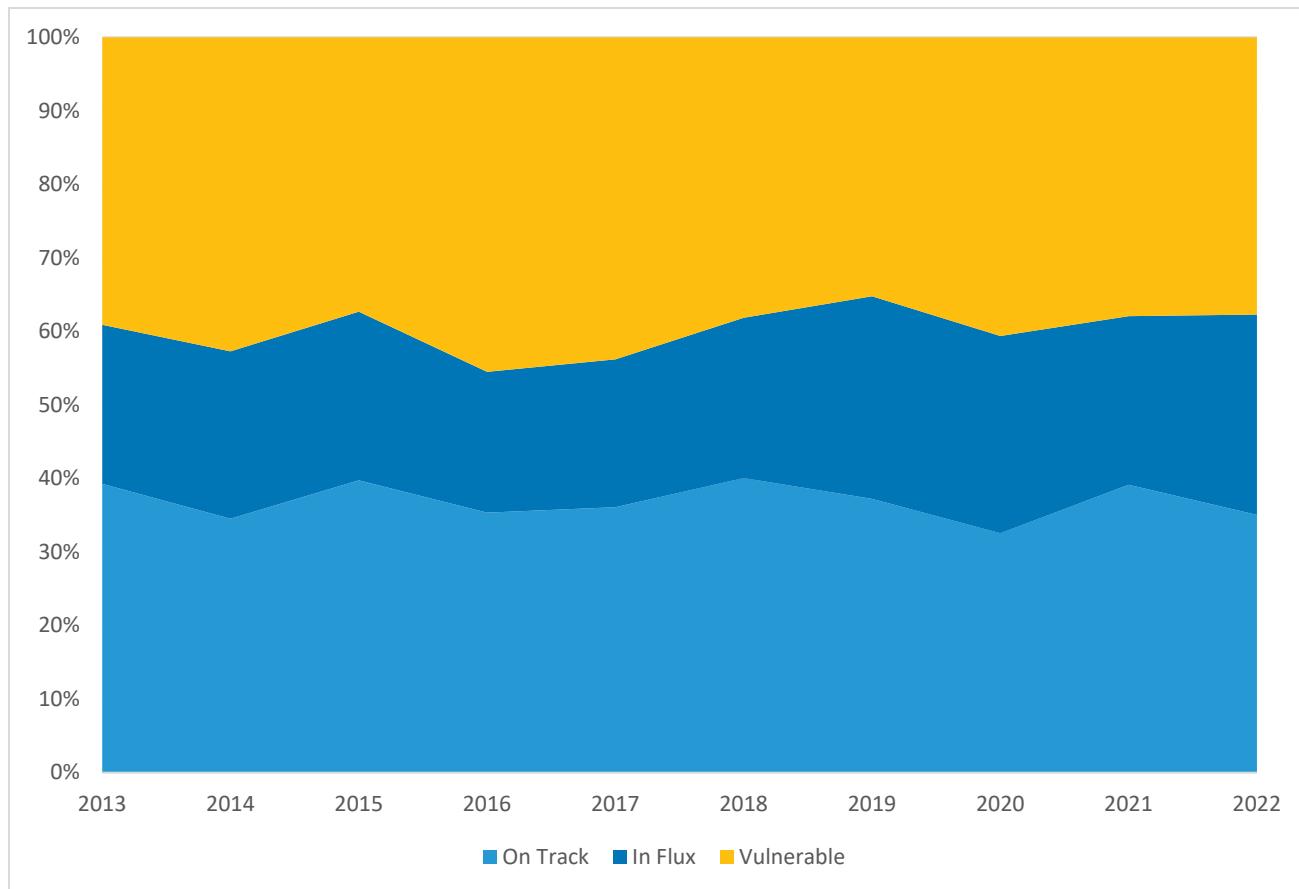
Children who are **ON TRACK** are doing well for their age **IN ALL FIVE** areas of development. These children are considered ready for the experiences and learning opportunities available to them in Grade 1.

Children who are **VULNERABLE** are having challenges **IN ONE OR MORE** of the five areas of development. Without supports, these children could experience difficulties in later years.

Children who are **IN FLUX** are not vulnerable in any area, and not on track in all areas. These children may or may not catch up to their **ON TRACK** peers and may benefit from additional supports.

Seeing a high percentage of vulnerable children, or a low percentage of on-track children, does not mean that children are not doing well in the NWT. It just means there are opportunities to improve upon children's preparation for school and learning, and that some extra supports in early grades can help to improve children's ability to succeed as they grow and move into later grades.

Figure 1: Percent of Kindergarten students who are developmentally **ON TRACK, **IN FLUX** and **VULNERABLE** in the NWT from 2013-2022**



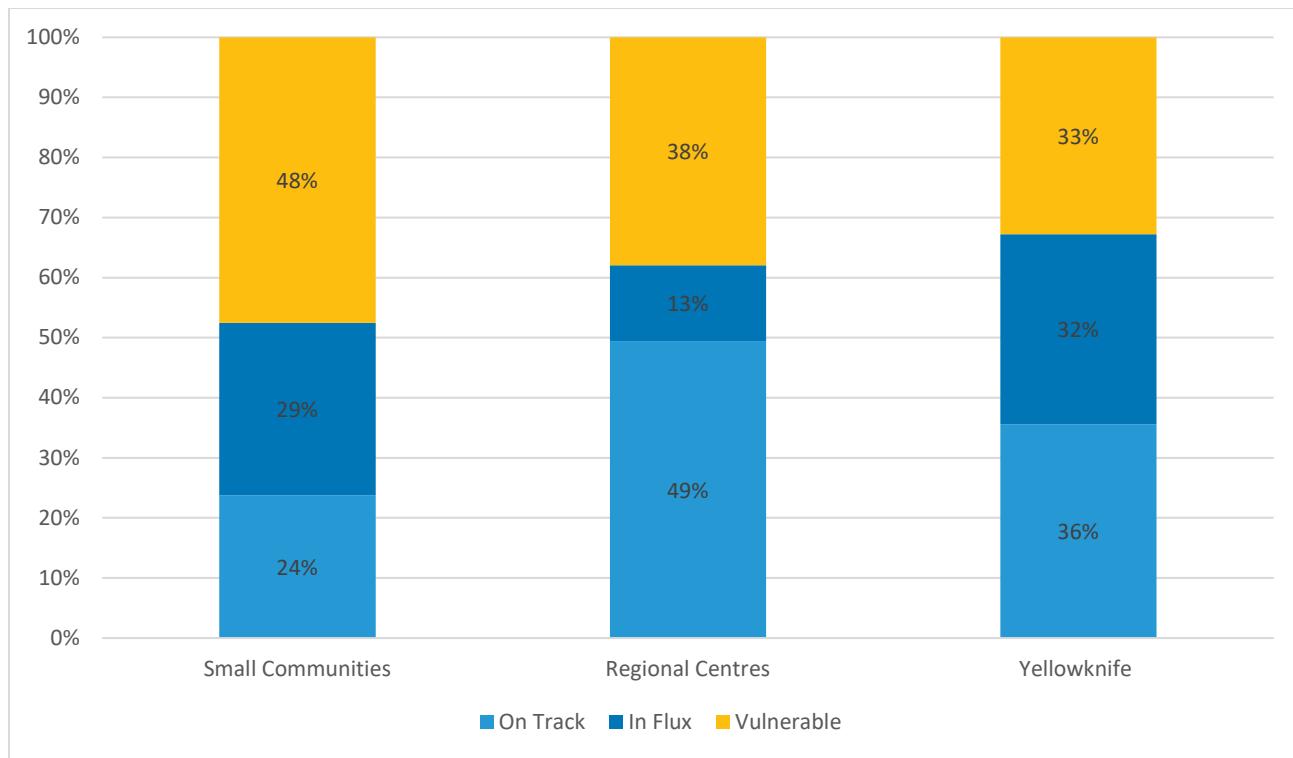
From 2021 to 2022 there is a decrease in the percentage of children who are developmentally *ON TRACK* in Kindergarten, and an increase in the percentage who are *IN FLUX*. The percent of children who are *VULNERABLE* has remained stable.

Monitoring EDI results in the NWT helps families, communities, schools, and decision-makers stay informed about how young children in different NWT regions are doing. This allows us all to ensure that proper attention can be given to children and communities that may need extra supports.

As supports and systems are introduced, such as the Junior Kindergarten (JK) program, we hope to see the percentage of children who are *VULNERABLE* going down, and the percentage of children who are *IN FLUX* and *ON TRACK* going up.

In the 2021-22 school year, 35% of children in Kindergarten were *ON TRACK*, 27% were *IN FLUX*, and 37% were *VULNERABLE*.

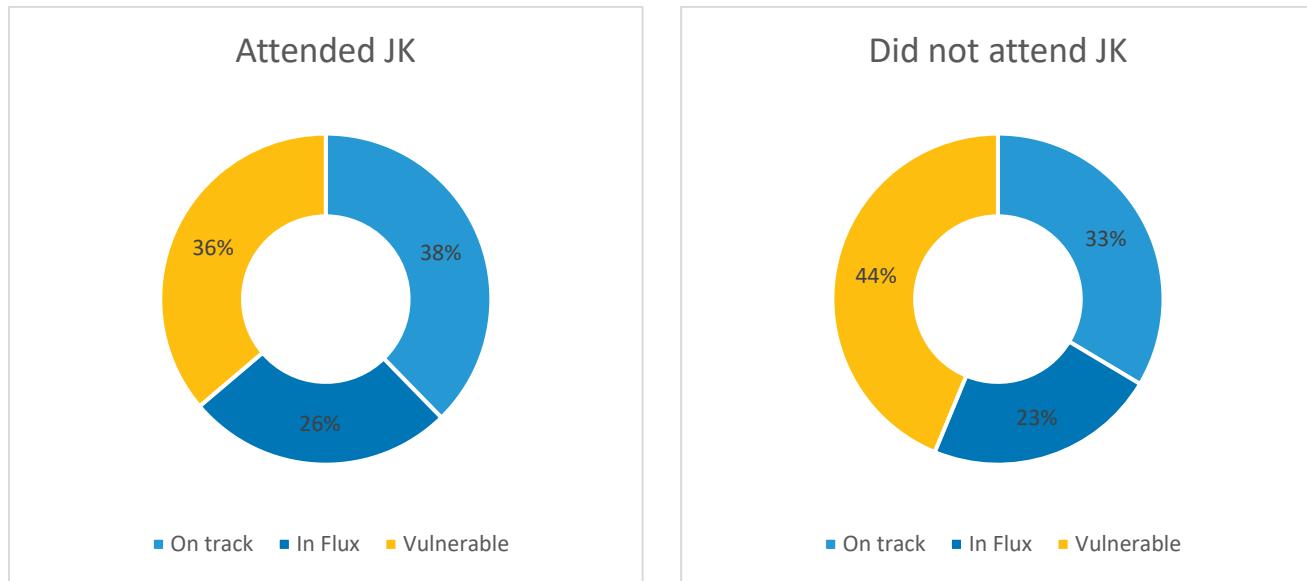
Figure 2: Percentage of children who are *ON TRACK*, *IN FLUX* and *VULNERABLE* in 2021-22 by community type*



*Regional Centres include Hay River, Inuvik and Fort Smith. Small Communities are those outside of Regional Centres and Yellowknife.

It is also important to consider that situations are different across all NWT communities: Yellowknife, regional centres, and small communities have unique strengths and needs. The EDI helps identify areas of strength and areas to support.

Figure 3: Percent of children who are *ON TRACK*, *IN FLUX* and *VULNERABLE* by whether they attended Junior Kindergarten, 2018-2022



*There is a higher percentage of children who attended JK who are developmentally *IN FLUX* or *ON TRACK* when compared to those who did not attend JK.*

Junior Kindergarten was made available across the NWT in 2017. This has had a positive impact on the readiness of children in the NWT for Grade 1. Attending JK is related to fewer children meeting the criteria of *VULNERABLE*.

In Summary

The developmental health of children is a shared responsibility.

The EDI results reflect the cumulative experiences of children from before birth to age five. Results cannot be attributed to one factor nor solved with a single solution. Together, everyone contributes to the positive experiences of children as they grow.

EDI reports will continue to be shared with stakeholders, departments, Indigenous Governments, and the public to reinforce the shared responsibility of supporting children and families in the early years.