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Creating Inclusive Communities for Children with Disabilities

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What is the CHILD-CHII?

The Child Community Health Inclusion Index (CHILD-CHII) is a measurement tool that can be used to help families, rehab professionals, educators, and community organizations gather information on the resources and accessibility features of a community program or facility. The CHILD-CHII identifies particular features that are

essential in including children with different types of disabilities in four different sectors: Education, Health, Public Spaces, and Community.

The CHILD-CHII assesses three different aspects of community facilities:

1. On-site Assessment: For child-related accessibility features in the building and equipment.
2. Organizational Assessment: For assessment of inclusion for programs and the organization structure such as staff training.

3. Macro Community-At-Large Assessment: To evaluate policies and systems surrounding a facility or program.

The CHILD-CHII was developed based on the CHII, that considered adult-related needs in creating an inclusive community. The CHILD-CHII considers what is important for children to live in communities that are healthy and inclusive.

Figure 1 shows the structure of the CHILD-CHII, including the sectors, venues, and inclusion domains.

Child Community Health Inclusion Index (CHILD-CHII)					
Level 1: Sectors	Community-At-Large				
	Education (Schools)	Health (Hospitals, Clinics)	Public Spaces (Parks, Playgrounds)	Community Institutions/Organizations (Community Centres, Libraries)	
Level 2: Venues	<p style="text-align: center;">Activity (Fitness room, Classroom, Gym)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Community Design (Transportation, Paths)</p>				
Level 3: Inclusion Domains	Built Environment	Equipment	Programs/Services	Staff	Policies
Assessments Used	On-site Assessment		Organizational Assessment & Macro Community-At-Large Assessment		

Figure 1: The Child Community Health Inclusion Index (CHILD-CHII)

How was the CHILD-CHII developed?

The CHILD-CHII was adapted from the Community Health Inclusion Index (CHII) which was developed in the United States [1]. The content of the CHILD-CHII was developed in three steps:

1) Content development

A thorough search of existing research and measurement tools was done to create a list of possible items/questions that can be included in the tool. This list included Human Rights instruments, international and national guidelines, lists, and tools and further developed by consulting experts in childhood disability including parents of

children with disabilities, clinicians, and researchers. [2]

2) Content validation

The items/questions that were developed were then validated through two stages of review by a larger number of clinicians, parents, researchers, government workers, community organization staff, teachers, and educators. They rated the importance (for community inclusion of children with disabilities) and the clarity (how understandable the items are) of each proposed item in the tool. Based on this rating, some items were removed or reworded to make them clearer. [3]

3) Feasibility pilot testing

The final list of items was then put together as a pilot version of

the CHILD-CHII measurement tool. This pilot was tested in a real-life setting in the community by parents, community organization staff, and clinicians. They provided their comments and ratings on the difficulty, length, clarity, and value of the CHILD-CHII tool for use in the community. [4]

The CHILD-CHII will undergo further testing to confirm validity and reliability.



Childhood disability LINK is a bilingual website Linking Information and New Knowledge on childhood disability to service providers and families. The website also focuses on enhancing the awareness and understanding of research on a variety of issues in childhood disability. Please visit us at: www.childhooddisability.ca

Reference:

- [1] Eisenberg, Y., Rimmer, J. H., Mehta, T., & Fox, M. H. (2015). Development of a community health inclusion index: an evaluation tool for improving inclusion of people with disabilities in community health initiatives. *BMC public health*, 15(1), 1-11.
- [2] Yoo, P. Y., Majnemer, A., Bolduc, L. A., Chen, K., Lamb, E., Panjwani, T., ... & Shikako, K. (2023). Content development of the child community health inclusion index: an evaluation tool for measuring inclusion of children with disabilities in the community. *Child: Care, Health and Development*, 49(1), 44-53.
- [3] Yoo, P. Y., Majnemer, A., Wilton, R., Ahmed, S., & Shikako, K. (2022). Content validation of the child community health inclusion index: a modified e-Delphi study. *Cities & Health*, 6(3), 495-502.
- [4] Yoo, P. Y., Majnemer, A., Wilton, R., Ahmed, S., & Shikako, K. (2023). Application of the child community health inclusion index for measuring health inclusion of children with disabilities in the community: a feasibility study. *BMC pediatrics*, 23(1), 1-8.

What are the three assessments of the CHILD-CHII?

1) Macro community-at-large

In this part of the questionnaire, we address the inclusion and accessibility of transportation services and local policies, community design policies and programs, and community wellness initiatives. These questions are meant to ask about currently available programs and initiatives.

2) Organizational assessment

To identify the activities and resources for children with disabilities that are available in the organization and learn about the programs, policies, and overall attitude of the organization toward inclusive health promotion.

3) On-site assessment

The items in this part of the assessment looks at navigability to the facility (e.g., accessibility of routes leading to the facility). And in the facility: the accessibility of information, toilets, and how safely and easily children with different disabilities can navigate the building and use the existing equipment.

How can the CHILD-CHII help?

- The CHILD-CHII tool can be used to help families and youth with disabilities

identify the inclusion practices of their communities and learn how inclusive and accessible a certain facility and/or community is to children with disabilities. They can use it to suggest improvements to organizations and advocate for accessibility.

- Educators can use the tool to identify gaps and opportunities for improvement in their organization's programs and advocate for change.
- Clinicians can use the tool to evaluate the environments and programs where their patients/clients participate in the community and areas to target interventions.
- Organizations and policymakers can use the tool to identify areas they need to improve to create healthier and more inclusive communities for children with disabilities; and to assess and benchmark policies and programs.
- Researchers can use the tool to assess environmental factors related to participation.

The CHILD-CHII and its items are well-aligned with international frameworks such as the World Health Organization's International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health. It can be one method to respond to and advance the implementation of the United Nations' Conventions on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.