

Highlights of ELCC Service Plan progress

Actions to move the Early Learning and Child Care (ELCC) Service Plan 2016-2020 forward in Waterloo Region have been closely aligned with the vision described in Ontario's Renewed Early Years and Child Care Policy Framework (2017). This vision has four key pillars: access and availability, affordability, responsiveness and inclusion, and quality. This document highlights some of the most significant actions and accomplishments that have been achieved or are in progress as of spring 2019.

Access and availability

"Increasing access to early year's programs to give families more opportunity to benefit from high-quality early childhood programs and services. ¹"

 **767**

new licensed child care centre spaces for children ages 0-4 years **opened in 2017 and 2018.**

4 new and 3 expanded child care centres are expected to **open in schools by December 2020**, with **licensed capacity** for at least

 **475 children**
ages 0-4 years.


Over 50

new licensed **home child care caregivers** received **start-up grants** to **increase access to licensed home child care** for children ages 0-4 years.

2 new  **EarlyON sites opened** (in Elmira and Kitchener) and **1 site was renovated and relocated** (in Cambridge).

4 new  **EarlyON sites** located in schools are **scheduled to open by December 2020.**

Affordability

"Ensuring that early years programs and services, including licensed child care, are within affordable reach for families. ²"



The subsidy waitlist was **eliminated** in 2017.

Daily child care fees in participating programs **went down** as a result of the **Fee Reduction Pilot** (starting July 2018).

Average amount parents saved on child care fees:

		
15%	8%	7%
Infant	Toddler	Preschool

"We highlighted [the fee reduction] to prospective families when they were coming in for tours and in many cases it helped with the decision making versus going with [unlicensed] child care that may be less expensive. "
- Quote from a Centre participating in the Fee Reduction Pilot

^{1,2} Ontario's Renewed Early Years and Child Care Policy Framework, 2017.



Responsiveness and inclusion

“Providing a range of early years and child care programs that are inclusive and culturally appropriate, located in schools, communities, workplaces and home settings so that parents – including parents who work irregular hours – can choose the options that work best for their family³”.

Quality

“Enabling safe and reliable programs built on positive, responsive relationships, engaging environments, and meaningful experiences for children and families, delivered by educated and well-supported staff⁴”.


97% of respondents to the 2018 Child Care Survey said **their educators respond to their child’s individual needs.**


The **Indigenous-led child and family centre** is scheduled to **open in 2019**. This is the **first Indigenous-led early learning program in Waterloo Region.**


Special Needs Resourcing (SNR) funding was **increased by 14%** to support **inclusion of all children.**

NEW
Fall 2019

SNR supports will be **offered** to licensed child care **after-school programs.**


130 kits Every local licensed child care centre and home child care program received kits with **items that support belonging and inclusion** of all children in licensed child care.

 **Early Years Engage** | Continuous quality improvement in Waterloo Region

Early Years Engage, the new continuous quality improvement approach, **launched in 2017.**

 **All child care sites** will participate in at least **one site visit through Early Years Engage by 2020.** The approach focuses on setting goals, measuring and using data for planning, and involving all staff and board members in planning.

89  **child care sites** received **One-Time Technology Grants** in 2018 to support increased quality in licensed child care programs.

“ We were able to purchase a tablet for staff to document learning through photos, videos and learning stories. ”

- Quote from a Centre receiving a Technology Grant

“ My child care center has always been willing to work with [Special Needs Resourcing] to support the needs of my child or any child in their care. They also provide written progress reports and goals for each individual child to support their needs. ”

- Quote from a parent in the 2018 Child Care Survey

