Early Years Engage Evaluation

Presenter:
Van Vilaysinh, Social Planning Associate
Region of Waterloo, May 31, 2018
Why focus on Quality?

Early Years Engage is a change initiative, shifting the ELCC sector from the Raising The Bar model of quality towards a culture of continuous quality improvement.

“The positive relation between child care quality and virtually every facet of children’s development that has been studied is one of the most consistent findings in developmental science.” – The National Academy of Sciences

Quality is a journey and not an end state
The Quality Journey

**FEDERAL**

- QUAD principles
- ELECT Pascal
- HDLH?

**PROVINCIAL**

- Day Nurseries Act, 1946, reviewed in 1983
- College of ECEs
- Expert Panel High Quality
- Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014
- Renewed EYCC Policy Framework, 2017

**WATERLOO REGION**

- Raising the Bar (RTB) (in Hamilton)
- CMSM (responsibility for RTB)
- ELCC Service Plan, 2011-2015
- ELCC Service Plan, 2016-2020
- EYE Evaluation
- RTB mandatory
- New approach (TQM)
- EYE Implementation
- EYE Measurement Framework

**OTHER (key research)**

- Early Years Studies McCain & Mustard
- Quality by Design Project, 2004-2007 Friendly & Beach
Three Phases of Early Years Engage

Phase 1 (2017): Implementing EYE
- Assess
- Review
- Plan
- Do

Phase 2 (2018): Evaluation
- Ask about service provider and CMSM experiences in implementing EYE
- Determine mandate and scope of Early Years Engage
- Clarify roles and expectations of service provider and CMSM
- What does the 2017 data tell us?
- What should we focus on next?


Aligning with the Province:
- Define program and system level quality
- Determine metrics to assess and monitor quality improvements at the program and system level
- What difference does Early Years Engage make in improving program and system level quality?
The process

To evaluate EYE and to develop a framework to measure quality improvement is a collaborative effort.

Sources of data from 2015 to 2017:
- ELCC forums (x6)
- Surveys
- Expert/key informant sessions (x10)
- Community sessions (x5)
- Key documents/Literature reviews
- 2017 site visits

1. Collect and summarize the data
2. Validate and make meaning of the data
3. Use the data to plan for next steps
2017 Accomplishments and Challenges

Methodology:
• Exploratory form, "Accomplishments and Challenges Form"
• Separated by staff and management
• Submitted by all programs
  – mostly individual responses, but some were group/team responses

Data analysis
• Over 2,000 comments in total
• Coding by organization, program, and themes
• Themes were based on minimum 5 comments and 5 different programs
• 100% overlap between staff and management results, differences in # times mentioned and perspective.
## Summary of Accomplishments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Accomplishments</th>
<th>Examples</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Made space more welcoming</td>
<td>• Warm/welcoming interactions with families</td>
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<td>• Providing healthy meals/snacks</td>
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<td>• Designing space to be more like ‘home’</td>
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<td>Incorporated curriculum components based on child's interests</td>
<td>• Program based on HDLH?/High Scope</td>
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<td>• Supporting independence, interests, and learning styles of all children</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Using tools to support children’s expression of feelings and problem solving</td>
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<td>Used different methods to foster children's expression</td>
<td>• Observing and building on children’s interests</td>
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<td>• Providing opportunities for creative expression</td>
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<td>• Promoting and encouraging self-help skills, independence and problem-solving</td>
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<td>Accomplishments</td>
<td>Examples</td>
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<tr>
<td>Used different methods to communicate with parents/caregivers and peers about</td>
<td>• Documenting and sharing with parents and families to make learning visible</td>
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<tr>
<td>children</td>
<td>• Dialogue with families/asking for input</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Using electronic tools</td>
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<td>Added new/different types of open ended materials and loose parts to indoor and</td>
<td>• Addition of materials/loose parts to expand learning, adapting to interests of children</td>
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<td>or outdoor space</td>
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<td>Engaged with families through events/socials/other</td>
<td>• Organized evening events, open houses, social/fundraising committees</td>
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<td>Naturalized outdoor play space or creatively used available natural outdoor</td>
<td>• Addition of natural elements</td>
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<td>space</td>
<td>• Going on forest walks</td>
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<td>• Using outdoor classroom, community garden</td>
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<td>Accomplishments</td>
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| Provided individualized supports for children with special needs | • Adapting programs, inclusive programs  
• Providing extra support  
• Referrals to SNAP, collaboration with KW Hab, KidsAbility |
| Used different methods to foster children's communication | • Using sign language  
• Encouraging the use of words  
• Having rich, authentic conversations with children |
| Created and/or offered diverse and inclusive programs | • Learning new phrases in other languages  
• Creating inclusive environments, respectful programs, embedding culture of families |
## Summary of Challenges

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<th>Examples</th>
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| Need for continuous professional learning (e.g., training) and time to complete it. | • Supporting children with complex issues (e.g. behavioural and mental health)  
• Basic computer skills, cultural diversity, HDLH?, curriculum                          |
| Lack of dedicated paid time - to plan, prep, and document                  | • Having time to just sit and engage with the children  
• Keeping up with workload                                                                                                                |
| Lack of funding - for materials and equipment (including technology equipment) | • Lack of French resources  
• Inadequate technology  
• Limited materials – buying own supplies                                                                                                     |
| Problems with retaining and sustaining qualified staff                    | • Frequent staff changes  
• Not being paid enough, shifts  
• Recognition of RECE  
• Supply staff – not enough, not trained                                                                                                         |
## Summary of Challenges continued

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| Lack of space                                        | • Not enough storage space  
• Small rooms/shared space  
• Not enough safe, accessible indoor space  
• Not enough safe, shady outdoor space               |
| Lack of dedicated paid time - to communicate with    | • Challenging keeping everyone on the board, coop, and parents updated.  
• Limited time to talk to parents                     |
| parents/caregivers                                   |                                                                                                                                 |
| Lack of dedicated supervision time - to train, mentor,| • Supervisor is busy, no time to do evaluations or to train new staff  
• Coverage/scheduling  
• Disciplining staff, dealing with difficult situations with parents, staff, and school |
| develop, and performance manage                      |                                                                                                                                 |
### Summary of Challenges continued

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<td>Lack of clarity around accountability and meeting Ministry's expectations</td>
<td>• Challenges with wider age range and reduced ratios</td>
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<td>• Expectations of ECE’s, Roles, College of ECE</td>
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<td>Lack of funding - for enhanced staffing</td>
<td>• Rising number of children with special needs, not enough support/funding for enhanced staffing</td>
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<td>Problems with keeping pace with Ministry changes</td>
<td>• Not enough information or time to implement ministry changes properly</td>
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<td>• Keeping up with, grasping and understanding all the new changes</td>
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<td>Inconsistencies between how non-profit and for-profit centres are viewed</td>
<td>• Not being able to access funding</td>
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<td>• Limited to current funding structure</td>
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<td>• Perception of quality</td>
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May 31 ELCC Forum exercises

Themes included 10 accomplishments and 11 challenges

• Participants used voting technology to validate and prioritize the accomplishments and challenges.

• Small group picked one challenge to discuss - to get a better understanding of the root of the problem and begin to identify solutions.
Evaluation Next Steps

• Summarize results gathered from May 31, 2018 forum
• Gather additional data (e.g., surveys, interviews etc.)
• September 2018 Forum – share back evaluation so far and continue the journey
Contact Information

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