

# **Building an Early Years Policy Framework from the Lenses of the City of London's Parents, Child Care Providers and Practitioners**

## Executive Summary

The purpose of this research study is to create an Early Years' policy framework that is co-constructed by those this particular policy would impact the most: parents, early years service providers, and practitioners. This grass root policy-building process is based on using existing data provided by the City of London, along with Strive, a community partner who can provide access to ECE practitioners within the community. A draft prototype of the policy will be created with the help of 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> year ECL students through internship and capstone applied learning experiences. The resulting data from homogeneous and heterogeneous focus groups will then inform the construction of a final draft policy prototype to be presented to community stakeholders as part of a democratic process to help inform and advocate for an early years policy framework through the eyes of the City of London community.

The City of London has a history of promoting neighbourhood engagement through an intentional process that encourages neighbourhood voices. This is evident through the Child and Youth Network that brings together various community partners that join forces to support children, youth, and families. The City of London's work on a family centre system has been foundational within the province, helping other communities understand the process and structure of effective family centres. The work continues, and the City shares its expertise with the various neighbourhoods, via strategic pathways that reinforce system capacity building and neighbourhood planning that continues to reflect what neighbourhood families wish for their children and youth (Child & Youth Network, 2017, *Approach: The family-centred service system approach and the family-centred service system theory of change*).

The concept of creating an early years' policy framework from the perspective of parents, child care providers and practitioners within the neighbourhoods of the City of London honours the work already done. This human centred design approach to building policy acknowledges the previous work of the City of London. It uses the Child Care and Early Years Service System Plan information 2019-2023 that was communicated to the provincial government, adds the early years' practitioner perspective, and then moves to informing an early years' policy framework that reflects the needs and aspirations of parents, child care providers and practitioners. This process of creating an early years' policy framework provides an opportunity for those who will be impacted by an early years policy framework to inform the community at large, and advocate for a policy that can benefit children and their families.

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# Early Years Policy Prototype from the Lenses of Parents, Child Care Providers and Practitioners in the City of London: October 2019

