

LONDON FOR ALL

A ROADMAP TO END POVERTY

Early Learning & Education

6.5 Advocate for increased investment by all levels of government in early years education and literacy programming

Centres of Excellence for Early Years and Child Care

In June 2017, Canada and Ontario signed the Early Learning and Child Care (ELCC) Agreement, as part of The National Early Learning and Child Care Multilateral Framework. Under the agreement, \$3 million per year is available to establish Centres of Excellence for Early Years and Child Care. Centres of Excellence support professional learning across the early years sector. These centres take into account the diverse needs of the province, such as culture, language and geography through the development of specialized networks.

In March 2018, the Ministry announced the following leads, working in collaboration with multiple partners from across the province, for each Centre of Excellence:

- Provincial Centre of Excellence – Western University and Ontario Reggio Association
- Indigenous Centre of Excellence – Ontario Aboriginal Head Start Association and Kenjgewin Teg Education Institute; and
- Francophone Centre of Excellence – Collège Boréal and Association francophone à l'éducation des services à l'enfance de l'Ontario.

Centres of Excellence are being established to:

- Support alignment with *How Does Learning Happen? Ontario's Pedagogy for the Early Years* and promote cohesion in pedagogical approaches and practices across early year programs;
- Build the pedagogical leadership capacity of program staff in the early years sector through innovative models and strategies that are grounded in current research and result in positive, inclusive and culturally relevant early years experiences for all children and their families; and
- Create linkages to and/or develop professional learning resources that are responsive to the needs of the sector and accessible online through a Centre of Excellence portal.

The Child Care and Early Years - Service System Plan – City of London

The Child Care and Early Years system includes services such as child care, Family Centres, EarlyON programs, special needs resourcing, child care fee subsidy, new facilities, recreation programs, and training for professionals.

In 2019, the City of London created its first Child Care and Early Years Plan that outlines how they will support families for the next 4 years.

The Journey Together – Ontario’s Commitment to Reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples

To help promote healthy child development and support family well-being, Ontario will expand five existing child and family programs on-reserve. Working with Indigenous and federal partners to identify needs, the funding will also make more child and family programs available in more communities. Ontario will also help increase the number of off-reserve licensed child care spaces and culturally relevant programming for children and families. Programs will be delivered by urban Indigenous organizations working with municipal child care services.

These investments are a step toward a broader child care and early years strategy for Indigenous communities in Ontario and are connected to the government’s vision where children and families are supported by a system of responsive, high-quality, accessible and increasingly integrated programs and services. These initiatives also align with Ontario’s approach to transform and integrate child and family programs through Ontario Early Years Child and Family Centres, which include a focus on ensuring programs meet local community needs.

Encyclopedia on Early Childhood Development

The first years of life are essential for children’s development and future well-being. The Government of Canada is committed to promoting and investing in projects that support early childhood development because every child deserves a good start in life so they can succeed.

November 2018, the Honourable Jean-Yves Duclos, Minister of Families, Children and Social Development, announced funding of \$1,271,000 to Families Canada for its *Early Childhood Development Science to Practice: Knowledge Mobilization* project funded through the Social Development Partnerships Program.

This project will promote the evidence-based Encyclopedia on Early Childhood Development through a variety of digital tools and e-learning products, to all Canadians, including families and services providers working directly with parents and

children. These innovative tools and products will help to create a better understanding of the science of early childhood development and improve the quality of early childhood practices.

The Encyclopedia on Early Childhood Development is a comprehensive, reliable and easy-to-use evidence-based reference tool that provides the most up-to-date scientific knowledge available on the development of young children, from conception to age five.