

Early Years & Child Care Service System Plan 2023-2026



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LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We respectfully acknowledge that, the County of Dufferin Early Years and Child Care Division, along with fellow Child Care Partners of Dufferin reside within the traditional territory and ancestral lands of the Tionontati (Petun), Attawandaron (Neutral), Haudenosaunee (Six Nations), and Anishinaabe peoples. We also acknowledge that various municipalities within the County of Dufferin reside within the treaty lands named under the Haldimand Deed of 1784 and two of the Williams Treaties of 1818: Treaty 18: the Nottawasaga Purchase, and Treaty 19: The Ajetance Treaty. These traditional territories upon which we live and learn, are steeped in rich Indigenous history and traditions. It is with this statement that we declare to honour and respect the past and present connection of Indigenous peoples with this land, its waterways, and resources.



The colour palette you are experiencing and encountering throughout this document are our assemblies of strong connections to our land, histories, values and pedagogical possibilities.

The photographs that you are witnessing throughout this document are traces of Dufferin County's Early Years and Child Care storytelling and story making. We offer these in conversation with our service plan to promote dialogue, capture perspectives and to deepen the understanding of our community, relationships, and experiences.



INTRODUCTION



As Service System Manager (SSM), the County of Dufferin is responsible for the planning and management of licensed child care and early years programs and services for children from 0 to 12 years old in Dufferin. This includes coordinating and planning at the system-level to ensure services are responsive to the needs of families.

This Early Years and Child Care Service System Plan will act as a road map for the next three years to make system improvements for the benefits of children and families.

Dufferin County Strategic Plan

This Early Years and Child Care Service System Plan aligns with Dufferin's 2023-2026 Corporate Strategic Plan and will initiate activities to move the Strategic Plan forward. This Strategic Plan includes:

Vision

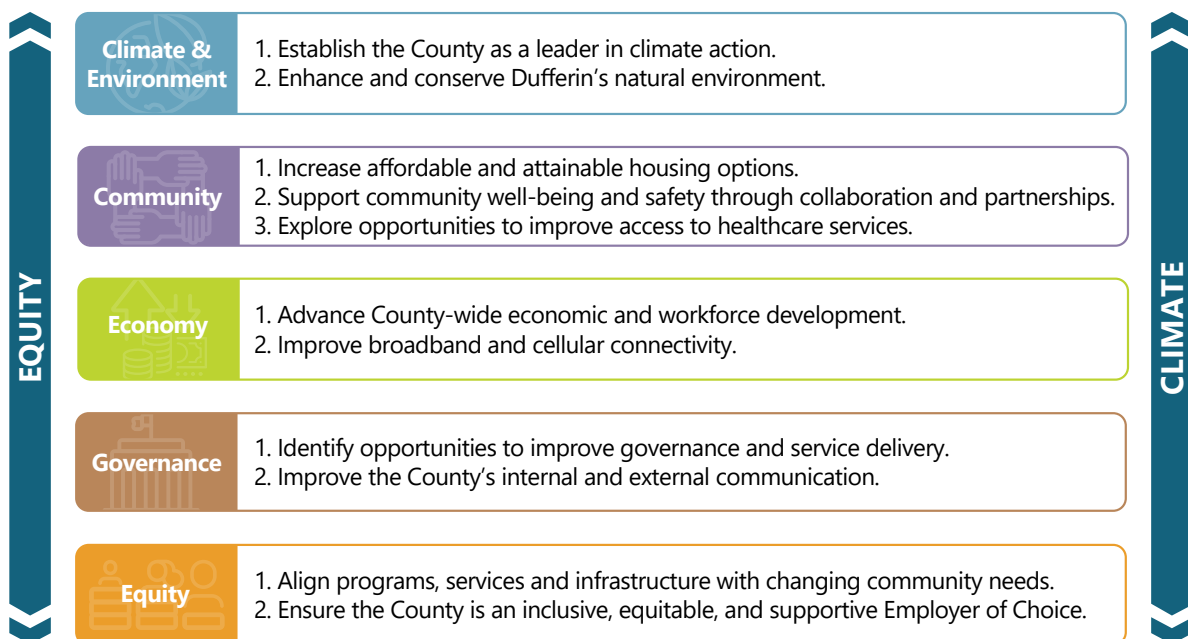
A community that grows together.

Mission

Providing programs and services that foster a thriving, equitable and resilient community in an ever-changing world.

Values

Collaboration | Accountability | Innovation | Compassion | Courage



Child Care and Early Years Act

In Ontario, the legislation governing child care systems was established as the *Child Care and Early Years Act* (CCEYA), 2014. The Act aims to ensure the health and safety of children and child care operators by applying the rules to regulate child care environments as well as setting out the responsibilities of all parties. The Act proclaims the funding and cost sharing requirements of the SSM in regard to the child care and early learning system.

Dufferin County Early Years and Child Care Programs

Early Years and Child Care programs not only play an important role in healthy development of young children but are essential for the well-being of children and families and the entire community. In addition to planning for the early years and child care system, the County of Dufferin, as SSM, is responsible for managing two main programs:

1. Licensed child care

- Licensed, centre-based child care
- Licensed home child care

2. EarlyON Child and Family Centres



Dufferin County Early Years and Child Care Service System Plan

This plan outlines three strategic priorities for the next three years, with a number of opportunities and key activities identified in each of the strategic priorities. The three strategic priorities and opportunities are:

Strategic Priority	Opportunities
Early Years and Child Care Programs and Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Affordability → Access → Responsiveness → System support → Equity and inclusion
Workforce and Pedagogy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Reimagining quality
Leadership and Governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Collaborative, evidence-informed decision making → System viability and sustainability

These three strategic priorities are centred around the child and family and the four foundations from *How Does Learning Happen? Ontario's Pedagogy for the Early Years*, 2014 and are embedded in our current and future direction.



The following sections outline the opportunities and key activities identified in each of the strategic priorities, along with the current programs that support the strategic priority.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY

EARLY YEARS & CHILD CARE PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

Programs that support the Early Years and Child Care Programs and Services strategic priority:

- Licensed Centre-Based and Home-Based Child Care
- Quality Initiative
- Workforce Strategy
- Knowing our Numbers
- Canada Wide Early Learning and Child Care System (CWELCC)

Opportunities	Key Activities	
	Licensed Child Care	EarlyON Child and Family Centres
Affordability	→ Continue to implement CWELCC fee reduction for families	
Access	→ Increase the number of licensed child care spaces by 478 by 2026 → Manage, analyze, support and approve new operators engaged in the CWELCC start up funding process	→ Increase awareness of EarlyON programs
Responsiveness	→ Increase access to licensed child care for marginalized groups	→ Continue to be responsive to parent/caregiver needs
System Support	→ Increase understanding about the early years and child care system and SSM requirements for new and existing operators	
Equity and Inclusion	→ Continue to reimagine the current model used to increase access and support children with special needs and their families → Create increased engagement and understanding among operators about diversity and inclusion → Increase the understanding of implementing a trauma informed practice in the system	→ Continue to provide a sense of belonging for all families that enter our centres → Provide programming that supports diversity and inclusion in our centres

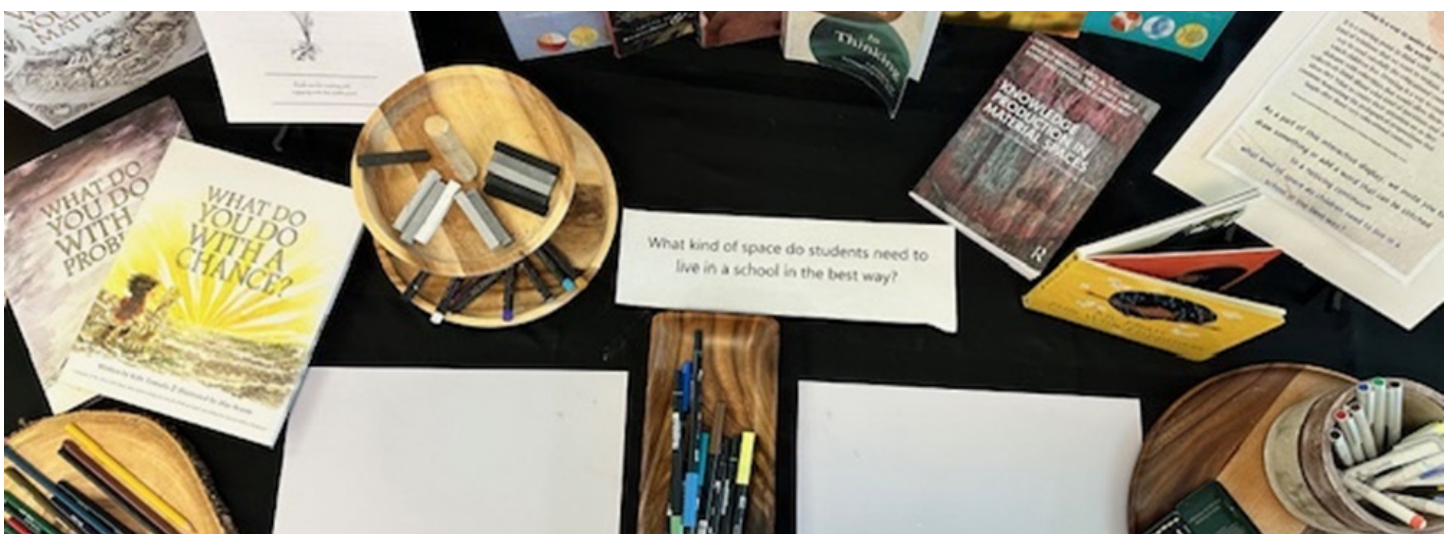


STRATEGIC PRIORITY WORKFORCE & PEDAGOGY

Programs that support the Workforce and Pedagogy strategic priority:

- Quality Initiative
- Workforce Strategy
- Knowing our Numbers
- CWELCC

Opportunities	Key Activities	
	Licensed Child Care	EarlyON Child and Family Centres
Reimagining Quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Continue to implement CWELCC wage increases for RECEs (Registered Early Childhood Educators) → Establish partnerships to create solutions to support recruitment and retention of RECEs → Formalize and implement a quality initiative → Continue to provide access to professional learning opportunities → Fund mental health supports through the provincial initiative → Communicate information about the expansion on qualifications and upgrades → Enhance mentoring opportunities → Continue to implement a workforce strategy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Increase collaboration with partners → Build capacity of staff working in EarlyON programs



STRATEGIC PRIORITY LEADERSHIP & GOVERNANCE

Programs that support the Leadership and Governance Strategic Priority:

→ Administration

Opportunities	Key Activities	
	Licensed Child Care	EarlyON Child and Family Centres
Collaborative, evidence-informed decision making	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Establish evaluation frameworks to support the work of the SSM in the early years and child care system → Continue to use data to identify opportunities for action 	
System Viability and Sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Build on collaborative relationships in the sector → Ensure the County organizational structure supports the early years and child care system → Manage the viability and sustainability of operators and overall equity in the child care system (i.e. business analysis, audit) → Enhance the business acumen of licensed child care centres through benchmarking, audits and assessments of financial viability → Advocate to the Province for adequate administrative funding for the SSM → Build resilience across the system 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Continue to be creative, resourceful and in partnership to meet ongoing community needs → Ensure sustainable base funding for EarlyON programs and services



SECTION 1:

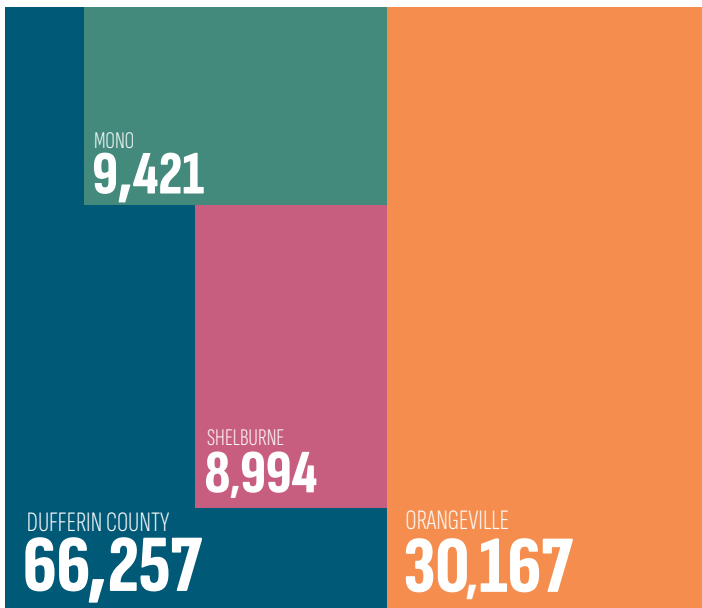
PORTRAIT OF CHILDREN & FAMILIES IN DUFFERIN COUNTY



CHILDREN & FAMILIES IN DUFFERIN COUNTY

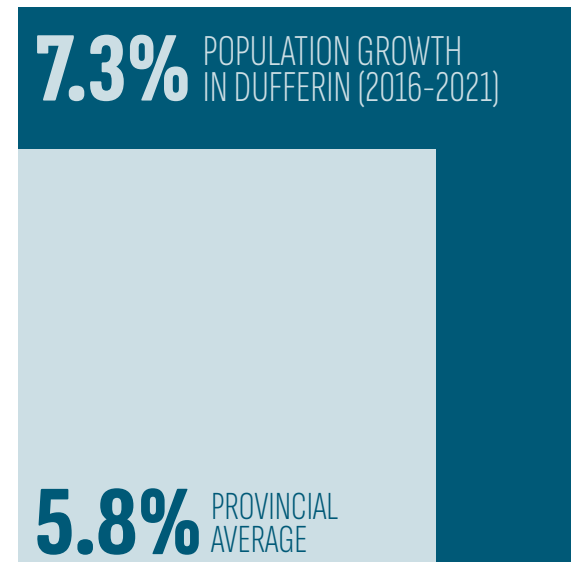
POPULATION

Dufferin County has a population of 66,257. Orangeville (30,167), Mono (9,421) and Shelburne (8,994) are the most populated areas.



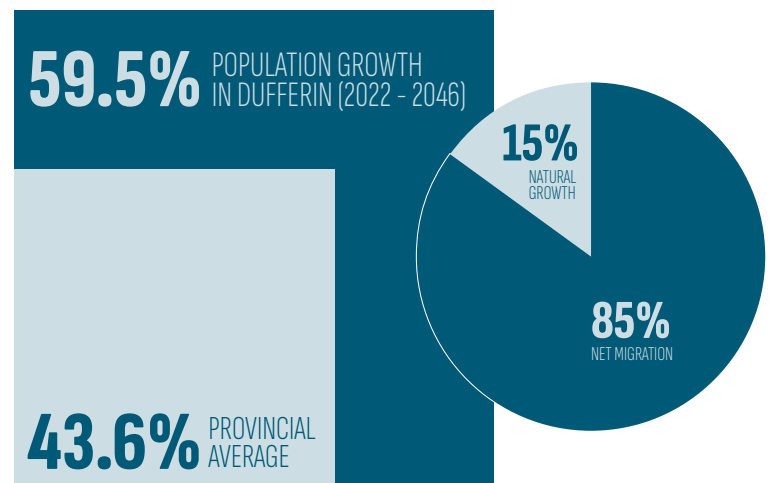
POPULATION GROWTH 2016-2021

The population in Dufferin grew 7.3% since 2016. This compares to the provincial average of 5.8%.



POPULATION GROWTH 2022-2046

According to Ontario population projections, Dufferin is projected to continue experiencing population growth significantly above the provincial average from 2022 to 2046. Over this time period, the percentage of seniors is projected to increase significantly while the number of children is only expected to grow at a moderate pace. Net migration is projected to account for 85% of all population growth in the province over the 2022-2046 period, with natural increase accounting for the remaining 15%.



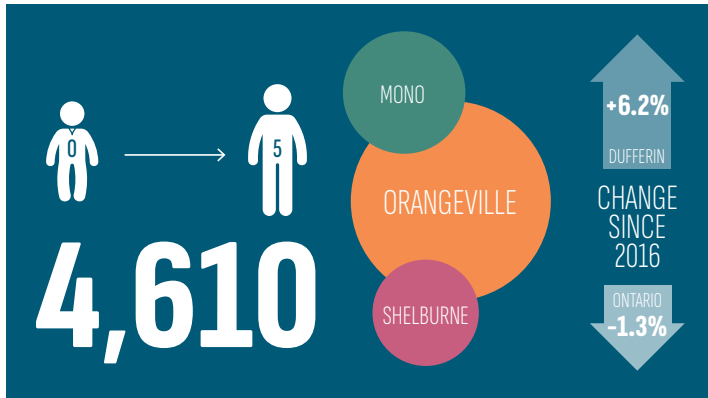
Source: Statistics Canada Census Data



CHILDREN & FAMILIES IN DUFFERIN COUNTY

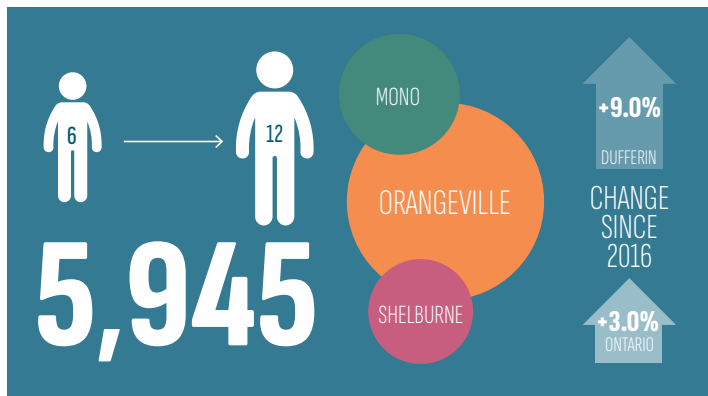
POPULATION OF CHILDREN AGED 0-5

4,610 children in Dufferin are aged 0-5, with Orangeville, Shelburne and Mono being the most highly populated. This is a 6.2% increase since 2016. This increase is higher compared to the Ontario rate, which saw a decrease of 1.3% over this same period.



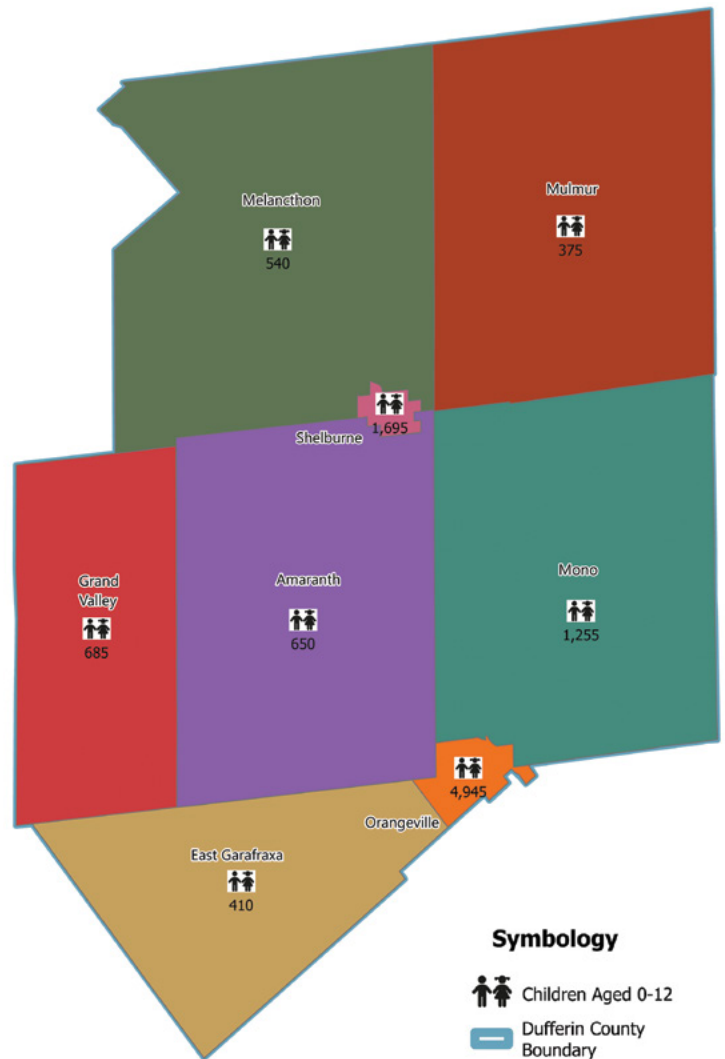
POPULATION OF CHILDREN AGED 6-12

5,945 children in Dufferin are aged 6-12, with Orangeville, Shelburne and Mono being the most highly populated. This is a 9.0% increase since 2016. This increase is higher compared to the Ontario rate, which saw an increase of 3.0% over this same period.



Source: Statistics Canada Census Data

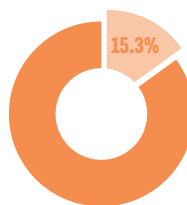
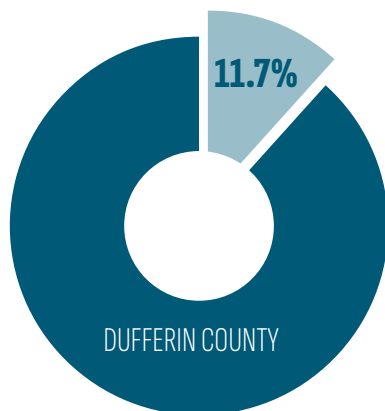
GEOGRAPHIC LOCATION OF CHILDREN IN DUFFERIN COUNTY AGED 0-12 BY MUNICIPALITY



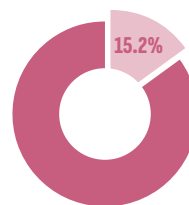
CHILDREN & FAMILIES IN DUFFERIN COUNTY

FEMALE-LED ONE PARENT FAMILIES

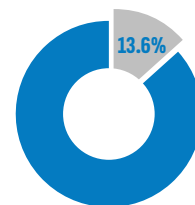
11.7% of families in Dufferin are female-led one parent, with higher rates in Orangeville (15.3%) and Shelburne (15.2%). This is lower than the provincial average of 13.6%.



ORANGEVILLE



SHELBURNE

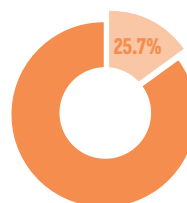
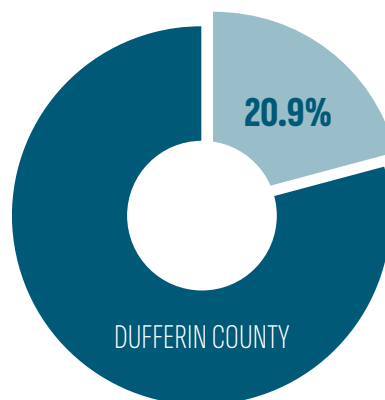


PROVINCIAL
AVERAGE

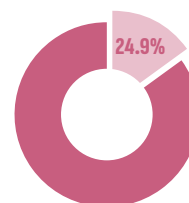
FEMALE-LED ONE PARENT FAMILIES

CHILDREN LIVING IN A ONE PARENT FAMILY

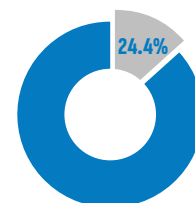
20.9% of children in Dufferin live in a one parent family, with higher rates in Orangeville (25.7%) and Shelburne (24.9%). This is lower than the provincial average of 24.4%.



ORANGEVILLE



SHELBURNE

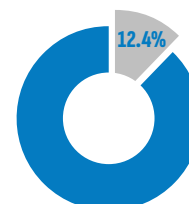
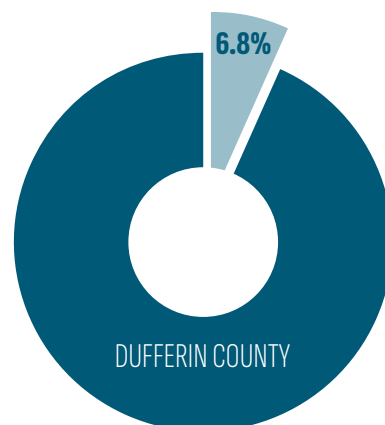


PROVINCIAL
AVERAGE

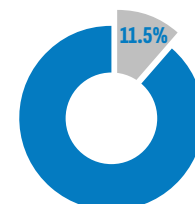
CHILDREN LIVING IN A ONE PARENT FAMILY

CHILDREN LIVING IN LOW INCOME

6.8% of children in Dufferin live in low income, with higher rates in Melancthon, Amaranth and Grand Valley. 12.4% of children aged 0 to 5 live in low income in Ontario and 11.5% of children under age 17 live in low income.



PROVINCIAL
AGED 0-5



PROVINCIAL
UNDER 17

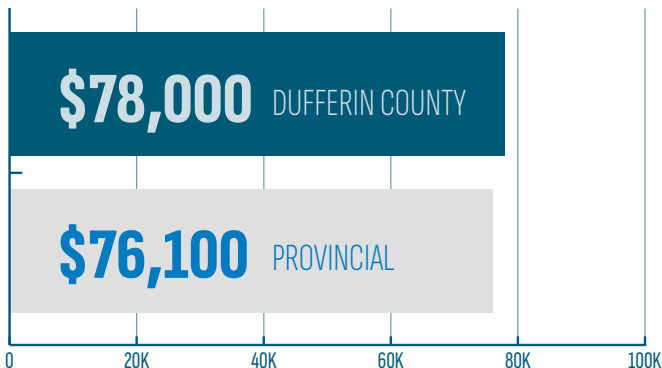
CHILDREN LIVING IN LOW INCOME



CHILDREN & FAMILIES IN DUFFERIN COUNTY

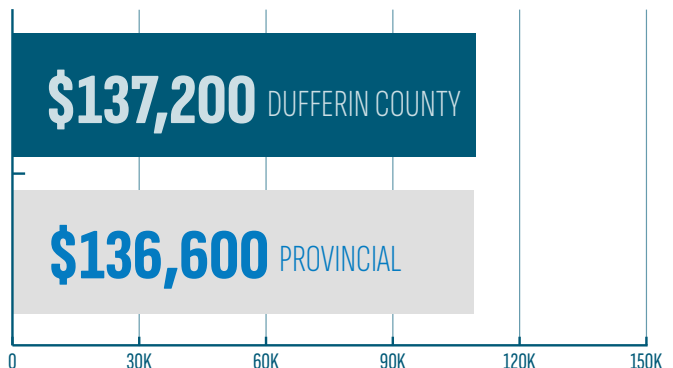
AVERAGE FAMILY INCOME - ONE PARENT

\$78,000 is the average family income of a one parent family in Dufferin. The Ontario average is \$76,100.



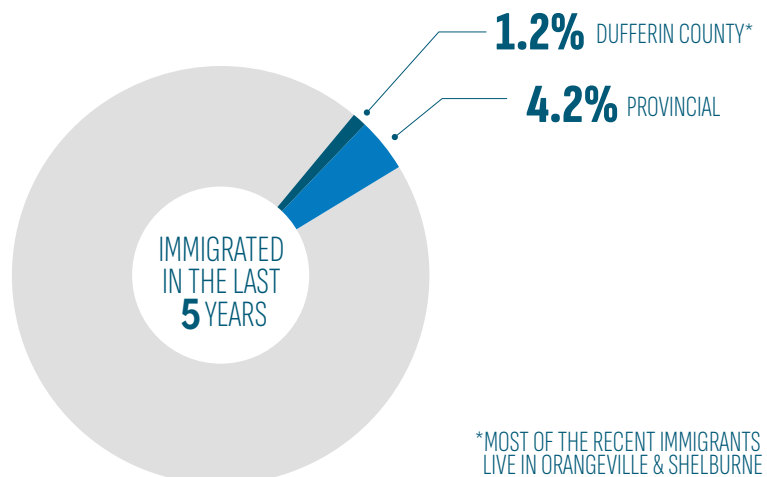
AVERAGE FAMILY INCOME - TWO PARENTS

\$137,200 is the average family income of a two parent family in Dufferin. The Ontario average is \$136,600.



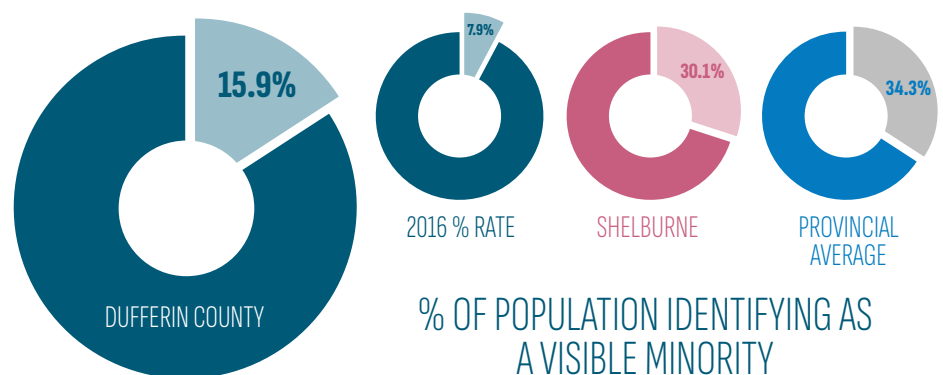
% OF POPULATION AS NEWCOMERS

1.2% of Dufferin's population are newcomers (immigrated in the last 5 years). Most of the recent immigrants live in Orangeville and Shelburne. This is lower than the provincial average of 4.2%.



% OF POPULATION IDENTIFYING AS A VISIBLE MINORITY

15.9% of Dufferin's population identify as a visible minority, with a higher rate in Shelburne (30.1%). The overall percentage of visible minorities in Dufferin has increased substantially since 2016 when the rate was 7.9%. This is lower than the provincial average of 34.3%



PUNJABI | SPANISH | PORTUGUESE

ਸਤ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਅਕਾਲ

HOLA!

OLÁ!

Punjabi, Spanish and Portuguese are the most common non-English languages spoken most often at home in Shelburne and Orangeville.

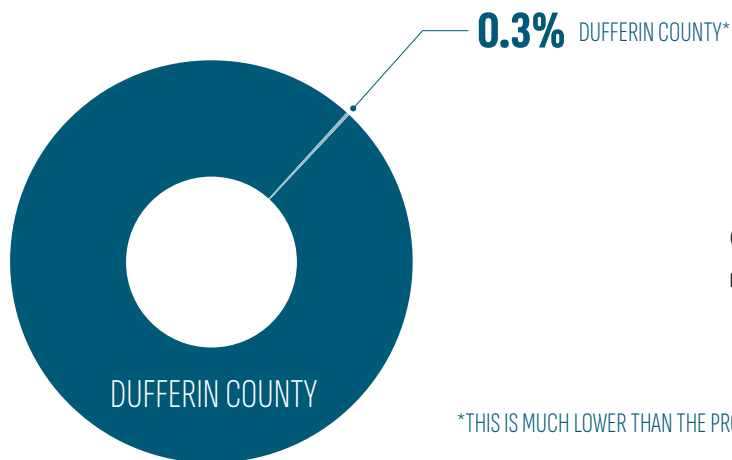
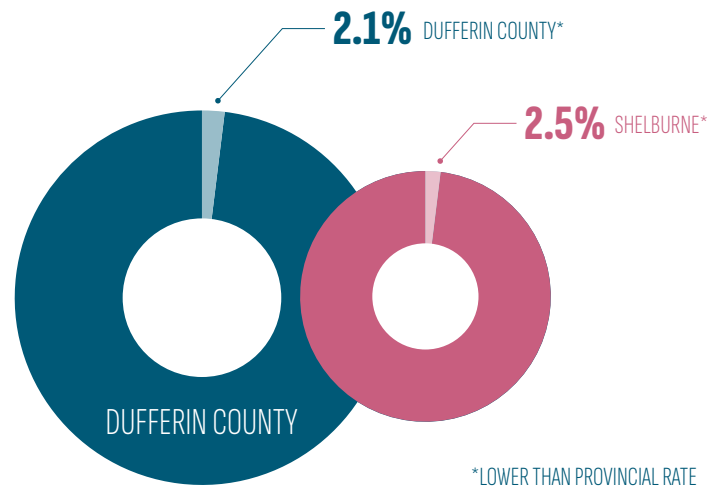
Source: Statistics Canada Census Data



CHILDREN & FAMILIES IN DUFFERIN COUNTY

% OF POPULATION HAVING INDIGENOUS IDENTITY

2.1% of Dufferin's population report having an Indigenous identity, with a higher rate in Shelburne (2.5%). This is lower than the Ontario rate of 2.9%.



% OF POPULATION IDENTIFYING AS FRANCOPHONE

0.3% of Dufferin's population identify as Francophone. This rate is much lower than the Ontario rate of 1.8%.

Source: Statistics Canada Census Data



CHILDREN & FAMILIES IN DUFFERIN COUNTY

Early Development Instrument (EDI)

The EDI is a 103-item questionnaire, completed locally in Dufferin County and across Ontario and Canada in cycles every three years by senior kindergarten teachers. It measures children's ability to meet age-appropriate developmental expectations in five general domains. It provides a snapshot of children's developmental health at school entry into grade 1.

"Vulnerable" describes children whose scores fall below the 10th percentile cut-off of the Ontario baseline population (Cycle 1 2006) on any of the five domains. Higher vulnerability indicates that a greater percentage of children are struggling with meeting developmental expectations in comparison with the Ontario baseline data.

PERCENTAGE OF CHILDREN VULNERABLE ON AT LEAST ONE DOMAIN - LAST THREE EDI CYCLES (CYCLES 4, 5 AND 6)

Geography	EDI 2023 (Cycle 6)* Vulnerable on at least one domain	EDI 2018 (Cycle 5) Vulnerable on at least one domain	EDI 2015 (Cycle 4) Vulnerable on at least one domain
DUFFERIN COUNTY	33.0%	36.3%	27.8%
PROVINCIAL AVERAGE	31.1%	29.6%	27.4%

* There was an implementation delay of two years in Cycle 6

PERCENTAGE OF CHILDREN VULNERABLE ON EACH DOMAIN - LAST THREE EDI CYCLES (CYCLES 4, 5 AND 6)

EDI Cycle Year	EDI Sub-Domain	Percentage Vulnerability	
		DUFFERIN COUNTY	PROVINCIAL AVERAGE
2023 (Cycle 6)	Physical Health & Well Being	18.1%	17.6%
	Social Competence	10.1%	10.1%
	Emotional Maturity	17.0%	13.1%
	Language & Cognitive Development	7.2%	6.7%
	Communication Skills & General Knowledge	11.5%	10.5%
2018 (Cycle 5)	Physical Health & Well Being	22.2%	16.3%
	Social Competence	13.3%	9.9%
	Emotional Maturity	16.1%	11.3%
	Language & Cognitive Development	8.0%	7.5%
	Communication Skills & General Knowledge	9.6%	10.0%
2015 (Cycle 4)	Physical Health & Well Being	20.3%	16.1%
	Social Competence	14.2%	10.7%
	Emotional Maturity	16.4%	12.3%
	Language & Cognitive Development	6.7%	7.0%
	Communication Skills & General Knowledge	11.3%	10.2%

- Overall EDI vulnerability (vulnerable on at least one domain) increased in Dufferin children over time from Cycle 1 (2006) through Cycle 5 (2018) but decreased in Cycle 6 (2023). Children are doing significantly better in Cycle 6 than in Cycle 5.
- Consistent across the cycles, Dufferin children have the highest vulnerability on Physical Health & Well Being and Emotional Maturity, and the lowest vulnerability on Language & Cognitive Development. These same trends are consistent in the Ontario average.
- Significant improvement occurred for Physical Health & Well Being and Social Competence in Cycle 6 compared to Cycle 5.
- Dufferin children have higher vulnerability rates than the Ontario average, both overall and for most domains, consistently over time.



SECTION 2:

OVERALL DESCRIPTION OF THE EARLY YEARS & CHILD CARE SYSTEM





CHANGING LANDSCAPE - PROVINCIAL CONTEXT

CWELCC

The Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care Agreement (CWELCC), signed by federal and provincial governments on March 27, 2022, aims to make child care more affordable. The framework established under CWELCC seeks to lower costs while improving accessibility, quality, and inclusivity in Ontario's early years and child care sector. Ontario, under this agreement, plans to facilitate the creation of 86,000 new CWELCC licensed child care spaces by the end of 2026.

As the Service System Manager (SSM) for Early Years and Child Care in Dufferin, the County of Dufferin administers the CWELCC system under Ministry direction.

Directed Growth Plan

As per Ontario's Access and Inclusion Framework 2023, the County of Dufferin has created a Directed Growth Plan. The purpose of Ontario's Access and Inclusion Framework is to support SSMs with developing and implementing local service system plans with an increased focus on access as it relates to inclusion.

The goal of Dufferin's Directed Growth Plan is to open 478 total licensed child care spaces between 2022 and 2026 under the CWELCC system.

The provincial funding for the new spaces has been allocated to help each region of the province progress towards a target provincial ratio of spaces to children, or access rate, of 37%. This is equivalent to there being one affordable child care space available for every 2.7 children aged 0-5.

Ontario Child Care Workforce Strategy

The purpose of the Ontario Child Care Workforce Strategy is to support the recruitment and retention of qualified professionals, help achieve system growth, and ensure increased access to high quality licensed child care in the province. The Ontario Child Care Workforce Strategy will support Ontario's early years and child care professionals by implementing better wages and working conditions, supporting career laddering and entry to the profession, and building the profile of the profession by implementing new programs and building on existing initiatives.

The focus of this strategy is:

- | | |
|--|---|
| → Workforce Compensation | → Innovation Fund |
| → Professional Development and Mental Health Support | → Expansion of Early Childhood Education Qualifications Upgrade Program (ECE QUP) |

LOCAL EARLY YEARS AND CHILD CARE SYSTEM

Families have access to a variety of early years and child care options in Dufferin. The licensed child care options include:

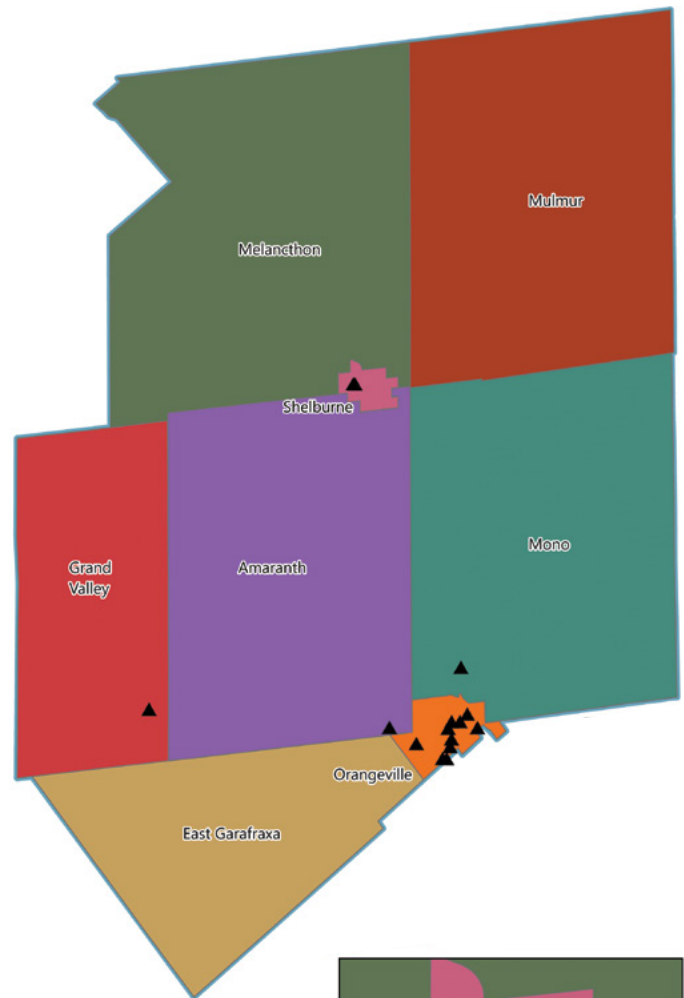
Licensed Child Care Centres

Licensed centres care for children 0 to 12 years old and include nursery schools, full-day care, and before-and-after school programs (operated in school settings by third-party operators). Child care centres operate in a variety of locations including standalone buildings and schools.

30 licensed child care centre sites in Dufferin

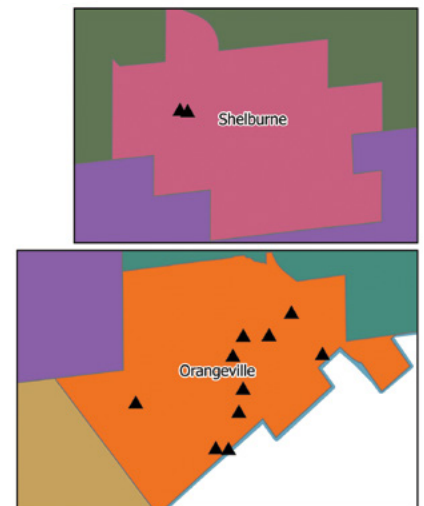
- Operated by 11 child care organizations
- 8 organizations are for profit
- 3 organizations are not for profit

EXISTING LICENSED CHILD CARE CENTRES IN DUFFERIN COUNTY - FULL DAY CARE



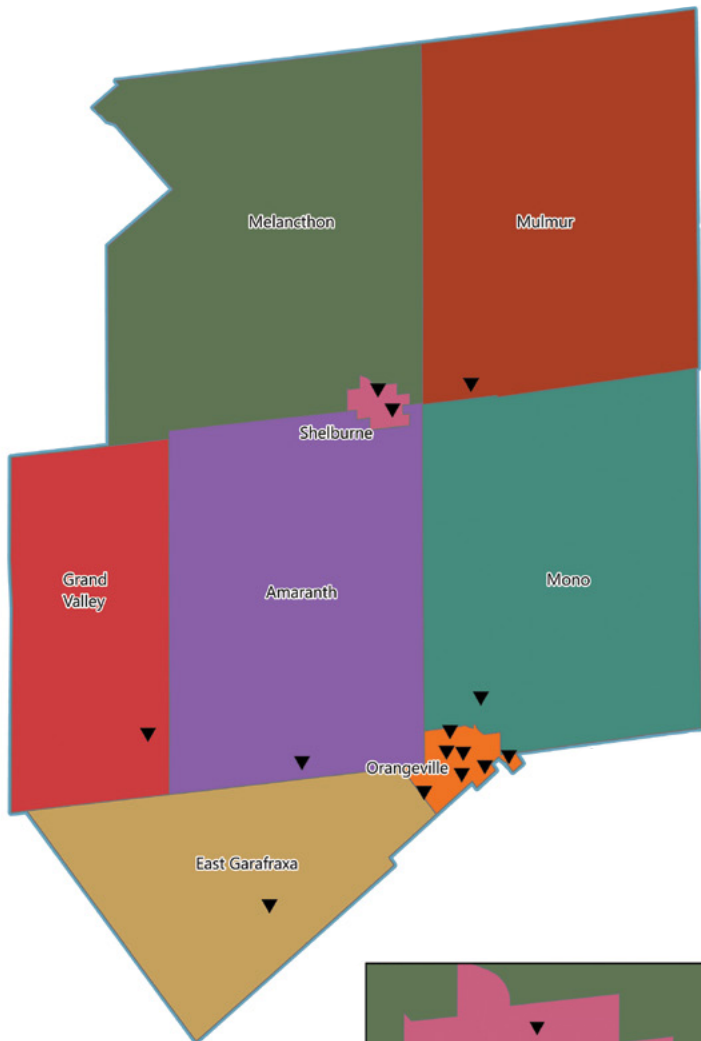
Symbology

- ▲ Existing Licensed Child Care Centre – Full Day Care
- Dufferin County Boundary

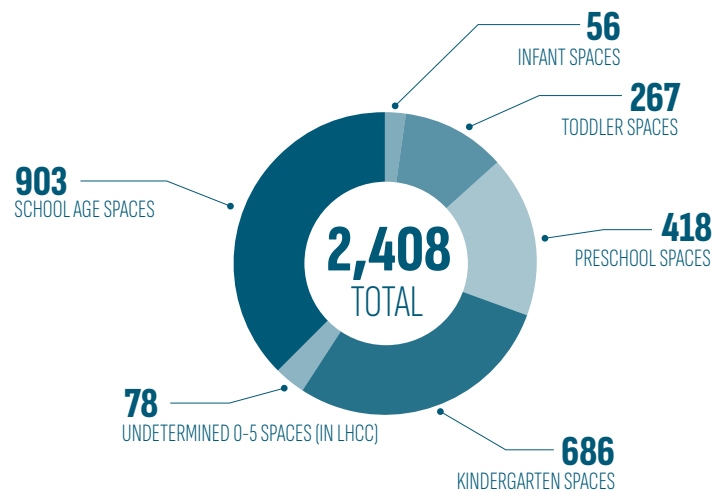
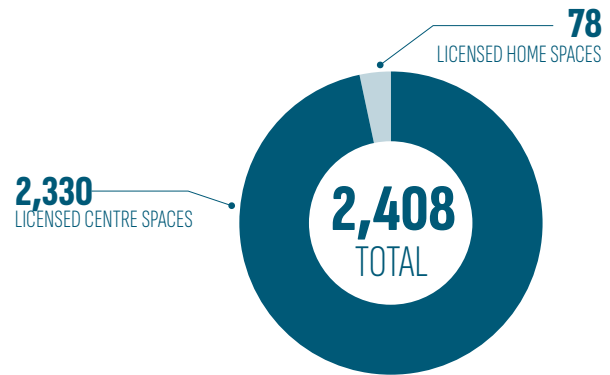


LOCAL EARLY YEARS AND CHILD CARE SYSTEM

EXISTING LICENSED CHILD CARE CENTRES IN DUFFERIN COUNTY - BEFORE AND AFTER SCHOOL CARE



AVAILABLE LICENSED CHILD CARE SPACES (AS AT DECEMBER 2023)



LOCAL EARLY YEARS AND CHILD CARE SYSTEM

Licensed Home Child Care

Licensed home child care is provided for children 0 to 12 years old in the private residence of an approved caregiver who is affiliated with a licensed home child care service provider (agency). Home Visitors provide oversight, training and support to caregivers. Routine inspections are conducted to ensure caregivers are following provincial regulation, as well the service provider's policies and procedures. The Ministry of Education licenses home child care service providers and conducts inspections to ensure they meet specific provincial health, safety and developmental standards.



Licensed home child care agencies in Dufferin. All are operated by for profit organizations¹

Number of homes located in Dufferin County at the end of 2023



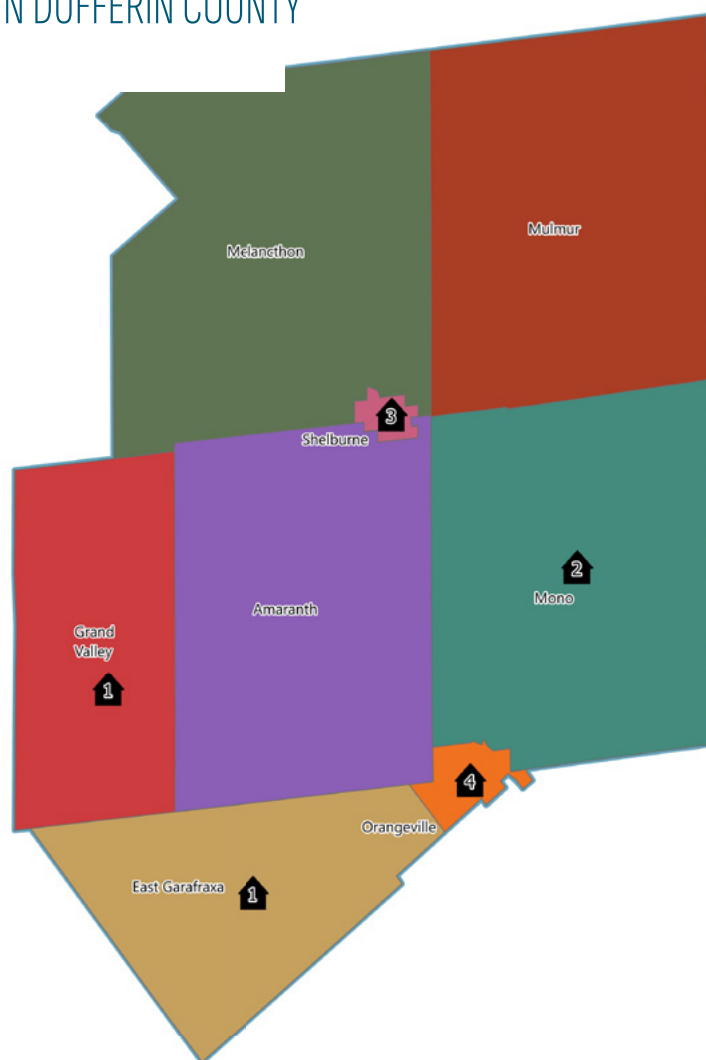
Approximate number of spaces in licensed home child care at the end of 2023



Estimated number of new homes in 2024



EXISTING LICENSED CHILD CARE HOMES IN DUFFERIN COUNTY



Symbology

- Existing Licensed Home Child Care Providers in Dufferin County
- Dufferin County Boundary

Note: This map is not representative of the exact locations of the home child care providers. It indicates only the number of homes located within the towns/townships in Dufferin County. This is subject to change over time

¹ Note: However, for the purposes of Ministry reporting for the growth plan, they are counted as not-for-profit spaces



LOCAL EARLY YEARS AND CHILD CARE SYSTEM

LICENSED CHILD CARE SPACES BY MUNICIPALITY

Geography (Municipality/CSD)	Population Age 0-5 2021 Census	Current Number Licensed Spaces Age 0-5	% Available Licensed Spaces Age 0-5
Mulmur	155	0	0.0%
East Garafraxa	165	32	19.4%
Melancthon	240	0	0.0%
Amaranth	260	66	25.4%
Grand Valley	360	81	22.5%
Mono	465	90	19.4%
Shelburne	735	261	35.5%
Orangeville	2,230	975	43.7%
ENTIRE COUNTY	4,610	1,505	32.6%

Geography (Municipality/CSD)	Population Age 6-12 2021 Census	Current Number Licensed Spaces Age 6-12	% Available Licensed Spaces Age 6-12
Mulmur	220	0	0.0%
East Garafraxa	245	30	12.2%
Melancthon	300	0	0.0%
Amaranth	390	30	7.7%
Grand Valley	325	30	9.2%
Mono	790	110	13.9%
Shelburne	960	120	12.5%
Orangeville	2,715	583	21.5%
ENTIRE COUNTY	5,945	903	15.2%



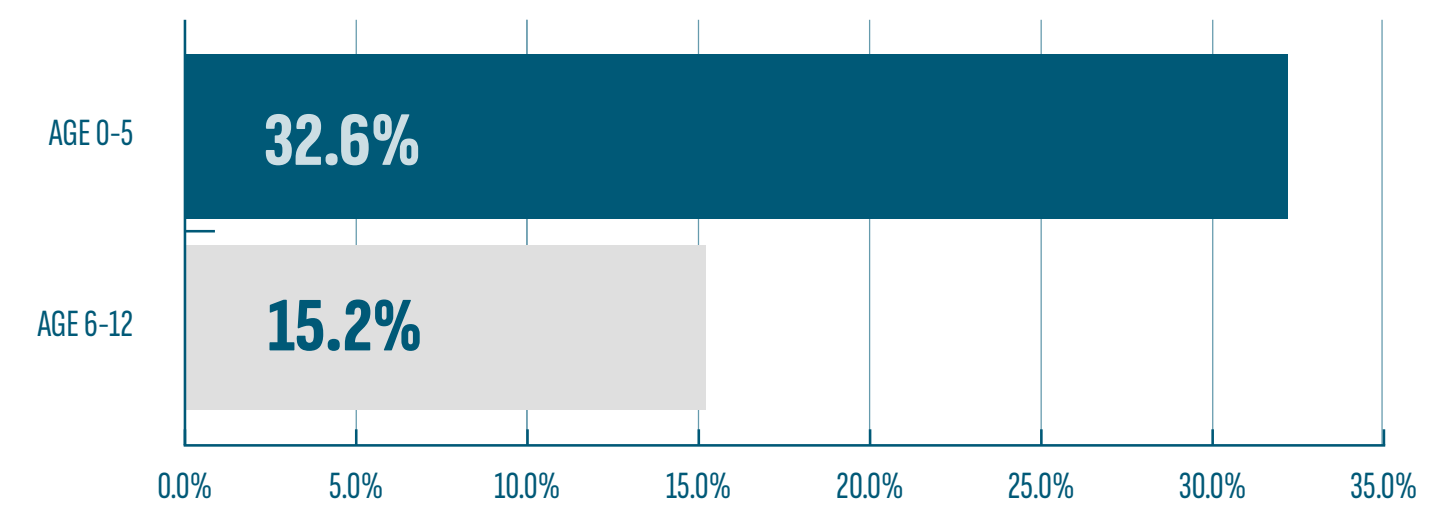


ACCESS TO LICENSED CHILD CARE



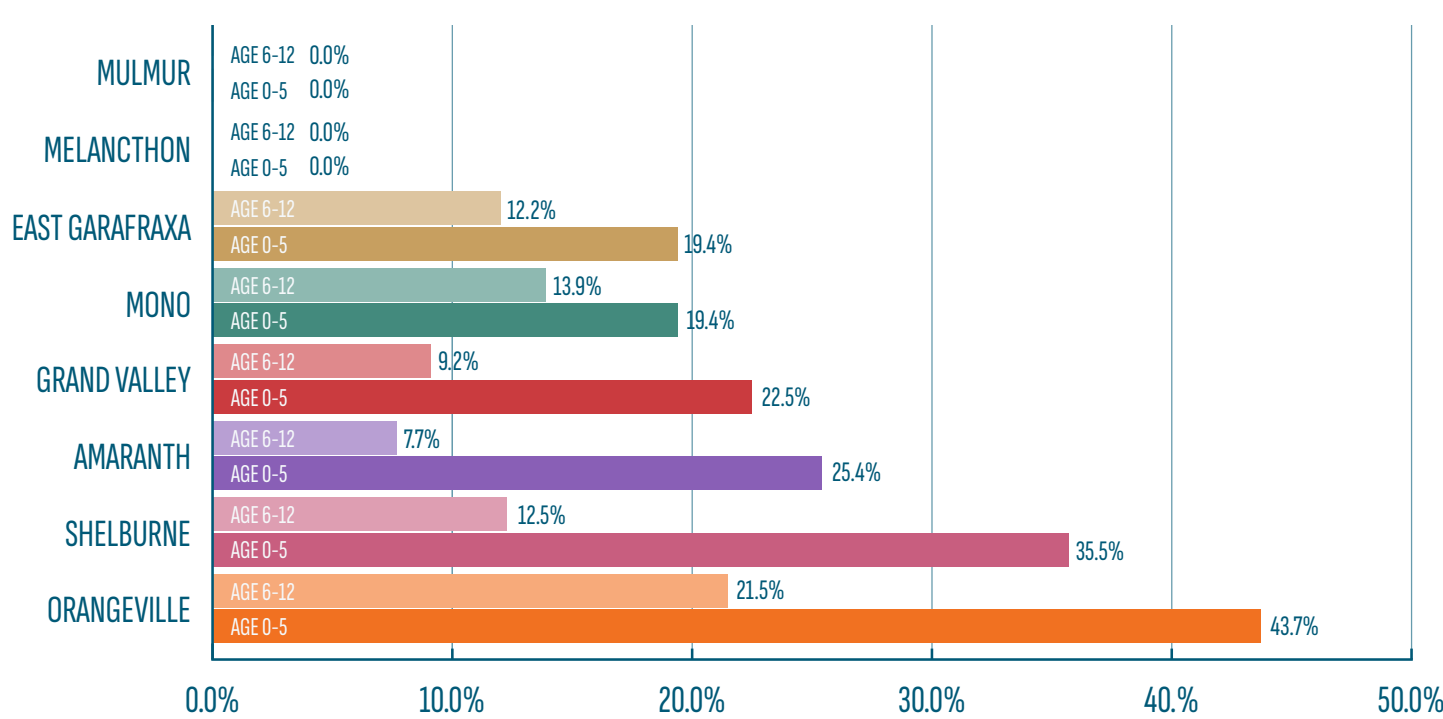
The Provincial target for access to licensed child care is 37%. Across Dufferin County, a licensed child care space is available for 32.6% of children birth up to 5 years of age and 15.2% of children 6 to 12 years of age.

% OF CHILDREN WITH ACCESS TO A LICENSED CHILD CARE SPACE



The highest proportion of licensed child care spaces are available in Orangeville. Mulmur and Melancthon do not have any licensed child care spaces.

% OF CHILDREN WITH ACCESS TO A LICENSED CHILD CARE SPACE



EARLYON CHILD AND FAMILY CENTRES

Caregivers and parents also have access to EarlyON Child and Family Centres.

EarlyON provides access to essential early years services and supports for children 0 to 6 years old, families, and caregivers. The suite of mandatory core services includes:



→ **Engaging parents and caregivers**

Information sharing on child development, pre and post-natal support programs, and targeted outreach to caregivers not currently accessing services.

→ **Supporting early learning and development**

Drop-in programs and services such as playgroups that build responsive adult-child relationships, supported by *How Does Learning Happen? Ontario's Pedagogy for the Early Years*.

→ **Making connections for families**

Working with families to identify concerns and opportunities related to child development and facilitating connections to community-based services.



SPECIAL NEEDS RESOURCING

Child care inclusion means that all children can attend and benefit from licensed child care programs. Licensed child care programs are in a unique position to provide inclusive and supportive environments for children with special needs and their families.

In Dufferin, Inclusion for Children with Additional Needs (iCAN) provides support to licensed child care programs to promote the inclusion of children with special needs. The iCAN program:

- Provides support and consultation to licensed child care operators to help meet the needs of children with additional needs up to the age of 12 years
- Supports the inclusion of all children with additional needs (physical, social-emotional, developmental, behavioral) to help them learn and grow to their best and fullest potential
- Offers information and resources, and helps connect families to other community resources if and when needed

Consultation may include observations and program plans for individual children; consultation to child care staff on programming; system level consultation with staff and caregivers; or customized workshops on specific topics.

45.9% increase in the number of children served through the iCAN program since 2018

- The majority of children served through this program are aged 0 to 6 years
- The years 2018/2019 saw some changes with a transition to a new service provider and a new program called iCAN. This impacted the service usage numbers
- The COVID pandemic brought further changes, with a significant decrease in iCAN usage numbers in 2020 and 2021 due to the pandemic (periodic closures of child care, restrictions of in-person contact, etc.)
- The numbers have increased significantly in 2022/2023



SPECIAL NEEDS RESOURCING

Year	Total Number of Individual Children Served through Inclusion for Children with Additional Needs (iCAN) Program	% Change (2018-2023)	Average Monthly Number of Children Served through Inclusion for Children with Additional Needs (iCAN) Program Age up to Kindergarten School Age	
2018	98	45.9%	53	3
2019	149		54	13
2020	76		30	9
2021	89		50	7
2022	125		72	10
2023	143		87	4

Sources: Community Living PRP Program Statistics and Dufferin Child and Family Services iCAN Program Statistics

11.34% of the total child care budget provided to Special Needs Resourcing

- The portion of funding provided to the Special Needs Resourcing part of the budget has continued to increase since 2018
- It is significantly higher than the Provincial mandate of 4% of total budget

Year	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
SNR Spend	\$435,263	\$402,716	\$414,548	\$482,728	\$562,376	\$617,200
Budget	\$5,795,109	\$5,466,724	\$5,213,010	\$5,213,010	\$5,674,892	\$5,443,288
% SNR	7.51%	7.37%	7.95%	9.26%	9.91%	11.34%



iCAN Pilot Program

With the changing needs in licensed child care, the iCAN program is piloting a new model to support licensed child care centres. The six month pilot will see advanced levels of behavioural support provided by a Registered Behaviour Therapist (RBT). This will be in addition to the Resource Consultant (RC) team and will provide child care centres with supplementary support when dealing with the increased complexity of needs we are seeing in young children.

The addition of an RBT will further support skill development and problem solving around challenging behaviour in the classroom. The RBT will also offer workshops and training to build capacity within the child care community. Feedback will be gathered from the child care community on the addition of this support over the period of the pilot. The feedback will be evaluated to see if outcomes support continuing with adding behaviour support to special needs resourcing moving forward.

Anticipated benefits of this role include:

- Building capacity of both RCs and educators in understanding challenging behaviour as well as learning strategies that can address behaviour concerns
- Supporting the inclusion of all children in child care, including children who have interfering behaviours
- Growing partnerships and collaboration between iCAN and child care/school age educators



FEE SUBSIDY

Child care fee subsidy is offered to eligible families to reduce their licensed child care costs. Eligibility is based on income and eligible hours of care.

- In 2018 and 2019, demand for fee subsidy was high, in part influenced by a fee subsidy promotional campaign. A wait list was implemented in the fall of 2019 and continued until the end of March 2020 when the COVID pandemic started
- There was a 27.6% reduction in the number of children utilizing child care fee subsidy since 2018
- Fee subsidy usage reduced significantly over the pandemic years of 2020 and 2021, as child care experienced some mandated closures and also many families made other arrangements for their children's care for reasons related to the pandemic
- In 2022 and 2023, coming out of the pandemic, fee subsidy usage increased, but not to pre-pandemic levels
 - Some fee subsidy families discontinued or reduced their use of licensed child care as compared to pre-pandemic and instead continued to use their pandemic child care arrangements that better suited new hybrid work schedules
 - Some other families were no longer eligible for fee subsidy as they were better off paying full fee and receiving the CWELCC fee reduction for their children under age 6
- At present, there is no wait list for fee subsidy

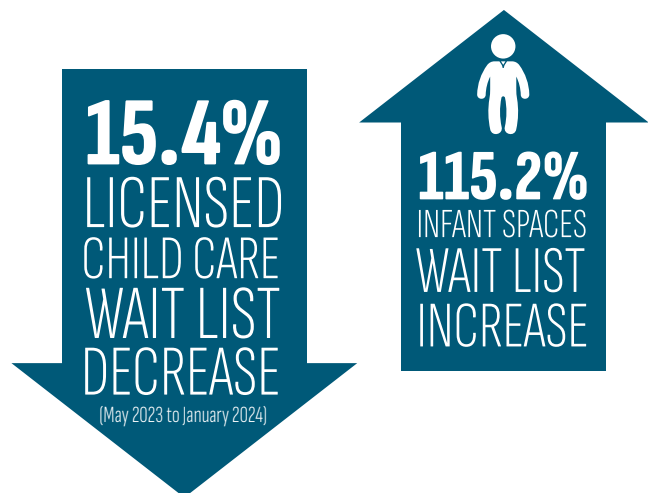
Year	Total Number of Individual (Unduplicated) Children Receiving Fee Subsidy	% Change (2018-2023)	Average Monthly Number of Children Receiving Fee Subsidy	% Change (2018-2023)
2018	654	6.6%	424	(27.6%)
2019	732		458	
2020	552		200	
2021	597		235	
2022	620		322	
2023	697		307	

Source: OCCMS Reports for Fee Subsidy



WAIT LIST FOR LICENSED CHILD CARE

There is no centralized wait list for licensed child care in Dufferin. Wait list information was collected directly from child care operators and a common list was created. Note: not all operators provided wait list information, so this data gives an overall sense of the demand for licensed child care.



WAITLIST NUMBERS

	May 23	Jan 24	% Change
Infants	145	312	115.2%
Toddlers	426	364	-14.6%
Preschool	337	190	-43.6%
Kindergarten	157	75	-52.2%
School Age	76	24	-68.4%
TOTAL	1,141	965	-15.4%

Although it appears that there has been a reduction in the wait list for licensed child care, the number of children on the wait list (965) is still high relative to the number of current spaces. The additional 478 spaces planned for through the directed growth strategy (between 2023 and 2026) are not adequate to meet the current demand for licensed child care.



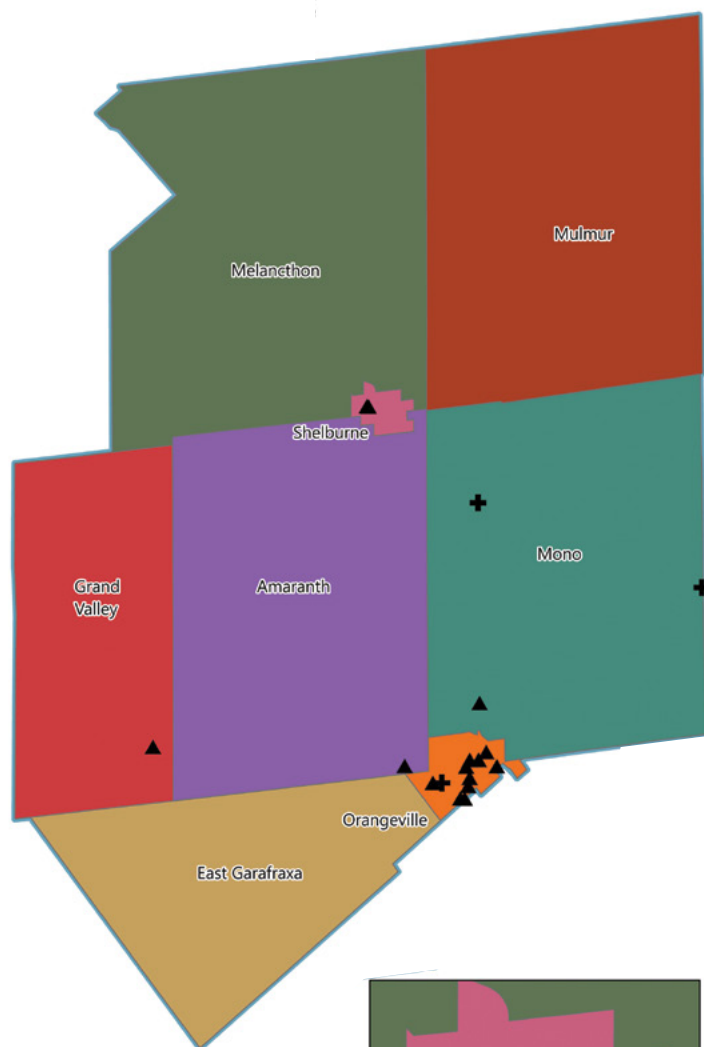
SECTION 3: DIRECTED GROWTH PLAN



DIRECTED GROWTH PLAN



EXISTING AND EXPECTED NEW (2024) LICENSED CHILD CARE CENTRES IN DUFFERIN COUNTY - FULL DAY CARE



From 2022 to 2026, as part of the directed growth plan, Dufferin will increase the number of licensed child care spaces for children aged 0 to 5 years by 478

Community-Based Spaces

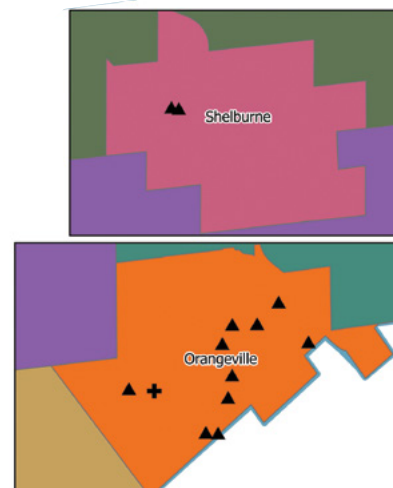
Total	2022/2023	2024	2025/2026
478	94	293	91

The priority neighbourhoods for increasing the number of licensed child care spaces are:

Name of priority neighborhoods/areas	# of spaces to be opened
Shelburne and Melancthon	204
Grand Valley	78
Orangeville and Mono	196
Total	478

Symbology

- +** Expected New Licensed Child Care Centre - Full Day Care
- ▲** Existing Licensed Child Care Centre - Full Day Care
- Dufferin County Boundary



Expected Growth Plans

As part of the vision of the CWELCC System, Ontario has released the Access and Inclusion Framework as a guide for SSMs to support child care operators to create additional accessible and affordable licensed child care spaces for children aged 0 to 5 years. In conjunction with this framework, the Ministry of Education has allocated each municipality Start-Up Grant Funding, which SSMs are to use to support child care operators with expansion or start-up projects that increase the number of licensed child care spaces.

The County of Dufferin has engaged in Directed Growth Planning. This planning has considered equity deserving children and families and geographic areas facing a lack of access to affordable child care options to determine priority “neighbourhoods” (municipally defined geographical areas in high need of increased access to child care).

Child care operators will be supported with Start-Up Grant Funding to increase access to licensed child care in these areas. Dufferin’s top priority neighbourhoods, in order of priority, are:

1. Shelburne and Melancthon
2. Orangeville and Mono
3. Grand Valley

As noted above, the County of Dufferin has been allocated a space creation target of 478 for 2022 to 2026. Start-Up Grant Funding for 2023 was \$335,000. For 2024 it is \$1,007,400.

The auspice ratio pre-growth plan is 57.4% for profit to 42.6% not for profit spaces.

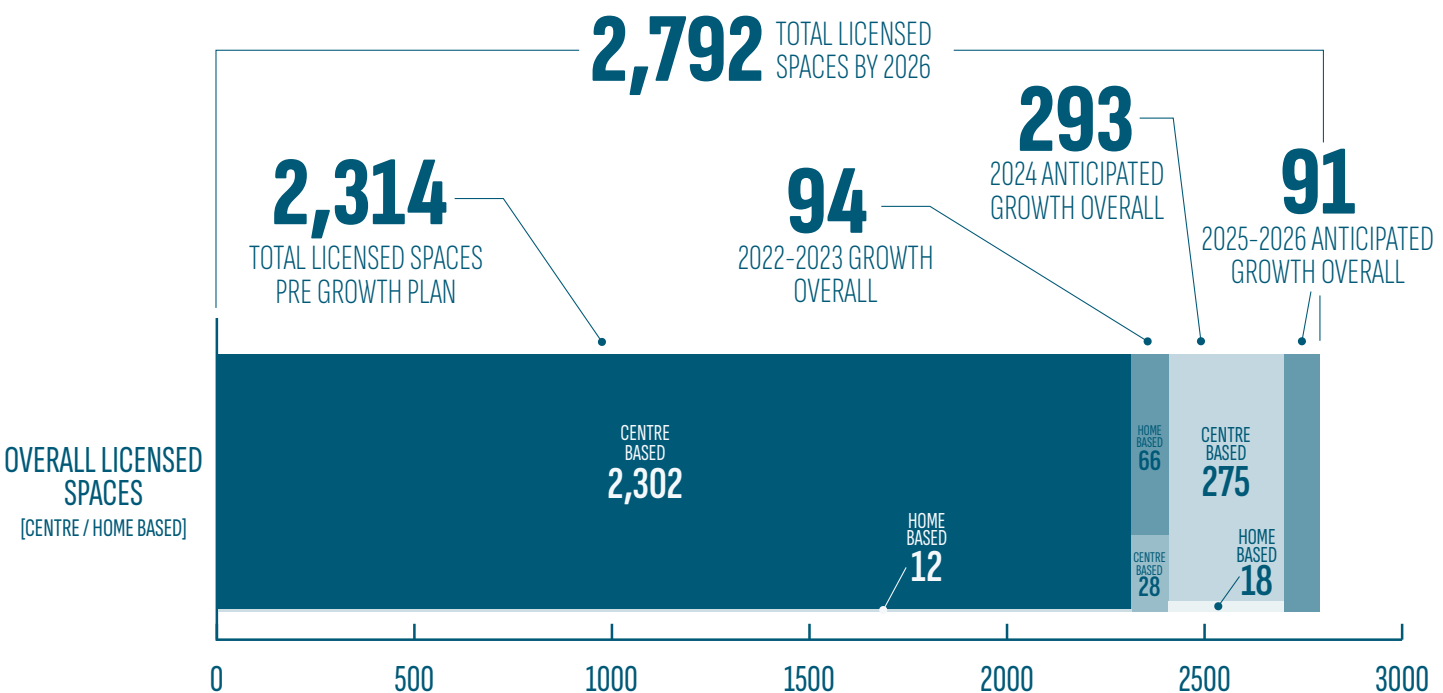
Growth in the licensed child care system in 2022/2023 included:

- 3 Licensed Home Child Care (LHCC) Agencies expanded, with 11 new homes/66 spaces across Dufferin
- 13 new Before and After School spaces in Shelburne
- 15 Kindergarten Spaces in Orangeville

Planned growth for 2024 includes:

- 3 new Licensed Home Child Care homes (18 spaces)
- 32 additional spaces at an existing French child care
- One centre expanding with 12 additional Preschool spaces
- One LHCC converting to a small centre in Hockley/Mono with 20 spaces
- A new centre in Mono close to Shelburne’s proximity with 108 spaces
- One new centre in Orangeville with 103 spaces

DIRECTED GROWTH PLAN



A potential challenge to increasing the number of licensed child care spaces includes the high number of for profit applicants for start-up funding and the CWELCC System, and not enough interest from not for profit operators. The Ministry of Education is directing municipalities to maintain their current not for profit to profit ratio which means growth needs to happen in the not for profit sector. Other potential challenges include:

Recruitment and Retention of RECEs

Recruitment and retention continues to be a crisis in the sector. The qualified Early Childhood Educators (Registered Early Childhood Educators) who do exist are leaving the field at a rate higher than they can be replaced coupled with a reduction of interest entering the early years workforce. Factors contributing to the loss of existing educators and barriers to recruiting new educators include: low wages, poor overall compensation, such as a lack of access to health benefits and pension, and adequate sick days, inadequate working conditions, and overarching systemic issues that place little value on the work of educators.

Access to Physical Space

In Dufferin County, Licensed Child Care operators are finding it difficult to find an appropriate physical space to purchase, or lease and, if one can be found, cost is the next barrier.

Long Term Support of Operators

The ability to support operators through regular funding lines such as Special Needs Resourcing, Child Care Fee Subsidy, Play Based Funding, and Repairs and Maintenance Funding will become more challenging with increased growth.

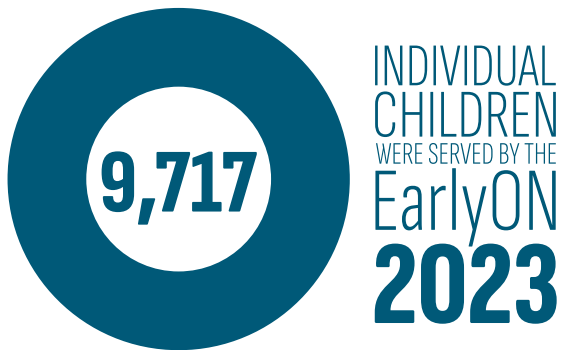
SECTION 4:

EarlyON Child and Family Centres



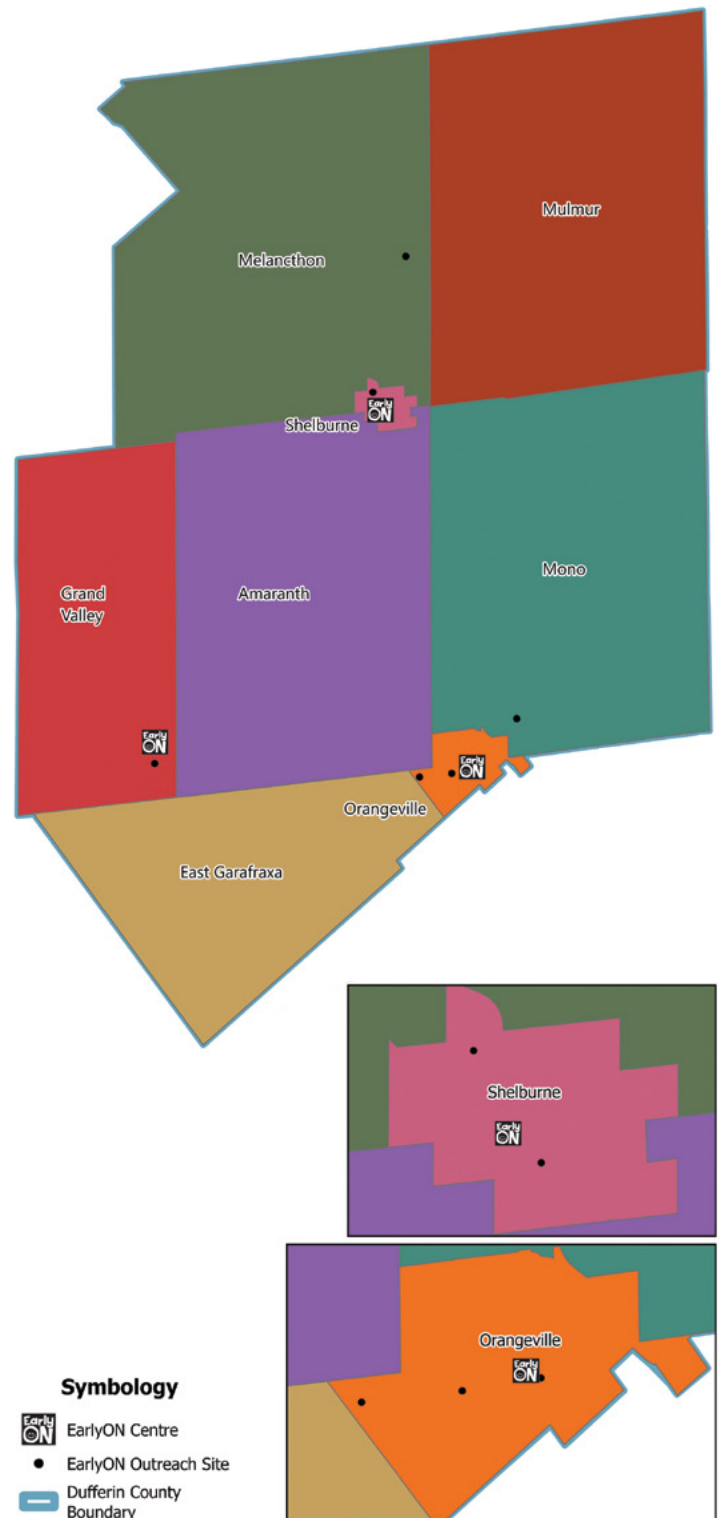
EarlyON Child and Family Centres

The Dufferin EarlyON has 3 main locations and one outreach location. They are located in Orangeville, Shelburne, Grand Valley and Horning's Mills. In addition to these locations, there are two consistent outdoor programs that use local parks. Currently those parks are Island lake and Hewitt park in Orangeville. Throughout the year outdoor EarlyON programs are offered, with locations that rotate parks throughout the County to reach families that are more rural.



- Due to the COVID pandemic and the resulting closure of indoor programs, the utilization of EarlyON programs has decreased since 2018 and 2019
- The number of days and hours open continue to be less than was offered prior to the pandemic
- The three EarlyON sites were closed to indoor programs/visits due to the COVID pandemic, from April 2020 through to April 2022 inclusive. Programs were only offered virtually and outdoors/offsite during that time. The numbers above during this closure period reflect these programs
- The EarlyON sites reopened in May 2022 to indoor programming, including drop in visits. When the sites reopened, the days and hours for drop in visits were reduced overall for the sites by 75% as compared to before the pandemic, explaining the large reduction in EarlyON usage comparing before and after the pandemic closure

EarlyON CHILD AND FAMILY CENTRES AND EarlyON OUTREACH SITES IN DUFFERIN COUNTY



EarlyON Child and Family Centres

Year	Total Number of Individuals Served by EarlyON		Total Number of EarlyON Visits	
	Children	Parents/Caregivers	Children	Parents/Caregivers
2018	1,829	1,468	12,804	9,609
2019	1,938	1,625	16,832	13,190
2020	928 <i>Jan to March only</i>	725 <i>Jan to March only</i>	3,888	4,125
2021	Cannot be calculated	Cannot be calculated	2,651	3,164
2022	566 <i>May to Dec only</i>	457 <i>May to Dec only</i>	6,386	4,994
2023	865	703	9,717	7,992

Sources: OneHSN tracking system for indoor programs and manual counts of outdoor and virtual programs.
 Note: There is no data for "number served" from April 2020 to April 2022 inclusive because this is measured only through the indoor OneHSN tracking system and there were no indoor programs due to the pandemic closure during this time.



EarlyON Programs

As there has been no increase in the base funding for EarlyON centres, the County has been creative with the provision of services.

Since its inception, the Dufferin EarlyON has had a reduction in staff by two thirds. The program continues to operate its three main sites, with them being open at least two days a week, with programs in between.

In order to respond to the needs of our families the County has partnered with community partners and local agencies to bring in expertise above and beyond the EarlyON facilitators. This combination has brought more programs to Dufferin families in specialized areas and has contributed to being responsive to community needs without having funding to meet the needs.

In 2023, access to EarlyON programs was increased at each site compared to 2022 service levels.



- Each site now offers Drop-in family time twice weekly (with the exception of Shelburne that has three weekly)
- Family Time is now being offered once a month on Saturdays with a rotation of sites
- Drop-in Family Time has also been added once a week in Horning's Mills at the hall to reach more families north of Shelburne in Melancthon
- Parent/caregiver programs and child and parent/caregiver programs continue to be offered at all three sites most days of the week, including two outdoor programs
- Programming concentrating on Mental Health for families has also been expanded to include programs such as, but not limited to yoga, music therapy, and a program called Take a Break for parents and caregivers



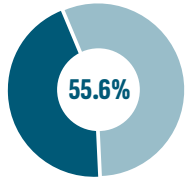
Parent/Caregiver Feedback

In July and August of 2023 a survey was conducted with parents and caregivers accessing the Dufferin EarlyON programs.

Highlights of the feedback include:



MAJORITY ARE
VERY
SATISFIED WITH
EarlyON
PROGRAMS & SERVICES



FIRST LEARNED
ABOUT EarlyON
CENTRES & PROGRAMS FROM
FAMILY AND/OR
FRIENDS



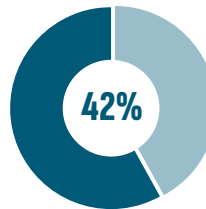
EarlyON
FAMILY TIME
DROP-IN
IS THE MOST
USED PROGRAM



EarlyON
PHONE LINE
TEXT SUPPORT
IS THE LEAST
USED SERVICE

More Access

- Parent/Caregiver survey respondents would like to see the EarlyON centre open more days at all locations
- They would like to have longer hours of service (beyond 3 pm)
- They would like there to be Saturday/weekend hours
- They do not want programs during nap time (afternoons, 9 am)
- They are concerned about program closures/cancellations with no notice



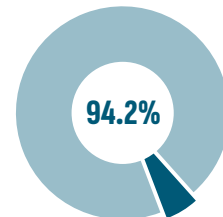
INTERESTED
IN AN EarlyON
PROGRAM
FOR DADS



SOCIAL MEDIA
IS THE PREFERRED
WAY TO HEAR ABOUT
EarlyON
PROGRAMS & SERVICES



EarlyON
CAN OFFER THE
HELP WITH
BREASTFEEDING
SERVICE
PRE-NATAL
TO AGE 6



HAVE NOT
EXPERIENCED
DISCRIMINATION
OR RACISM AT
AN
EarlyON CENTRE

EarlyON has been successful in creating a welcoming and inclusive environment for families and children, with a strong emphasis on social interaction and a wide range of engaging activities and resources



Funding

Base funding for EarlyON Child and Family Centres has not increased since 2018. The impact of this has been a reduction in program offerings and days and hours of operation for the various sites.

In 2023, funding in the amount of \$15,270 was received for mental health initiatives. Funding will be provided by the Province for three years (2023, 2024, 2025). Overall, the funding was provided to leverage local expertise and enhance existing mental health resources and capacity building strategies to support children, families and the workforce in early years settings based on community needs.

The purpose of the funding was to build further capacity in the system for mental health initiatives by:

- Supporting the coordination of regional mental health supports for children, parents/caregivers, and staff
- Enhancing current professional learning supports to include mental health information for the early years and child care sector
- Supporting alignment with Ontario's provincial pedagogy for early years and child care settings:
"How Does Learning Happen? Ontario's Pedagogy for the Early Years"

The following initiatives were funded in 2023:

- Building capacity in staff, including but not limited to, Trauma Informed Care, Reaching In Reaching Out (resilience training), Compassion Fatigue training
- Programs for families: Yoga, Sound Bath, Mom and Baby Yoga, Music Therapy, Take A Break, Attachment child/adult, healthy relationships, Bounce Back and Thrive program
- Post Partum Program (FAB) bringing in professional community supports with specific skills (counselling, family supports)
- Lactation Support with doulas is offered weekly



SECTION 5: WORKFORCE

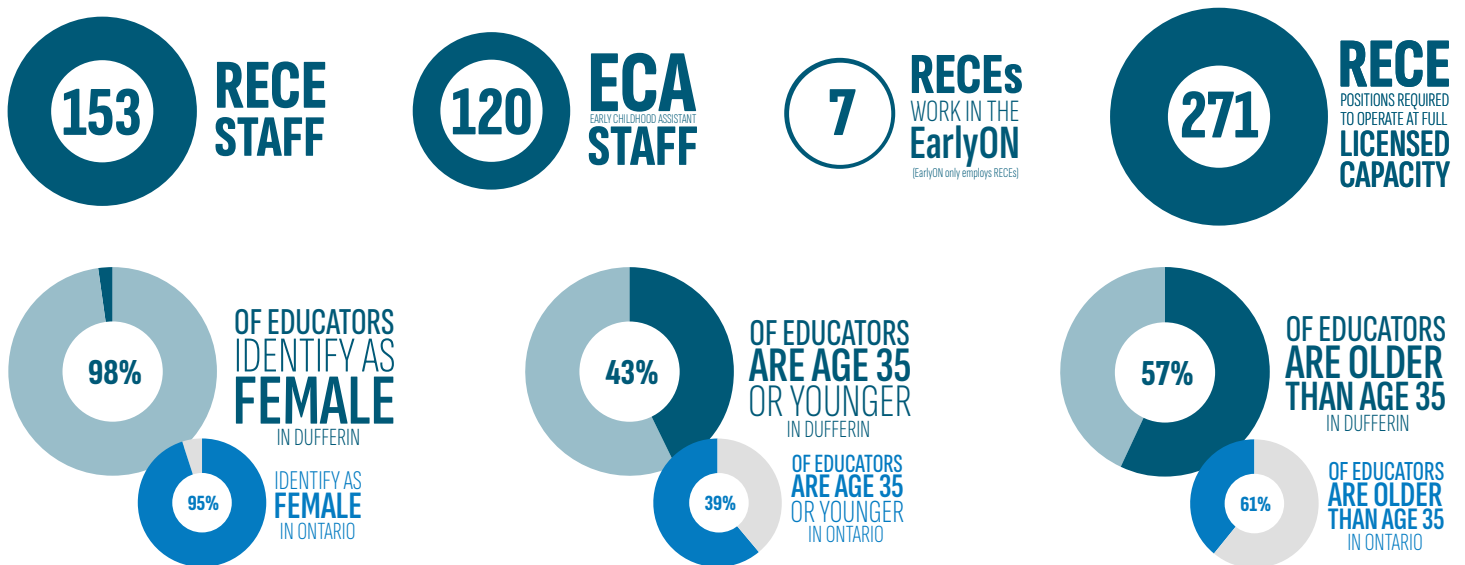


CURRENT WORKFORCE

The purpose of the Ontario Child Care Workforce Strategy is to support the recruitment and retention of qualified professionals, help achieve system growth, and ensure increased access to high quality licensed child care in the province.

Since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, employment among child care workers has fluctuated more, compared with employment in Canada as a whole. In February 2021, a year after the pandemic hit Canada, employment among child care workers was 21% below that in February 2020. In comparison, total employment in Canada decreased by 3% over the same period and it has still not rebounded.

The following data provides an overview of the local early years and child care educator workforce.



Note: The above data was collected for Dufferin County

Hourly Wage by Auspice and RECE Status - Workforce

Wages of RECEs are higher than Non-RECEs. Those working for for-profit programs have the lowest hourly wages. RECEs working in the public sector earn significantly higher wages than RECEs working in licenced child care.

RECE Status			
Hourly Wage Range	Non-RECE	RECE	Total
For Profit	\$20.33	\$23.06	\$22.08
Not-For-Profit	\$22.71	\$25.22	\$24.95
Public	\$30.00	\$33.92	\$33.44
Average Across Auspice	\$21.88	\$26.13	\$25.43

Data source: Knowing Our Numbers - Wellington/Dufferin



WORKFORCE STRATEGY

Results Based Accountability Project

In Spring 2023, Dufferin County and key community partners utilized a Results Based Accountability (RBA) approach to:

1. Establish an evaluation framework for the Dufferin Workforce Strategy to systematically monitor and measure the progress and impact of the Strategy
2. Utilize evidence informed planning for the next phase of the Workforce Strategy's approach

The results statement for the Workforce Strategy is:

**ALL DUFFERIN FAMILIES AND CHILDREN HAVE ACCESS
TO A HIGH QUALITY AND STABLE CHILD CARE SYSTEM**

Data collection included: EarlyON Child and Family Centres, Dufferin and Child Family Service's Resource Consultants, Dufferin County's Resident Families and Early Childhood Educators working in Dufferin County's Licensed Child Care

EDUCATORS
SURVEY
N=119

FAMILY
SURVEY
N=350

OPERATORS
SURVEY
N=20

EDUCATORS
INTERVIEW
N=15

The data collection methods included surveys and interviews with Dufferin County early childhood educators, families, and licensed child care operators.

Highlights from the findings of this project include:

Access

- 32.6% of children birth up to 5 years of age have access to a licensed child care space
- 15.2% of children 6 to 12 years of age have access to a licensed child care space
- Most spaces are located in Orangeville, with Mulmur and Melancthon having no child care spaces
- Main barriers to access identified were waitlists, location and hours of operation

Quality

- Parents are satisfied with the care their child/ren receives
- Parents feel that centres are high quality, with qualified, welcoming and responsive staff
- Educators feel confident in providing quality care for children in their centre

Stability

- For every 1 ECA, there were 1.37 RECEs
- Operators indicate they are not able to hire enough staff, but that they have enough staff to keep rooms open consistently
- Challenges finding qualified and motivated RECEs, staff to work supply and split shifts, and difficulties competing with the school board for staff



WORKFORCE STRATEGY

Professional Learning

- Preference for short recorded videos or in-person encounters
- Focus on mental-health and well-being; child care agency management and leadership; diversity and inclusion education; education and child development expertise; and parent involvement and communication
- The top challenges to participation are the hours of the session (e.g., work day, evening) and unpaid time

Recruitment and Retention

- Over the past year, the main recruitment activities focused on Georgian students
- Three out of ten Georgian College ECE placement students completed their placement in Dufferin County in the past year
- Additionally, five bursaries were provided to Georgian students with 36% uptake of bursaries offered in Fall 2022
- Over the past year, thirteen educators participated in the Community of Practice program over seven different sessions
- Almost two-thirds of educators plan to be working in a Dufferin LCC centre in 5 years
- Additionally, the majority of respondents reported their overall workplace mental health was good or excellent; they felt valued and connected as an educator; welcomed into the Dufferin LCC system; and engaged in their role
- Challenges with maintaining a work-life balance either for themselves or their staff and not many opportunities for advancement
- The most frequent retention barriers identified were:
 1. Low wages
 2. No benefits/pension
 3. No paid sick days
 4. Decrease in feeling valued as an ECE
 5. Little to no support to feel a sense of belonging and well-being
 6. Little to no flexibility in hours/shifts



WORKFORCE STRATEGY

Knowing Our Numbers

Early Years and Child Care Service System Managers across Ontario joined forces to better understand the challenges of today's early years workforce with the common goal of creating an evidence-based response. They joined in a province-wide study called Knowing Our Numbers to evaluate early learning and child care (ELCC) through a local lens. Three surveys were distributed:

1. Survey for Program Directors and Supervisors
2. Survey for all staff (supervisors, directors, RECEs, designated early childhood educator's (DECE), non-ECEs, ECAs and special needs support staff
3. Survey for home child care providers

Dufferin County is included in this 2023 data collection under the heading of Central West Region.

Central West Region

Territorial boundaries of the Regional Municipalities of Halton, Peel and Waterloo, and the Counties of Dufferin and Wellington

To view the Knowing Our Numbers report, [click here](#).

Almost **6,000** participants in the ECE workforce in Ontario shared their voices



32,000

additional educators are needed just to cover the planned expansion. This excludes replacing the **one in five educators expected to retire** over the next decade

50%

of new ECE grads are **piecing together several part-time jobs** when entering the labour market

This compares to

6.8%

of multiple job holders among other working women—a **staggering** difference

Age

There are significant regional variations in age distribution across Ontario. For example, in the northern regions, 51% of respondents are 35 years of age or younger and 49% are over the age of 35 years. In comparison, in Central West (which includes Dufferin County), 35% of respondents are 35 years of age or younger and 65% are over the age of 35 years. Dufferin County has a younger population of educators than Central West as a whole.





WORKFORCE STRATEGY

Job Satisfaction

Generally, job satisfaction is low across all workplaces throughout the child care sector in Ontario. Educators report that the same factors would improve their personal job satisfaction as would improve the workforce as a whole, with appropriate salaries being at the top of the list for both.

Some examples of these factors are:

- Appropriate Salary
- Improved Benefits
- Support for children with emotional and behavioral needs
- Supports for children with disabilities
- Paid preparation time

These factors are similar to the findings for Dufferin County through Results Based Accountability.

Professional Development

Across Ontario, there is low desire on the part of respondents to engage in any type of professional learning. This is not surprising, since studies find that financially struggling, burnt-out staff are less willing and able to learn new skills. A low number of respondents report participating in equity, diversity, and inclusion training during the preceding 12 months. This pattern holds across regions. The most common types of training, though received by fewer than half the respondents, are in anti-bias/racism approaches (46%) and support for children with disabilities (45%).

The top areas in Central West in which educators would like to receive professional development include:

- Supporting vulnerable families
- Supporting newcomer families
- Critical trauma-informed practice
- Incorporating land-based learning

Discrimination

Numerous studies reveal the percentage of racialized workers is much higher in early learning and child care than in the workforce as a whole. The Knowing Our Numbers study reaches similar conclusions, although there are large variations in the percent of racialized workers by region, auspice, age, years of experience, and position.

Over 1/3 of participants experience workplace discrimination, with 56% reporting daily occurrences. The top two types of discrimination being experienced included bullying and education or seniority.



WORKFORCE STRATEGY

Quality Initiative

Raising the Bar is a community initiative to promote and support early childhood educators in their continuous commitment to excellence in early learning and child care programs. The program provides a framework for best practice to guide early learning, child care operators, and EarlyON child and family centres in delivering high quality services for children and families.

In addition to the best practice framework, Raising the Bar helps to ensure practices are current and responsive to family and community needs by engaging educators in ongoing Reflective Practice, Leadership, and Continuous Professional Learning.

Better Together

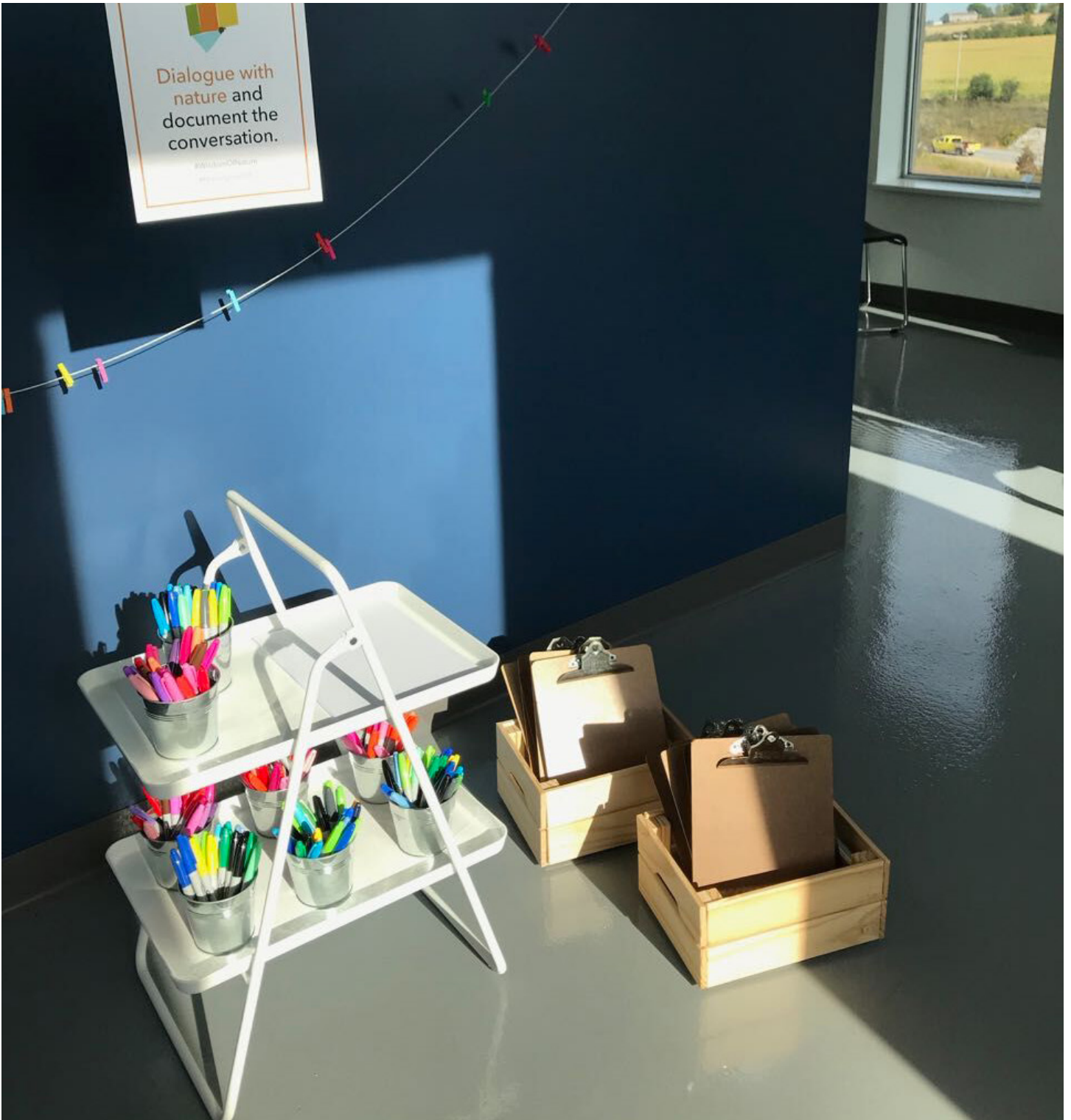
Better Together is a collaborative, strategic change and capacity building initiative designed to create conditions for a thriving and sustainable ELCC workforce. Children's Services leaders from six SSMS across Ontario and one external strategy lead committed to collectively advance three strategic projects in the areas of:

1. **New Allies:** Creating partnerships with economic development officers, rural leaders, and more
2. **New Models:** Exploring employment benefits and system improvements (eg. Access & Inclusion)
3. **New Narrative:** Refreshing the story around the ECE career and early years brain development



SECTION 6:

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN



IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Key activities will be undertaken over the four years of the plan to ensure movement and achievement in each of the strategic priorities. The following visual outlines the timelines for each of the key activities.

Strategic Priorities	Key Activities	Timelines			
		2023	2024	2025	2026
Early Years and Child Care Programs and Services	Continue to implement CWELCC fee reduction for families	●	●	●	●
	Increase the number of licensed child care spaces by 478 by 2026	●	●	●	●
	Manage, analyze, support and approve new operators engaged in the CWELCC start up funding process	●	●		
	Increase access to licensed child care for marginalized groups	●	●	●	●
	Increase understanding about the early years and child care system and SSM requirements for new and existing operators	●	●	●	●
	Increase awareness of EarlyON programs	●	●	●	●
	Continue to be responsive to parent/caregiver needs	●	●	●	●
	Continue to reimagine the current model used to increase access and support children with special needs and their families		●	●	
	Create the conditions for dialogue and engagement among operators about diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging	●	●	●	●
	Increase the understanding of implementing a trauma informed practice in the system		●		
	Continue to provide a sense of belonging for all families that enter our centres	●	●	●	●
	Provide programming that supports diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging in our centres	●	●	●	●
Workforce and Pedagogy	Continue to implement CWELCC wage increases for RECEs	●	●	●	●
	Establish partnerships to create solutions to support recruitment and retention of RECEs	●	●	●	●
	Reimagine quality	●	●	●	●
	Provide responsive and relational professional learning opportunities and strengthen pedagogies	●	●	●	●
	Fund mental health supports through the provincial initiative	●	●		
	Communicate information about the expansion on qualifications and upgrades		●		
	Enhance mentoring opportunities	●	●	●	●
	Continue to implement a workforce strategy	●	●	●	●
	Increase collaboration with partners	●	●	●	●
	Build capacity of staff working in EarlyON programs	●	●	●	●



IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Strategic Priorities	Key Activities	Timelines			
		2023	2024	2025	2026
Leadership and Governance	Establish and implement evaluation frameworks to support the work of the SSM in the early years and child care system	●	●	●	●
	Continue to use data to identify opportunities for action	●	●	●	●
	Build on collaborative relationships in the sector	●	●	●	●
	Ensure the County organizational structure supports the early years and child care system		●		
	Manage the viability and sustainability of operators and overall equity in the child care system (i.e. business analysis, audit)	●	●	●	●
	Enhance the business acumen of licensed child care centres through benchmarking, audits and assessments of financial viability	●	●	●	●
	Advocate to the Province for adequate administrative funding for the SSM	●	●		
	Build resilience across the system	●	●	●	●
	Continue to be creative, resourceful and in partnership to meet ongoing community needs	●	●	●	●
	Advocate for sufficient and sustainable base funding for EarlyON programs and services	●	●	●	●



SECTION 7: MEASURING PROGRESS



MEASURING PROGRESS

To ensure continuous progress we will measure and track outcomes. Measuring progress will involve a number of different methods, including surveys, focus groups and the review of data collected as part of service and program delivery.

Strategic Priorities + Outcomes	Measures
Early Years & Child Care Programs and Services Families can easily access the early years and child care services they need Families and children feel a sense of belonging and inclusion within early years and child care services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Access ratio → Number of families accessing fee subsidies → CWELCC enrollment → Number of new licensed child care spaces → Total number of families served and visits through EarlyON → Waitlist numbers for licensed child care → Participation rate of educators and leaders in learning about equity, diversity and inclusion → Child, family and educator ratings of inclusion and belonging → Educator diversity
Workforce & Pedagogy Early years and child care programs, services and staff are high quality.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Average annual salary for early years and child care educators → Number of workshops, seminars, training sessions, or events organized annually → Participation rate in professional learning → Percentage of Dufferin educators who report an increase in knowledge via the Dufferin Professional Learning program → Satisfaction rate of operators regarding the relevance and practicality of tailored professional learning days → Percentage of Dufferin educators who report their overall mental health is good or excellent in the workplace → Participation rate in mentorship programs → Percentage of child care centres having difficulties filling vacant positions → Staff retention rate → Average number of years in the profession → Satisfaction rates from families regarding the care their child/ren receives → Percentage of families that report that Dufferin child care centres are high quality, with qualified, welcoming and responsive staff
Leadership & Governance Service System Management is responsive and accountable.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Satisfaction rate of operators regarding the ongoing supports and resources they receive → Percentage of operators who report they feel the support and resources they receive promotes the conditions for them to provide high quality, with qualified, welcoming and responsive care → Number of serious occurrences





infoeycc@dufferincounty.ca

519-941-6991

www.dufferincounty.ca