



Committee Report

CEYD-24-05

To: Chair and Members of the Joint Social Services and Land Ambulance Committee
From: Mandy Koroniak, Director of Children's Early Years
Date: Wednesday, September 11, 2024
Subject: **Early Years Professional Learning Day 2024**

Background:

The recruitment and retention of the Registered Early Childhood Educators (RECEs) and other child care and early years programme staff remains a significant challenge for the sector, at a critical time when Ontario seeks to grow access to licensed child care spaces under the Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care (CWELCC) System.

Access to continuous, paid professional learning opportunities can support workforce retention and recruitment by communicating the importance of the child care and early years workforce to both staff and the public, and enables staff to fully participate in continued professional development. These opportunities support programmes in delivering high-quality care to children, families, and communities by facilitating meaningful, continuous opportunities for educators to develop their skills and strengthen their knowledge and professional practices.

In January 2023, the Children's Early Years division supported all licensed child care and early years service providers in Wellington-Guelph through its first 1-day, system-wide Early Years Professional Learning Day for the sector, funded through the Canada-Ontario Early Childhood Workforce Agreement. Nearly 550 child care and early years educators, supervisors and non-programme staff participated in this day. Many participants shared the ways in which their work was positively impacted by this opportunity, including the following:

"It was inspirational and refreshing to hear all the information today. It reminded me of why I have chose this work and put in the time for the last 18 years"

"I learned about the neuroplasticity of children's brain and that we, as educators have a huge role in helping children to learn how to regulate their emotions and to effectively engage them in learning"

"I feel inspired and motivated to share my learning and lead with it within my programme"

Update:

New professional learning funding was provided to Service System Managers in 2024 under the Ontario Child Care Workforce Strategy, which continues the work that had been previously supported through the Canada-Ontario Early Childhood Workforce Agreement. This funding must be prioritized to provide child care and early years staff and supervisors with the opportunity to participate in one professional learning day.

Through this funding, all child care service providers in the County of Wellington and City of Guelph are being supported to participate in a 1-day, system-wide *Early Years Professional Learning Day* for the child care sector on Friday November 29, 2024. A separate event is planned for EarlyON service providers on October 23, 2024 under the [Infant and Early Years Mental Health: Resources for Early Childhood Education Project CEYD 2024-03](#).

Early Years Professional Learning Day will include a half-day, community-wide professional learning opportunity and a half-day of team-specific learning for programmes. Professional learning themes that are available to programmes include: Inclusion in the Early Years; Play, Provocations, Planning and Pedagogical Documentation and; Outdoor Learning.

Programmes participating in *Early Years Professional Learning Day*, including the County's Directly Operated Child Care Centres, will be closed on November 29, 2024. Parent fees will not be charged on this day and funding will be provided to programmes to cover the costs of waiving parent fees and other eligible expenses.

The Children's Early Years division is pleased to again offer the opportunity for a system-wide professional learning day for licensed child care programmes in Wellington-Guelph. This day will provide a critical support, targeted to the needs of our early years workforce and support overall professional growth and retention in the sector.

Financial Implications:

The professional learning funding allocation to support *Early Years Professional Learning Day* forms part of the 2024 Children's Early Years budget. Allocation of this funding to support the project will fit within that budget and there will be no impact the municipal tax levy.

Strategic Action Plan:

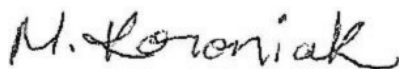
This report relates to the following objectives and priorities in the County's Strategic Action Plan:

- Doing What the County Does Best – Providing Critical Daily Services for Your Residents
- Making the Best Decisions for the Betterment of the Community

Recommendation:

That the Joint Social Services and Land Ambulance Committee recommend to County Council that the report, *Early Years Professional Learning Day 2024*, be received for information.

Respectfully submitted,



Mandy Koroniak
Director of Children's Early Years Division