

EarlyON

Child and Family Centre

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Centre pour l'enfant et la famille

SYSTEM TRANSFORMATION



EarlyON Child and Family Centres

- Access to free, high-quality drop-in programs and a range of services
- Activities for children aged from 0-6 years, that support healthy child development and early learning
- Advice from professionals trained in early childhood development
- Information about family services in the community
- Participants can connect with other families with young children



History



1996



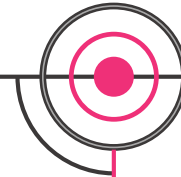
Ministry of Children and Youth Services establishes Family Resource Programs (FRPs).

Ministry of Children and Youth Services funds Ontario Early Years Centres (OEYCs) across province. In Niagara, four agencies operate OEYCs, with service areas delineated by electoral riding.

2002



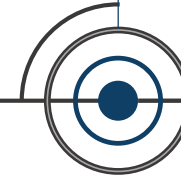
2009



Ministry of Education provides funding to local school board to open Parenting and Family Literacy Centres.

FRPs and OEYCs are transferred to the Ministry of Education.

2010



History



Province wide consultations with families, educators, municipalities, and other key stakeholders to determine the best way to realize vision.

2013

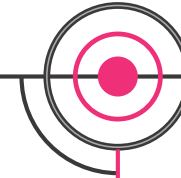


Ministry of Education releases the Ontario Early Years Policy Framework.

2014



2017



Renewed Early Years and Child Care Policy Framework

Transfer of responsibility



February 2016

The Province of Ontario announced the plan to integrate and transform existing child and family programs including:

- Ontario Early Years Centres
- Parenting and Family Literacy Centres
- Family Resource Programs

January 2018

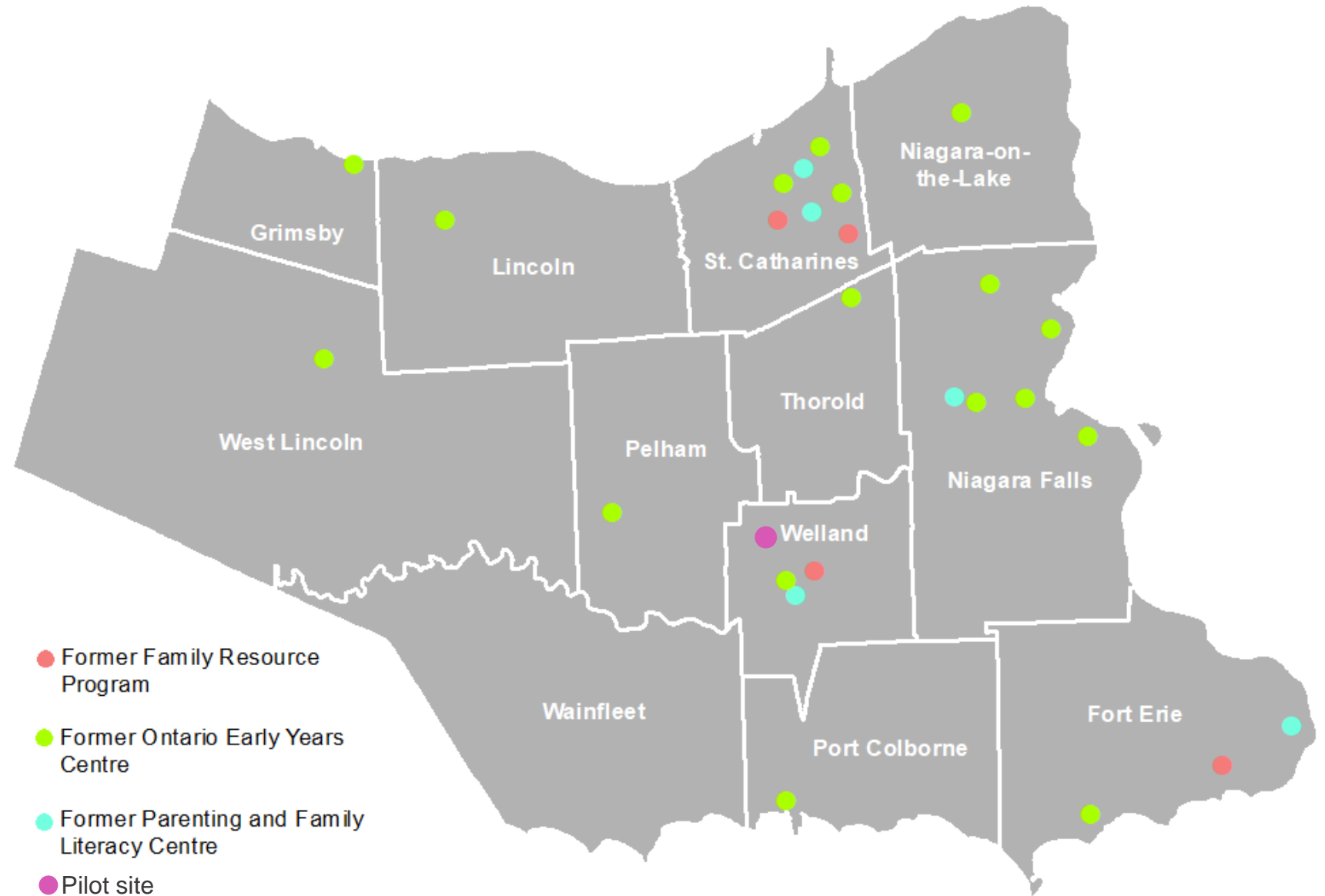
The programs were combined into one program known as EarlyON Child and Family Centres

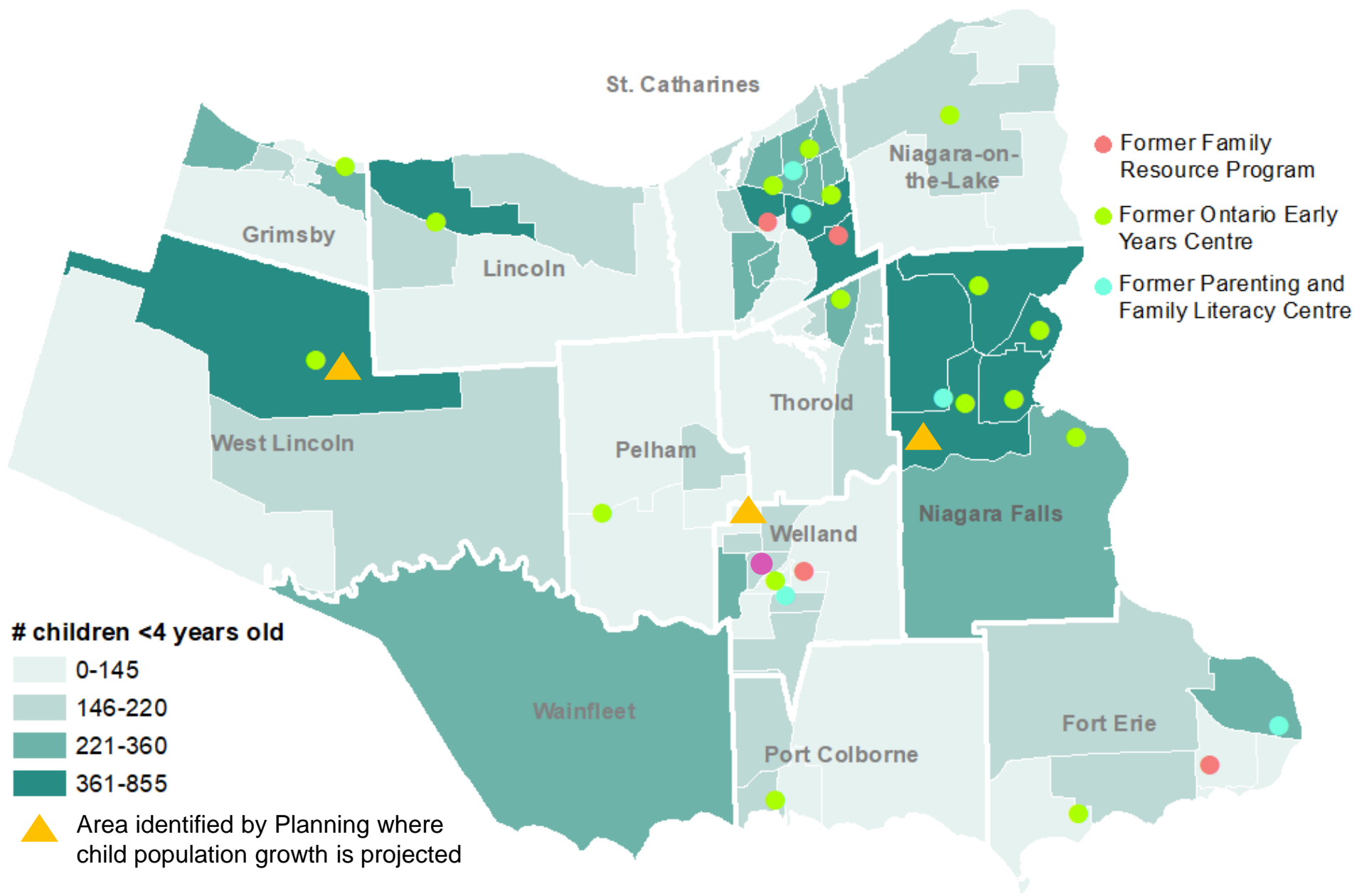
January 2018

Provincial government identified that Niagara Region Children's Services will assume system management responsibility of the EarlyON system.

Current state

- Historically established, three different mandates and funding allocations
- Nine different service providers operating 26 locations across Niagara (+1 pilot site)
- Variable hours, programs and services between locations
- Mandated centres to support specific populations





Population of Children 4 years old and under, with municipal and neighborhood boundaries

Population data source: Statistics Canada 2016 Census of Population

Development of local plan



Conducted a comprehensive local needs assessment and inventory of existing child and family programs and services



Conducted public engagement to inform the planning and delivery of future EarlyON programs and services across Niagara.

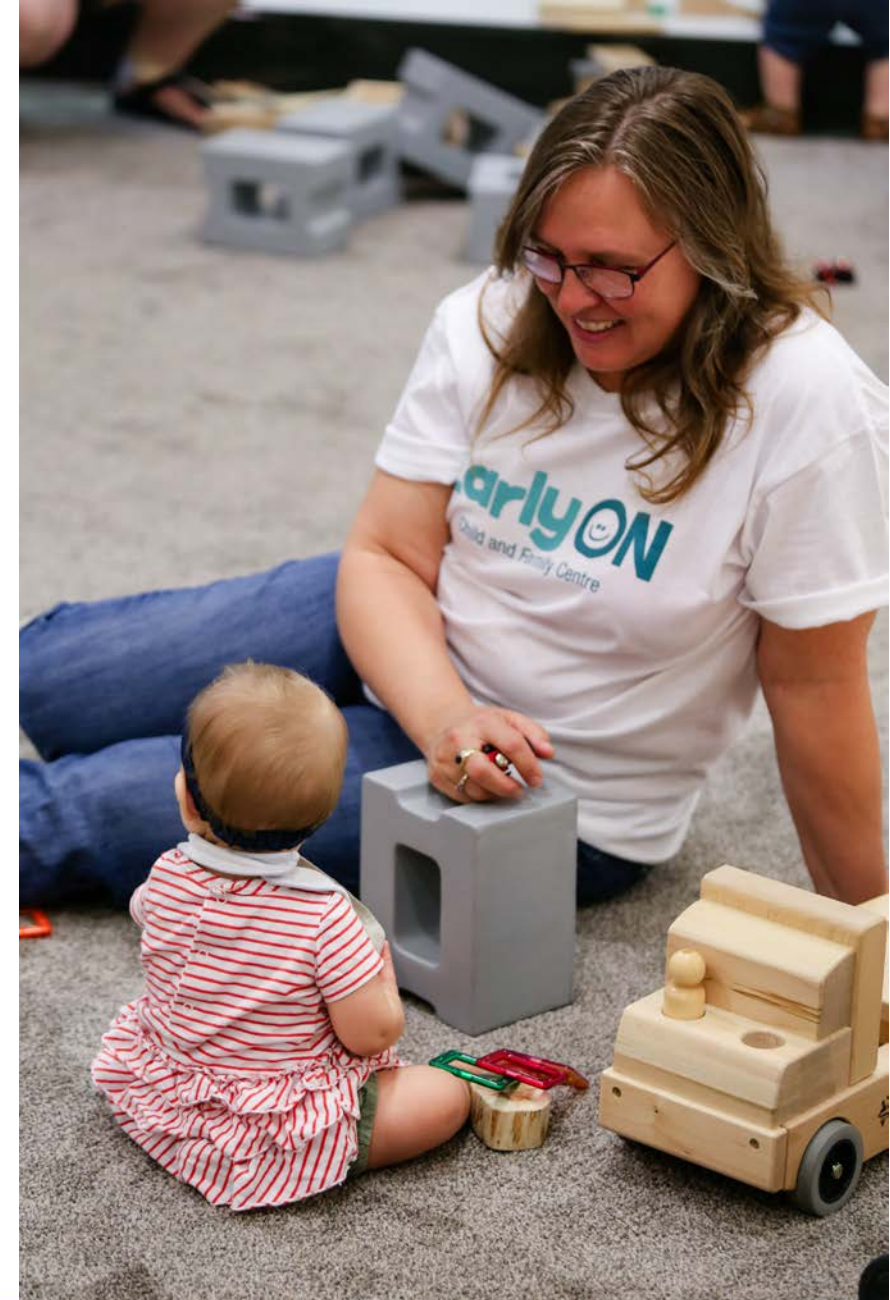


Submitted an EarlyON local system transformation plan to the Ministry of Education



Ministry system expectations

- Integrated and coordinated early child and family system
- Increased early identification of developmental issues, referrals and linkages to specialized supports
- Collaboration with community services
- Increased parent/caregiver awareness, participation and satisfaction
- Continuous community engagement
- Improved child and parent/caregiver outcomes



Local feedback

Based on data from the
Parent/caregiver survey...

**46% of survey respondents had never heard
of centres**

**87% of survey respondents prefer access to
centres year round**

**69% of survey respondents are willing to
drive 15 minutes or more to attend**

**56% of survey respondents would like both
library and Public Health services co-located
with centres**

To build upon our current
strengths, our goals are:

- Increase awareness
- More flexible hours
- Multiple aspects of accessibility and inclusion
- Co-location with existing community hubs



Ongoing planning and engagement

- Facilitated sessions to inform mandatory core services
- Facilitated session for feedback on the methodology used to develop service zones
- Two month check-in at Seaway Mall pilot centre
- Facilitated session for input on the accessibility, quality, affordability and responsiveness of the early learning and child care system
- Focus group sessions to gather information on satellite services
- Pilot project



Strengths of Current System ●●●●●

CHOICE:

Families can attend any EarlyON across Niagara

AFFORDABILITY:

All EarlyON programs are free

VALUED:

Families who attend place a high value on EarlyON services

UNIQUE POPULATIONS:

We serve Indigenous, French language, and vulnerable families

PROFESSIONAL STAFFING:

Qualified teams made up of Registered Early Childhood Educators and additional staff with specialized skill sets

Opportunities through Transformation

- 1 Enhanced system planning
- 2 One service system
- 3 Data collection
- 4 Service delivery options



Pilot Learnings

COMMUNITY HUB LOCATION

Co-location within existing community hub (library, walk-in clinic, other community services)

Outcomes:

- Increased visibility and participation
- Parent survey comments value convenience. 88% access other services. 71% said more likely to attend due to hub location

INCLUSIVE AND ACCESSIBLE

Accessibility of centre
Continuous daytime hours
Evening hours

Outcomes:

- Inclusive space for all families
- Parents and caregivers attended centres open during the lunch hour
- Co-location is critical to viability of evening hours

OFFERING COMMUNAL SPACE TO COMMUNITY PARTNERS

Invite community partners to use communal space

Outcomes:

- Speech Services, Child Care Fee Subsidy
- Public Health Well Baby Clinics and vaccine clinic feedback: all feel service delivery is viable in shared hub location.
- Families stay and play



A new system for Niagara

- Negotiated Request for Proposal
- EarlyON Review Panel
- Successful proponents will be invited to enter into contract negotiations with Niagara Region to operate EarlyON Child and Family Centres across Niagara and participate in the transformation to a new integrated system.



