

Ontario Early Years Child and Family Centres

Needs Assessment and Initial Plan for Perth County



Social Services Department

Serving Perth County, the Town of St. Marys
and the City of Stratford

September 2017

Acknowledgements

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Executive Summary

This report presents a transition plan for the delivery of early years programs in Perth County, the Town of St. Marys, and the City of Stratford (“**Perth County**”) through a new service structure called Ontario Early Years Child and Family Centres (“**Child and Family Centres**”), which come into effect on January 1, 2018.

In preparation for the launch of Child and Family Centres, the Social Services Department of the City of Stratford (“**Service Manager**”) has prepared a comprehensive needs assessment and initial plan which contains:

- Socio-demographic profile of young children (ages 0-6) living in Perth County;
- Examination of the early years programs and services currently offered in Perth County;
- Summary of the community insights and feedback, obtained through an extensive community consultation process; and
- Recommendations for making enhancements to Ministry of Education funded child and family support programs currently offered in the community.

This transition plan will form part of a broader five-year children’s services system plan which will be submitted to the Ministry of Education in 2019.

Background

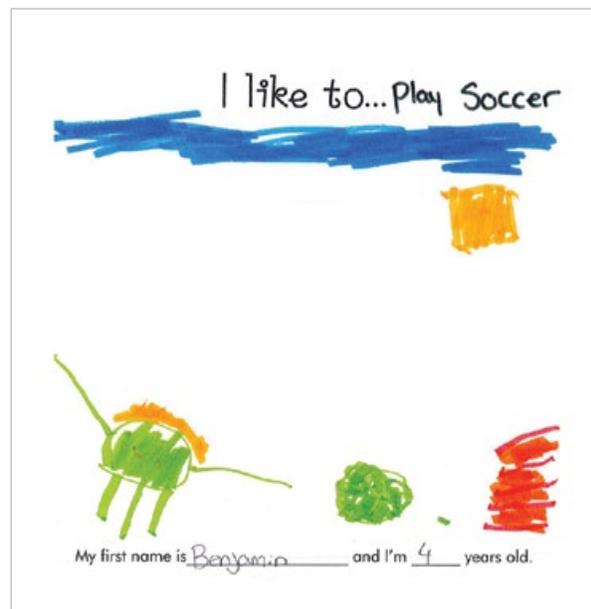
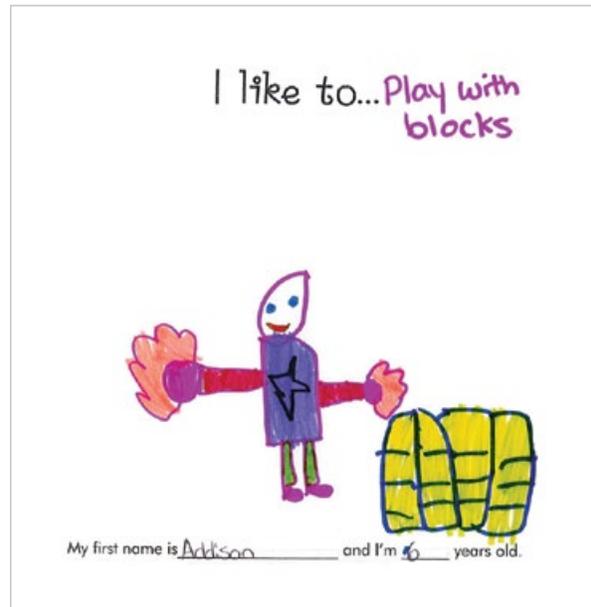
The Ministry of Education has historically funded four child and family programs in the province: Ontario Early Years Centres (OEYCs), Parenting and Family Literacy Centres, Child Care Resource Centres, and Better Beginnings Better Futures programs. These programs have provided beneficial services for families for many years. However, there is limited public awareness of available programs, access barriers, shifting demographics and a lack of consistency in what is available to families across Ontario.

In 2017, the Ministry released Ontario's Renewed Early Years and Child Care Policy Framework, which highlights the following vision:

"All children and families have access to a range of high-quality, inclusive and affordable early years and child care programs and services that are centered around the child and family and contribute to children's learning, development, and well-being."

The integration of the four Ministry-funded child and family programs into a new identity and governance structure called Ontario Early Years Child and Family Centres is intended to help achieve this vision, and further strengthen the continuum of learning for children.

Given the leadership role that Service Managers play in the administration of child care and other human services at the local level, the Social Services Department of the City of Stratford has been assigned the responsibility for developing a local transition plan and overseeing the management of Child and Family Centres in Perth County.



Planning Process

In the spring of 2017, a consulting team with expertise in community planning, facilitation and data-mapping was retained by the Service Manager through a competitive bid process to prepare the needs assessment, facilitate a comprehensive community consultation process, and develop a transition plan.

The process for completing the plan involved:

- Extensive public engagement (community forum, surveys, focus groups, children's drawings) with over 1,300 children, parents, caregivers, and service providers;
- Targeted review of websites and policy documents related to early years programs and services in Ontario;
- Inventory of existing early years and family support programs offered in Perth County;
- Data-mapping and in-depth analysis of available socio-demographic data, healthy child development indicators and OEYC service utilization statistics;
- Key informant interviews with neighbouring Service Managers;
- Numerous site visits and meetings with the staff and Board of Directors of the lead OEYC agency (Perth Care for Kids); and
- Ongoing strategy sessions with the Service Manager.

Early Years Population

According to the 2016 Census, there are approximately 6,400 children (ages 0-6) living in Perth County. This represents 8% of the total population (76,796), compared to 7% for Ontario. One-third of these children reside in Stratford (33%; 2,075), followed by Perth East (22%; 1,385), North Perth (21%; 1,345), West Perth (12%; 790), St. Marys (8%; 525) and Perth South (4%; 265).

There are approximately 900 babies born in Perth County each year. The number of young children living in North Perth is on the rise, while the early years population in Perth South, Stratford, and West Perth is declining.

The community does not have a significant number of French language speakers, new immigrants, or persons who self-identify as being of Indigenous origin. However, the municipalities of Perth East and North Perth are home to several Anabaptist cultural groups. Population estimates produced by local providers indicate that there are more than 5,000 members of the old order Anabaptist cultural groups.

In general, income levels in Perth County are below the provincial medians. However, fewer families in Perth County are living in poverty in comparison to the provincial levels. The exception is North Perth, which has a significantly high poverty rate among young children (ages 0-6) at 28%.

Current Early Years Programs and Services

Since the inception of OEYCs in 2002, Perth Care for Kids has been the service delivery provider. Perth Care for Kids currently operates three fixed early years centres in Perth County – Stratford, West Perth (Mitchell), and North Perth (Listowel). At present, only the Early Years Centres in Stratford and Listowel meet the Ministry’s criteria for Centre-based services. The OEYC in Mitchell houses a toy lending library, resource centre, and administration offices; however, space for drop-in play groups and other programs is only available in the evenings and on the weekends due to the agency’s child care operations.

In addition to Centre-based services, OEYC programs are offered in 26 different satellite locations throughout the county, to facilitate access for families from small towns and rural areas. This includes library branches, community recreation centres, and community rooms in retirement homes.

In 2016-17, a total of 2,126 unique children attended over 45 different OEYC programs and services offered in Perth County. Over the past six years, the number of unique children served has declined by 13% (from 2,432 in 2011-12). However, the number of unique parents/caregivers has remained relatively constant over the same time period - 2,117 in 2011-12 and 2,116 in 2016-17. The decline in the number of children served is probably due to the introduction of full-day kindergarten, which came into effect in 2014. Local providers report that the age range of children attending early years programs has fallen with the introduction of full-time kindergarten.

As part of this needs assessment, a series of maps were prepared that illustrate where users of the OEYCs reside. The maps reveal that several OEYC participants come from neighbouring regions (e.g., Huron County, Waterloo Region, Wellington County, etc.), and that Perth residents are travelling to programs operated by Early Years Centres outside their immediate catchment area. For example, residents of West Perth and St. Marys are participating in programs operated by the Stratford Early Years Centre, and vice versa (Stratford residents are attending programs operated by the West Perth Early Years Centre).

Findings

A variety of public consultation methods were held to better understand how families find out about existing programs and services; why parents and caregivers use these services; who participates and who does not; what are the barriers to accessing services; and where are there service gaps and areas for improvement. In addition, over 200 children submitted colouring pages, illustrating how, what, where and with whom they like to play.

In general, the early years programs and services that are offered by Perth Care for Kids are well liked and appreciated by current participants. Many of the staff have been with the agency for numerous years, and have established strong relationships with participants who use the OEYC programs and services. However, awareness is achieved primarily through word of mouth, there are mixed perceptions of how welcoming the Centres are to outsiders, and the programs are not currently distributed in a manner that meets the socio-demographic needs of the community. Also, several of the programs have limited space capacity and/or specific age criteria which impedes participation by parents and caregivers who are taking care of other children/siblings.

Parents and caregivers report that the most preferred time to attend early years programs is weekday mornings, as most children nap during the afternoons. In addition, parents and caregivers have requested that the Centres remain open over the lunch hour, and for participants to have open access to kitchen facilities to prepare and give their children snacks.

Many community members expressed interest in seeing more structured learning and literacy programs. The curricula of these programs need to be reviewed to determine if they fit with the early years pedagogy - *How Does Learning Happen?* There is also a need to increase community awareness and understanding about the benefits of this pedagogical approach.

Recommendations

The Child and Family Centres in Perth County will offer a range of programs and services for children (ages 0-6) and their parents/caregivers, to foster the four foundational conditions that are important for early learning and development: belonging, well-being, engagement, and expression. This includes:

- Drop-in play groups consistent with early years pedagogy;
- Pre and postnatal support programs;
- Targeted outreach to specific population groups (e.g., Indigenous, low-income, Anabaptist populations, etc.);
- Information sharing about healthy child development and available community resources (ages 0-6 and beyond); and
- Facilitating connections to specialized community services, as necessary.



As per the Ministry guidelines, all services will be provided at no fee to program participants and will be delivered by qualified teams, which will include at least one Registered Early Childhood Educator (RECE).

The plan describes how early years programs and services will be delivered beginning in January 2018, and how the system will be transitioned over the course of the year to achieve the intended outcomes. The 36 recommendations detailed in the report are categorized into the following 11 themes:

1. Children's services planning and coordination
2. Program locations for permanent and satellite sites
3. Virtual services and resources
4. Service providers
5. Qualifications of Early Years Professionals
6. Early literacy
7. Toy lending library
8. French language services
9. Indigenous programs and services
10. Branding and public awareness
11. Monitoring and evaluation

Overall, it is recommended that the City of Stratford take a phased-in approach to the implementation of the new system to minimize any disruptions to children, families, caregivers and staff, as summarized in the following table.

| | |
|---|--|
| <p>Implementation Phase 1 (Jan – Jun 2018)</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enter into a provisional 6-month purchase of service agreement with Perth Care for Kids. • Renew the lease agreements with the Falstaff Family Centre and North Perth – Spinrite Child and Family Centre. • Update the City of Stratford’s website to include key messages about the transition plan, and provide Perth Care for Kids with key messages and Q&As to handle inquiries from parents and caregivers. • Establish a new position responsible for system-wide coordination of the early years programs. • Issue an RFP for the delivery of mandatory core programs and services (to take effect July 1, 2018, to December 31, 2019). • Implement the recommendations from the provincial branding strategy and marketing campaign, and develop a complementary communications and community relations strategy for Perth County. • Explore the feasibility of accessing the Early Years Capital Program (EYCP) to create a new Child and Family Centre in Stratford, and reconfigure the Centre in North Perth. • Consider the role the Perth Service Integration Committee could play in supporting the Service Manager with ongoing planning and evaluation of early years services. |
| <p>Implementation Phase 2 (Jul – Sep 2018)</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure all programs and services are delivered by qualified Early Years Professionals. • Explore opportunities to improve the efficiency of the delivery of outreach programs. • Begin transitioning the days, times and locations programs are offered, in accordance with community need and demand. • Establish one interactive, central website where families can easily find information, tools, and resources on early years programs in Perth County (including child care resources). |
| <p>Implementation Phase 3 (Fall 2018 – Dec 2019)</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Redesign and begin publishing new program calendars, ensuring that they are more easily searchable by service location and that they contain information on all available early years programs offered in the community. • Review programs and services to ensure they are consistent with the early years pedagogy – <i>How Does Learning Happen?</i> • Explore opportunities to expand and enhance programs and services, and pilot new programs. • Hold regular professional learning and development workshops to enhance the knowledge and expertise of Early Years Professionals. • Continue to engage children, parents, caregivers, and community partners in program monitoring and evaluation activities. |

I like to...
play hockey.



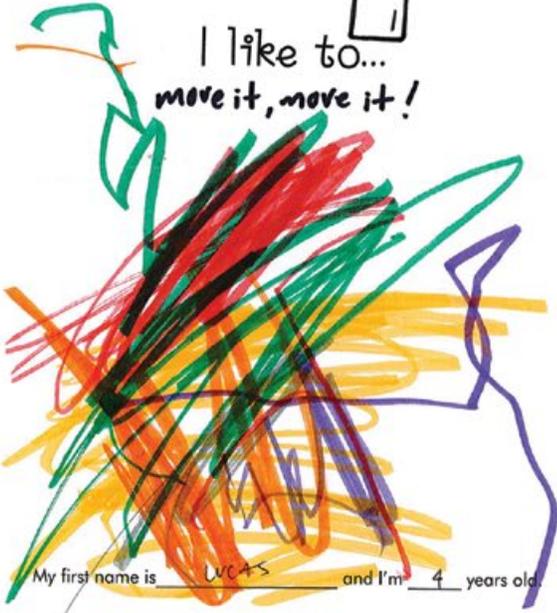
My first name is Myles and I'm 5 years old.

I like to...
eat ice cream
with Mom



My first name is Fran and I'm 4 years old.

I like to...
move it, move it!



My first name is Lucas and I'm 4 years old.

I like to... play with
my baby sister.



My first name is Sophie and I'm 6 years old.

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1. Introduction

The Social Services Department of the City of Stratford (“**Service Manager**”) is pleased to present this initial road map for making enhancements to the Ministry of Education funded early years programs currently offered in Perth County, the Town of St. Marys, and the City of Stratford (“**Perth County**”).

In preparation for the introduction of Ontario Early Years Child and Family Centres (“**Child and Family Centres**”) in January 2018, the Service Manager has prepared a comprehensive needs assessment and initial plan which contains:

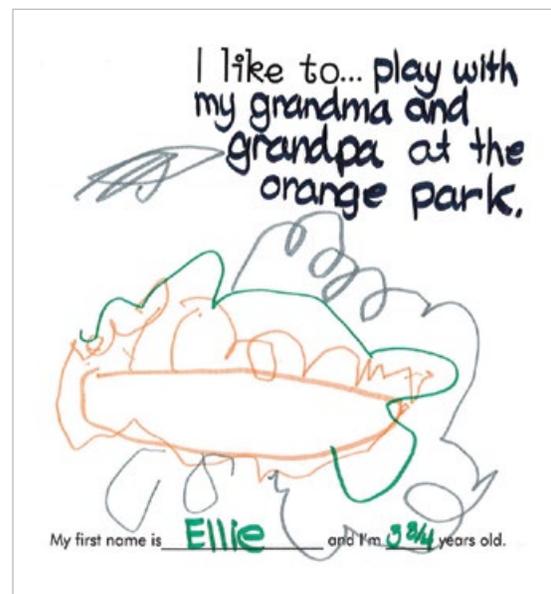
- Socio-demographic profile of young children (ages 0-6) living in Perth County;
- Examination of the early years programs and services currently offered in Perth County;
- Summary of the community insights and feedback, obtained through an extensive community consultation process; and
- Recommendations regarding the delivery of Ministry of Education funded child and family support programs.



The recommendations follow the Ministry of Education’s Planning, Business Practices and Funding Guidelines for Service System Managers, which are outlined in **section 3**.

This transition plan will form part of a broader five-year children’s services system plan which will be submitted to the Ministry of Education in 2019.

Thank you to all of the children, families, caregivers, and service providers who completed surveys and participated in the consultation process. The plan would not have been possible without the valuable insight and feedback of all participants.





2. The Early Years

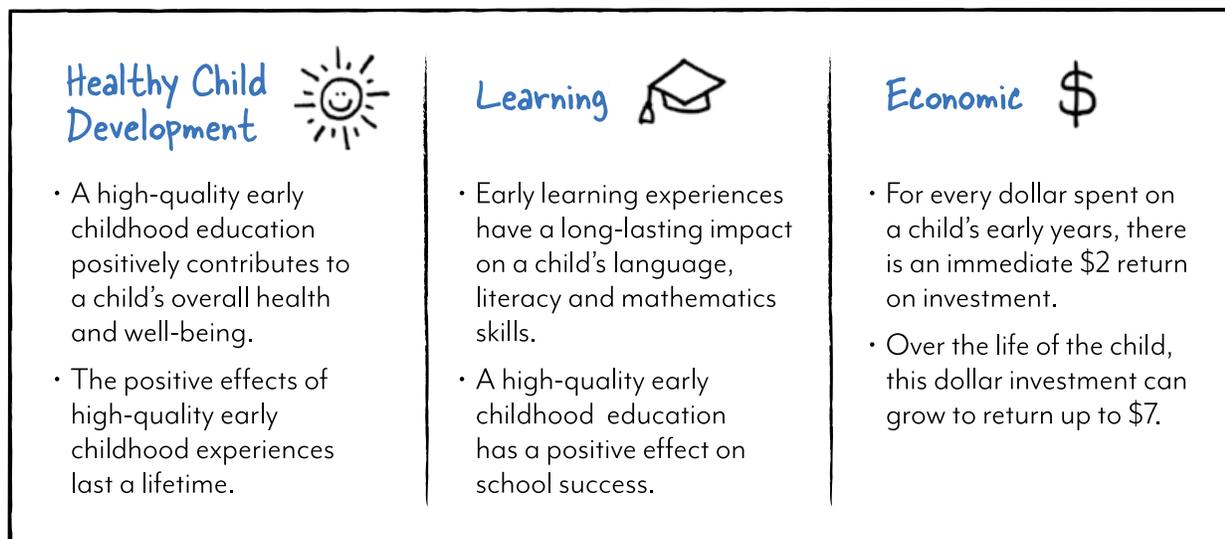
2.1 Why are the Early Years Important?

Children's early experiences (i.e., the bonds they form with their parents and their first learning experiences) deeply affect their future health (physical and mental), behaviors and life-long learning skills. Research on developmental neurobiology has proven that the first six years of a child's life are extremely formative.¹ Child development experts recommend that children be provided with inclusive, caring environments that foster learning through exploration, play, and inquiry. Devoting resources to programs that support very young children is one of the best investments governments can make to ensure a prosperous and sustainable society. When children succeed, the whole community succeeds.²

¹ Mustard, J.F. 2010. Early brain development and human development. Toronto, ON: Council for Early Child Development.

² Encyclopedia of Early Childhood Development. 2011. Importance of early childhood development. Quebec: Centre of Excellence for Early Childhood Development (CEECD) and Strategic Knowledge Cluster on Early Childhood Development (SKC-ECD).
[web resource] <http://www.child-encyclopedia.com/importance-early-childhood-development/introduction>.

Figure 1 - Health, Learning, and Economic Outcomes of Positive Early Years Experiences



Source: Ontario’s Renewed Early Years and Child Care Policy Framework, 2017.



2.2 Vision and Guiding Principles

Child and Family Centres are intended to support all children, parents, and caregivers in learning, growing and connecting – together. This aligns with the Ontario Ministry of Education’s renewed vision for the early years and child care:

“All children and families have access to a range of high-quality, inclusive and affordable early years and child care programs and services that are centered on the child and family and contribute to children’s learning, development, and well-being.”³

To support this renewed vision, it is expected that communities will be guided by the following **six principles** when developing, delivering and evaluating Child and Family Centre programs and services as outlined in **Figure 2**.

³ Ontario Ministry of Education. 2017. Ontario Early Years Child and Family Centres – Business Practices and Funding Guidelines for Service System Managers. Toronto, ON: Ministry of Education.

Figure 2 - Guiding Principles for Ontario Early Years Child and Family Centres

Guiding Principles for Ontario Early Years Child and Family Centres



1. Child and Family Centered

All programs and services are designed and delivered to meet the unique needs of parents, caregivers and young children to support their learning, development, and well-being.



2. Welcoming

Child and Family Centres provide a warm and welcoming environment based on the foundational conditions for supporting growth and long-term success - belonging, well-being, engagement, and expression.



3. High-Quality

Programs and services are designed to support positive experiences and outcomes, and foster nurturing relationships between children, parents, and caregivers, based on the latest evidence and research.



4. Inclusive

Programs and services are accessible and responsive to children, parents, and caregivers with varying abilities and cultural, language, socio-economic, sexual orientation and religious backgrounds.



5. Integrated

Programs and services are developed, coordinated and delivered in a cohesive manner in collaboration with broader community services (e.g., school boards, early years partners, primary care providers, etc.) and parents and caregivers.



6. Community Led

Communities, educators, parents, and caregivers are engaged in designing Child and Family Centre programs and services that embrace and build on their strengths, address identified gaps and meet their unique needs.



3. Provincial Framework for Child and Family Centres

3.1 Background

The Ministry of Education has historically funded four child and family programs in the province: Ontario Early Years Centres (OEYCs); Parenting and Family Literacy Centres; Child Care Resource Centres; and Better Beginnings Better Futures programs. These programs have provided beneficial services for families for many years, such as play groups, early literacy programs, parenting resources and workshops, pre and postnatal support programs, and information and referrals to other service providers. However, there is limited public awareness of available programs, access barriers, shifting demographics and a lack of consistency in what is available to families across Ontario.



In 2016, the Ministry of Education announced its intention to integrate the four provincially-funded child and family programs into a new identity and governance structure called **Child and Family Centres**, in order to:

- Ensure that all children and their parents/caregivers have access to high-quality, inclusive, play and inquiry-based learning opportunities;
- Enhance public awareness of available early years programs and services;
- Address community needs, changing demographics, and systemic access barriers by particular population groups (e.g., low-income families, teen parents, Indigenous families and other cultural groups, etc.); and
- Confirm that programs are reflective of current research and best practices - *How Does Learning Happen? Ontario's Pedagogy for the Early Years*.⁴

Given the leadership role that Consolidated Municipal Service Managers (“**Service Manager**”) across Ontario play in the administration of child care and other human services at the local level, Service Managers were assigned the responsibility for developing plans and ensuring that the new Child and Family Centres meet the Ministry’s vision and guidelines.

For Perth County, the Town of St. Marys and the City of Stratford, the Social Services Department of the City of Stratford is the designated Service Manager responsible for overseeing the administration of the new Child and Family Centres structure.

3.2 Core Services

Child and Family Centres will offer a range of programs and services for young children (ages 0-6), parents and caregivers, which foster the four foundational conditions that are important for early learning and development - belonging, well-being, engagement, and expression. See **Figure 2** for a list of mandatory core services that will be provided at no fee to program participants.

These core services will be designed and delivered in ways that are responsive to local community needs, in accordance with the Ministry’s guidelines. Wherever possible, engagement with parents and caregivers will occur with children present.

⁴ Ontario Ministry of Education. 2014. *How Does Learning Happen? Ontario's Pedagogy for the Early Years*. Toronto, ON: Queen's Printer for Ontario.

Figure 3 - Mandatory Core Services Offered by Ontario Early Years Child and Family Centres

Mandatory Core Services Offered by Ontario Early Years Child and Family Centres

Engaging Parents and Caregivers



- Conversations and information sharing about child development, parenting, nutrition, play and inquiry-based learning, and other topics that support their role;
- Pre and postnatal support programs which enhance parent and caregiver well-being, enrich adult-child interactions and support them in their role(s); and
- Targeted outreach opportunities designed for parents and caregivers who could benefit from Child and Family Centre programs and services but are not currently accessing services for a variety of reasons (e.g., newcomers, teen parents, low-income families, etc.).

Supporting Early Learning and Development



- Drop-in programs and services which build responsive adult-child relationships and encourage children's exploration, play, and inquiry, supported by early years pedagogy.

Making Connections for Families



- Responding to parent/caregiver concerns about their child's development through conversations and observations which can be supported by validated tools and resources (e.g., developmental surveillance, Nipissing District Developmental Screen, etc.);
- Facilitating connections with specialized community services, such as pre-school speech and language, public health, education, child care, and child welfare, as appropriate; and
- Sharing information about programs and services available for the whole family beyond the early years.

3.3 Planning Guidelines

OBJECTIVES

The provincial guidelines require that Child and Family Centre programs and services must be designed and delivered to achieve the following key goals and objectives:^{5,6}

- Parents and caregivers have access to high-quality services that support them in their role as children’s first teachers, enhance their well-being, and enrich their knowledge about early learning and development;
- Children have access to play and inquiry-based learning opportunities and experience positive developmental health and well-being;
- Parents and caregivers have opportunities to strengthen their relationships with their children;
- Francophone children and families have access to French language programs and gain enhanced knowledge about language and identity acquisition;
- Indigenous children and families have access to culturally responsive programming;
- Parents and caregivers are provided with timely, relevant and up to date information about community and specialized services; and
- Local service providers collaborate and integrate services to meet community needs in an efficient and accessible way.

MUNICIPAL ROLE

The Service Manager has been given the flexibility to deliver Child and Family Centre programs and services through a variety of methods including centres, mobile services, virtual hubs and local phone lines. Child and Family Centre programs and services may be offered in a variety of community-based locations (e.g., schools, recreation centres, common areas within multi-residential buildings, etc.), but must not take place within individual homes. Whenever possible, the Ministry of Education encourages the use of a **schools-first approach** in alignment with other child care and early years initiatives, to help support positive and smooth transitions for young children.

The Service Manager has also been given the flexibility to offer Child and Family Centre programs and services directly or through the purchase of service agreements with publicly-funded school boards and not-for-profit organizations. School boards and local service providers funded through purchase of service agreements must follow the Ministry of Education’s requirements for Child and Family Centres.

⁵ Ontario Ministry of Education. 2016. Ontario Early Years Child and Family Centres – Planning Guidelines for Service System Managers. Toronto, ON: Ministry of Education.

⁶ Ontario Ministry of Education. 2017. Ontario Early Years Child and Family Centres – Business Practices and Funding Guidelines for Service System Managers. Toronto, ON: Ministry of Education.

STAFFING

As per the Ministry guidelines, the Service Manager is required to ensure that qualified staff teams are responsible for delivering mandatory core programs and services at every Centre. Qualified teams must include at least one Registered Early Childhood Educator (RECE). RECEs have specialized knowledge and expertise related to child development and play and inquiry-based learning that is essential for delivering high-quality early years programs and services.

3.4 Planning and Implementation Timelines

The following is a list of key planning and implementation dates from the Ministry of Education.

| | |
|--------------------|--|
| February 19, 2016 | Announcement by the Minister of Education of the provincial plan for moving forward with the integration and transformation of child and family programs to establish Child and Family Centres by 2018 |
| July 2016 | Publication of the Planning Guidelines for Service Managers by the Ministry |
| January 1, 2017 | Transfer of funding for data analysis services to Service Managers across Ontario |
| April 12, 2017 | Extension by the Ministry of the deadline for the submission of transition plans from May 31 to September 29 |
| June 6, 2017 | Publication of Ontario's Renewed Early Years and Child Care Policy Framework |
| June 16, 2017 | Announcement of the new funding approach and allocations for Service Managers by the Ministry |
| July 2017 | Publication of the Business Practices and Funding Guidelines for Service Managers by the Ministry |
| September 29, 2017 | Revised submission due date for needs assessment summaries and initial plans |
| 2018 | Phased-in implementation of Child and Family Centres across Ontario (see section 8 – recommendations for details) |
| 2019 | Development of a five-year children's services system plan |

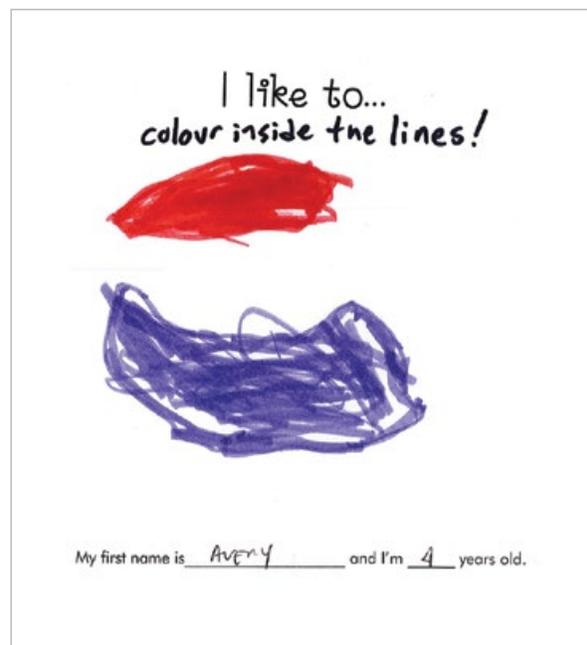


4. Approach

4.1 Planning Process

The Service Manager launched the needs assessment process in the fall of 2016. To begin with, the Service Manager conducted a broad-based parent/caregiver survey, and held a community forum with Kids First, the children's services planning network for Huron County and Perth County.⁷

In the spring of 2017, a consulting team with expertise in community planning, facilitation and data-mapping was retained by the Service Manager through a competitive bid process to prepare the needs assessment, facilitate a comprehensive community consultation process, and develop a multi-year implementation plan.⁸



⁷ The survey and community forum were conducted by Beth Blowes & Associates.

⁸ The consulting team was led by Eden Grodzinski of JPMC.

All told, the transition planning process involved:

- Extensive community consultations (see **section 4.2**);
- Targeted review of websites and policy documents related to early years programs and services in Ontario;
- Inventory of existing early years and family support programs offered in Perth County;
- Data-mapping and in-depth analysis of available socio-demographic data, healthy child development indicators and OEYC service utilization statistics;
- Key informant interviews with neighbouring Service Managers;
- Numerous site visits and meetings with the staff and Board of Directors of the lead OEYC agency (Perth Care for Kids); and
- Ongoing strategy sessions with the Service Manager.

For a list of the planning assumptions and decision-making criteria that informed the needs assessment and initial plan for Perth, please refer to **Appendix A**.

4.2 Community Engagement

CHILDREN

In recognition that “children are competent, capable of complex thinking, curious, and rich in potential,”⁹ and that the focus of this plan is on providing services for young children (ages 0-6), a great effort was made to engage very young children. Children attending programs at the Early Years Centres, licensed child care centres, and Children’s Aid Society between July 31 and August 11, 2017 were invited to draw a picture that expressed: “I like to...” In total, 203 children ages 4 months to 6 years participated in this consultation process: 54% at a child care centre and 46% at an OEYC. The drawings that were received from these children is peppered throughout this report.

PARENTS AND CAREGIVERS

As mentioned above, one of the key objectives of Child and Family Centres is to ensure that parents and caregivers have access to high-quality services that support them in their role as children’s first teachers, enhance their well-being, and enrich their knowledge about early learning and development. Input and feedback from parents and caregivers were obtained through two methods: a broad-based community survey (fall 2016), and pop-up focus groups and conversations at existing early years and family support programs (spring 2017). This local engagement provided tremendous insight into how the current early years system is meeting the needs of Perth families and where there is an opportunity for improvement.

⁹ Ontario Ministry of Education. 2014. *How Does Learning Happen? Ontario’s Pedagogy for the Early Years*. Toronto, ON: Queen’s Printer for Ontario.

Community Survey

Between October 29 and November 18, 2016, parents and caregivers were invited to respond to an on-line questionnaire. The survey contained 12 questions probing parents and caregivers' experiences with the OEYC and other children's programs, as well as the types of programs their children would like to try. A web link to the survey was posted on the City of Stratford website, and promoted by Perth Care for Kids, local child care centres, and other community agencies. Paper copies of the survey were also available. A total of 1,005 individuals responded throughout Perth County; 85% of respondents identified themselves as parents, 6% as caregivers, and 9% as both.

Pop-up Focus Groups

During March and April 2017, the consulting team toured and visited the three Early Years Centres – West Perth, North Perth, and Stratford – operated by Perth Care for Kids, including three of their mobile programs:

- Family Time (Listowel)
- Play & Learn (St. Marys)
- Toddler Time (Mitchell)

Also, the team visited five different targeted outreach programs operated by other community partners:

- Amish Family Play Group (Milbank)
- Crossing Bridges (Stratford)
- English as a Second Language (ESL) program for Low German-Speaking Mennonites (Poole)
- Loving Spoonfuls (Stratford)
- Small Wonders (Stratford)

Through these site visits, the consultants observed over 120 children playing, and held conversations with 41 parents/caregivers probing:

- How did you find out about this program?
- In what ways has this program been beneficial to you?
- What do you like most about this program?
- What could we do to improve this program?

SERVICE PROVIDERS

The community engagement process also involved extensive consultations with local service providers working in the early years sector. All told, the consulting team held 10 community meetings, connecting with the staff and board members of 40 local organizations. Please see **Appendix B** for a detailed list of community meeting dates and participating organizations.

4.3 Data Mapping and Analysis

This report uses data gathered from a variety of sources including Statistics Canada, the Offord Centre for Child Studies, City of Stratford Social Services Department, Perth Care for Kids, and the Perth District Health Unit.

Socio-demographic and service utilization data were mapped using Geographical Information System (GIS) software, in conjunction with the location of the Early Years Centre fixed and satellite locations, as well as schools and other community facilities to identify the most effective way to deliver services. Various maps have been produced at the smallest possible scale which meets federal and provincial legislation regarding data and health privacy.¹⁰ Every attempt has been made to produce maps at the dissemination area (DA) level.¹¹ Where this could not be accommodated, data mapping occurred at the next highest level of geography. For additional details regarding the mapping methodology, please refer to **Appendix C**.

¹⁰ Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act (PIPEDA) and Ontario's Personal Health Information Protection Act, 2004 (PHIPA)

¹¹ All of Canada is divided into dissemination areas (DAs) - small geographic areas which respect the boundaries of Census Subdivisions and roads. Each DA contains a population of 400 to 700 persons.



5. Community Maps and Socio-Demographic Profiles

This section of the report presents a comprehensive overview of available socio-demographic data related to young children (0-6 years of age) living in Perth County. The information and maps provide a visual representation of the geographic distribution and make-up of children and families living in the community, providing essential context for the recommendations that follow.

5.1 Rural Context

Perth County is a vibrant agricultural community located in the centre of southwestern Ontario. It encompasses 2,219 square kilometers of land and is comprised of six municipalities: North Perth, Perth East, Perth South, St. Marys, Stratford and West Perth.

The total population of Perth County is 76,796, two-thirds of which dispersed among five population centres (see **Table 1**).¹² The remainder of residents (32%) live in rural areas and small villages.

¹² Statistics Canada. 2017. Perth, CTY [Census division], Ontario and Ontario [Province] (table). Census Profile. 2016 Census. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 98-316-X2016001. Ottawa. Released August 2, 2017.

Table 1 - Top 5 Population Centres in Perth County, 2016

| Population Centre | Total Population | 0-4 Population |
|-------------------|------------------|----------------|
| Stratford | 31,465 | 1,400 |
| Listowel | 7,530 | 490 |
| St. Marys | 7,265 | 345 |
| Mitchell | 4,573 | 270 |
| Milverton | 1,576 | 115 |

Source: Statistics Canada, 2016 Census

AMENITIES

The rural environment that characterizes Perth County is central to how residents access services and programs for children. Low population density means that it is not financially viable to establish full-service organizations like Early Years Centres throughout the County, and so the majority of amenities for children (e.g., health and social services) are located in Stratford and Listowel. To date, mobile early years programs are offered in a variety of locations, such as churches, libraries, recreation centres and parks. For more details on the community amenities available in each municipality, please refer to **Appendix E - Municipal Maps and Profiles**.

TRANSPORTATION

Transportation to services is a key issue. Due to the geographic spread of the community, travelling between destinations can be quite time-consuming, particularly in winter (e.g., it takes about an hour to travel by car from St. Marys in the south to Listowel in the north). The City of Stratford is currently the only municipality with public transportation. Consequently, the majority of people depend on personal vehicles for transportation.

Furthermore, there is a significant presence of Anabaptist cultural groups residing in Perth East and North Perth which continue to travel by horse and buggy. For children and families belonging to the more conservative groups (i.e., Old Order Amish, Old Order Mennonite and Independent Old Order – David Martin – Mennonite), it can take over an hour to travel by horse and buggy to existing play groups in locations like Milbank from their family farms. Accessing specialized services in urban centres is challenging for this community.

5.2 Early Years Population

BIRTH RATE

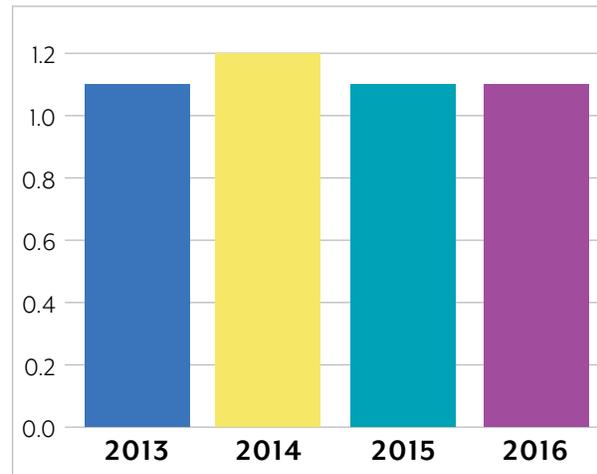
The birth rate (i.e., the total number of live births per 1,000 of a population in a year) observed by the Healthy Babies, Healthy Children (HBHC), program for Perth County is 1.1 (2016). This rate has remained fairly constant over the past four years — see **Figure 4**.

An analysis of the number of births observed by the HBHC program reveals a variation in comparison to the reported population of the same ages for the 2016 Census. The Census numbers are higher for all municipalities. The variation may be due to migration, or if parents decline public health services, their babies would not be screened through the HBHC program. For this need assessment, the 2016 Census has been used.

The 2016 Census of the population illustrates that there are about 900 children in each one-year cohort between 0 and 6 years of age — see **Figure 5**.

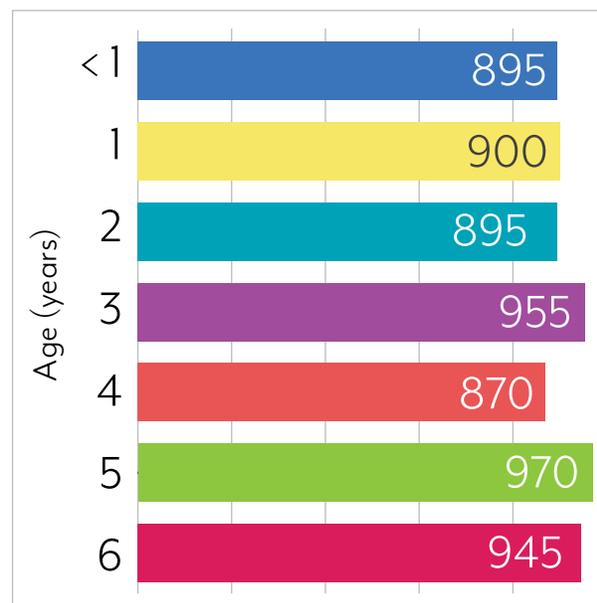


Figure 4 - Birth Rate in Perth County, 2013-16



Source: Healthy Babies, Healthy Children, Perth District Health Unit, 2017

Figure 5 - Number of Children Ages 0-6 in Perth County, 2016



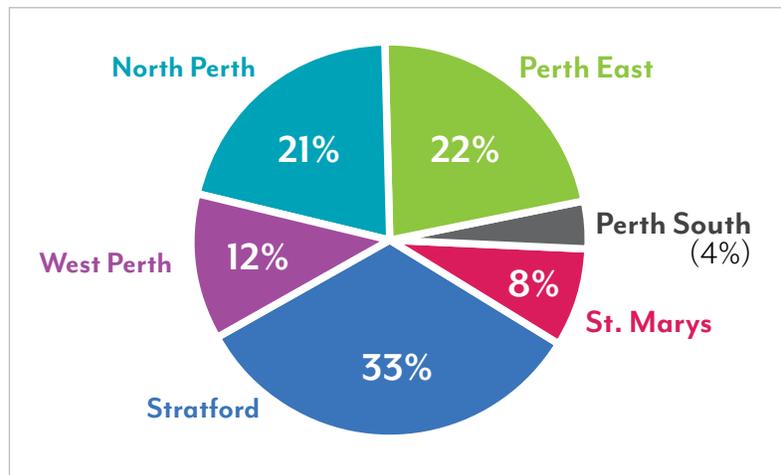
Source: Statistics Canada, 2016 Census



POPULATION SIZE

According to the 2016 Census, there are approximately 6,400 young children (ages 0-6) living in Perth County. This represents 8% of the total population (76,796), compared to 7% for Ontario. As illustrated in **Figure 6**, one-third of these children reside in Stratford, followed by Perth East (22%), North Perth (21%), West Perth (12%), St. Marys (8%) and Perth South (4%).

Figure 6 - Distribution of Children Ages 0-6 in Perth, 2016

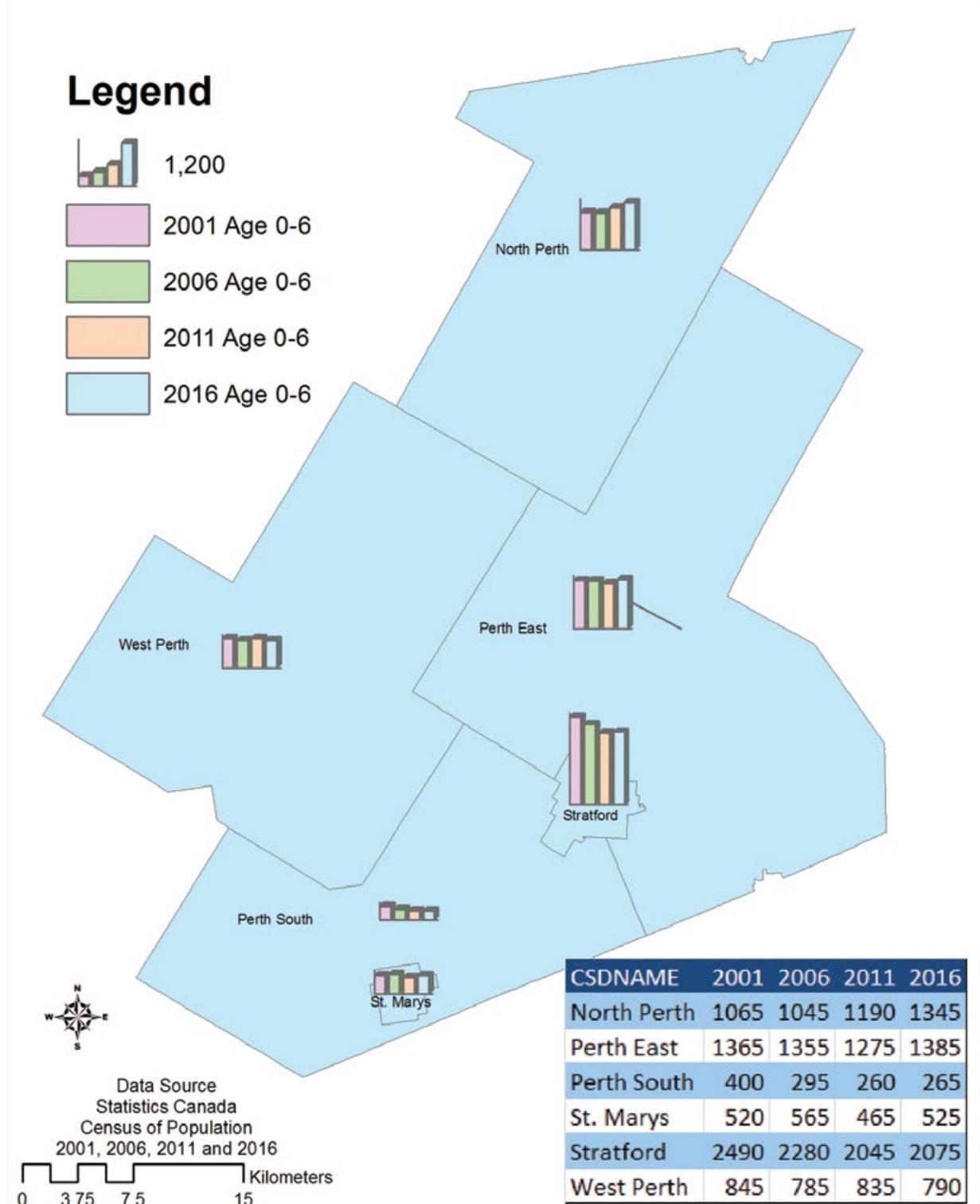


Source: Statistics Canada, 2016 Census

POPULATION CHANGE

Since the inception of Early Years Centres in 2002, the number of young children living in North Perth has increased substantially (26% between 2001 and 2016), while the early years population in Perth South, Stratford, and West Perth have declined by 34%, 17%, and 7% respectively. See **Figure 7** for detail.

Figure 7 - Population Change for Children Ages 0-6 by Census Subdivision in Perth County, 2001-16



POPULATION DISTRIBUTION AND DENSITY

Figure D1 in Appendix D illustrates the distribution of young children (ages 0-6) in Perth County, in comparison to the locations of the current Early Years Centres. The map shows that the areas of the county with the highest concentration of very young children are Perth East and the outskirts of Stratford and Listowel. The distribution of young families at the borders of the top three population centres – Stratford, Listowel, and St. Marys - is most likely related to new housing development.

5.3 Language and Cultural Diversity

LANGUAGE

The majority of residents of Perth County speak English. The most current Census data about language reveals that 465 persons (0.6% of the total population) have a mother tongue of French, and only 95 individuals (0.1%) speak French at home (2011 Census).¹³ Mother tongue refers to the first language learned and is often the basis for cultural identity. There are currently no French language schools in Perth County, and the Service Manager has not been designated to provide services in French.

The top non-official language spoken at home is German. Over 3,700 residents (5%) report German to be their home language, and 1,980 residents (3%) speak it most often home. The local Anabaptist communities likely contribute to the high percentage of low German and Pennsylvania Dutch-speaking residents, as evidenced in **Figure D2 in Appendix D** which shows a high concentration of non-official language speakers in Perth East and North Perth.

INDIGENOUS POPULATION

According to the 2011 National Household Survey (NHS), less than 1% of Perth's population (645 individuals) self-identify as Indigenous. Two-thirds of these individuals reside in Stratford (see **Figure D3 in Appendix D**). There is no Indigenous reserve in the area.

Although the Indigenous population of Perth is small, the proportion of very young children in the community is almost double the provincial average – 16% of Perth's Indigenous population is aged 0-4 (100 children), as compared to 8% in Ontario.

IMMIGRANTS

Less than 10% of the population of Perth County is foreign-born. Many of these individuals have lived in Canada for many years, while others are relative newcomers. A total of 900 individuals living in Perth immigrated to Canada between 2001 and 2011 (see **Figure D4 in Appendix D**). These recent immigrants make up 15% of the total foreign-born population, and 1% of the total population.

¹³ Statistics Canada. 2013. National Household Survey Profile. 2011 Census. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 99-004-XWE. Ottawa. Released June 26, 2013.

ANABAPTIST COMMUNITIES

Perth County is home to a number of Anabaptist cultural groups: Old Order Amish, Old Order Mennonite, Amish Mennonite, Conservative/Markham Mennonite, and Church of God in Christ Mennonite, Independent Old Order (David Martin) Mennonites, and Low German-Speaking Mennonites from Mexico. Each of these cultural groups is unique.

Local providers question whether the Anabaptist cultural groups are appropriately included in Statistics Canada's Census data. Population estimates conducted by local researchers indicate that there are more than 5,000 members of the old order Anabaptist cultural groups and that the size of the Anabaptist population doubles every 20 years, whereas the mainstream population doubles every 100 years.

Family size varies, with averages ranging from four to six children per family. Children typically start school when they are six. Generally speaking, children do not speak English until they start school. Parenting styles are passed from one generation to the next. Parents try to set a good example for their children. Harsh talk is rare and rules are clearly defined. Most children will seem particularly quiet. In time, as children become more comfortable with Early Years Professionals, they will become more animated.¹⁴

5.4 Economic Security

Income shapes overall living conditions and is one of the key social determinants of health. Research shows that the effects of living in poverty are detrimental to child development and learning (e.g., quality of diet, access to extracurricular learning experiences, parental depression, instability of residence, etc.) and that these issues are complicated in rural communities.¹⁵ The longer children live under conditions of material and social deprivation, the more likely they are to show adverse health and developmental outcomes.¹⁶

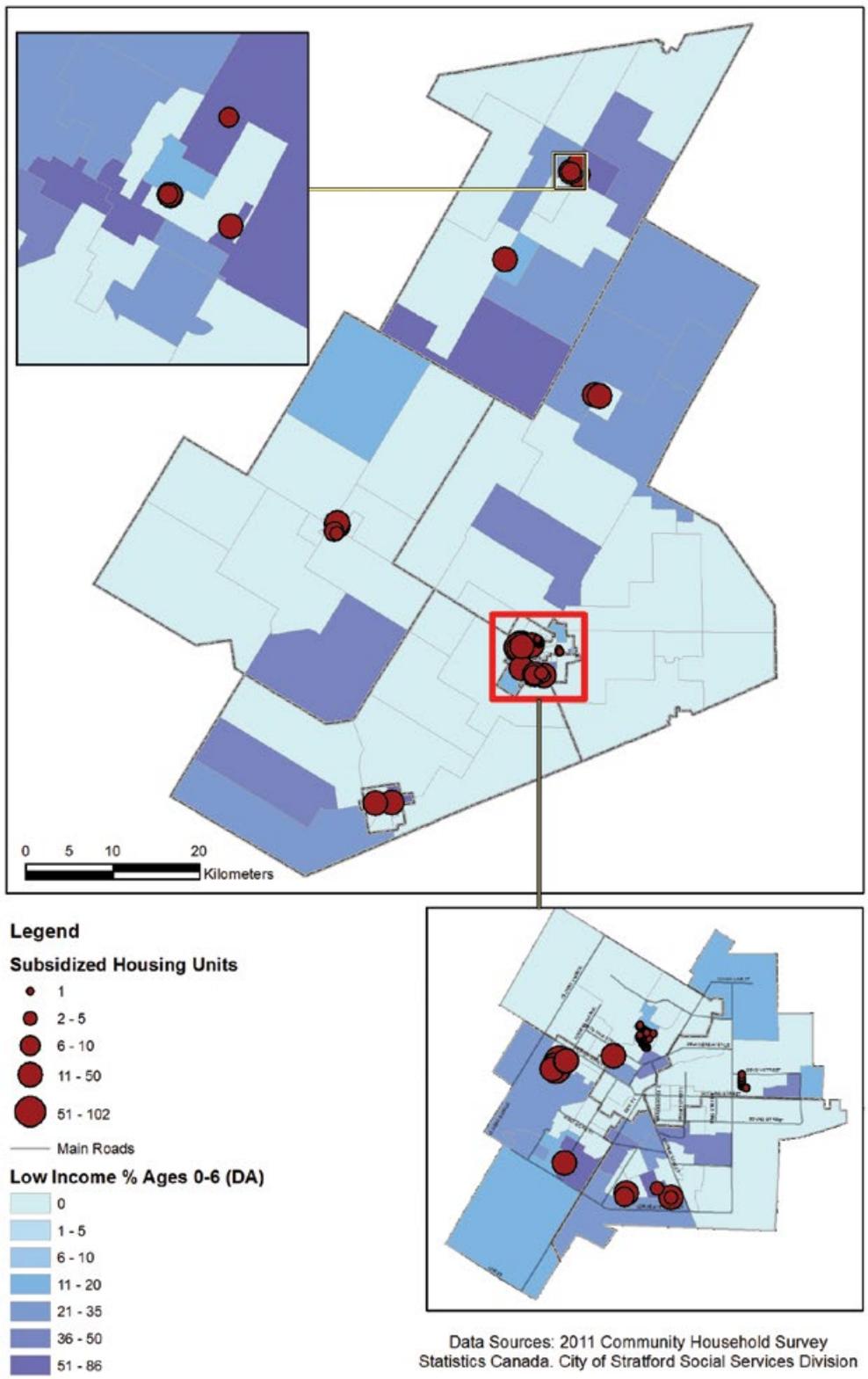
In general, income levels in Perth County are below the provincial medians. However, fewer families in Perth County are living in poverty in comparison to the provincial rate. In 2011, the median family income in Perth County was \$78,713, in comparison to \$80,987 for Ontario. The poverty rate among young children (ages 0-6) in Perth County is 17%, compared to 18% for Ontario (after-tax Low-Income Measure, 2011). However, there is variation among the local municipalities (see **Figure 8**). The poverty rate among young children (ages 0-6) in North Perth is significantly high at 28%. Local providers report that they are seeing many more families struggling to make ends meet on low and moderate incomes.

14 Perth District Health Unit. 2012. A Descriptive profile of Amish and Mennonite Communities in Perth County, 3rd Edition.

15 Williams, D.T., & Mann, T.L. (Eds.) 2011. Early childhood education in rural communities: Access and quality issues. Fairfax, VA: UNCF/Frederick D. Patterson Research Institute.

16 Mikkonen, J., & Raphael, D. 2010. Social Determinants of Health: The Canadian Facts. Toronto: York University School of Health Policy and Management.

Figure 8 - Prevalence of Children Ages 0-6 Living in Low-Income and Location of Subsidized Housing in Perth County, 2011

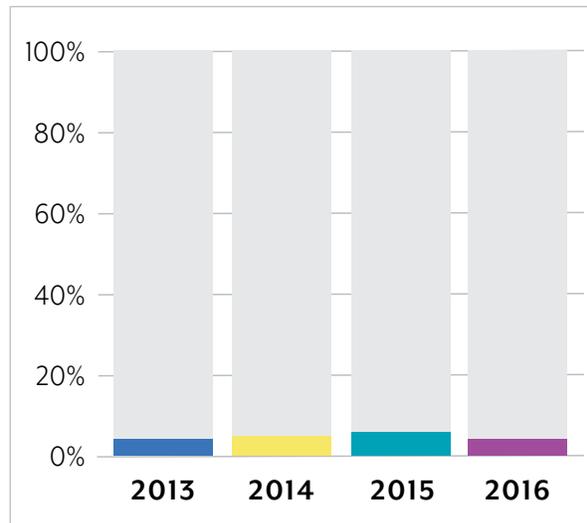


5.5 Early Childhood Development

LOW BIRTH WEIGHT

Low birth weight (LBW) has been demonstrated to be a predictor of future physical and cognitive challenges, such as chronic health problems, learning difficulties, and lower educational attainment and earnings. In terms of planning for the delivery of early years services, LBW can be a valuable indicator of where specialized services may be required. According to Perth District Health Unit, 4% of babies born to Perth mothers are below healthy birth weights (2016). This statistic has remained relatively constant over the past four years (see **Figure 9**).

Figure 9 - Percentage of Babies with Low Birth Weight in Perth County, 2013-16



Source: Healthy Babies, Healthy Children, Perth District Health Unit, 2017

CALLING ALL THREE YEAR OLDS (CATYO)

Calling All Three Year Olds (CATYO) Kindergarten Registration is a school readiness initiative coordinated by the two local school boards in partnership with a range of community service providers. CATYO offers early identification of developmental concerns by a trained screener using the Nipissing District Developmental Screen (NDDS). CATYO Kindergarten Registration provides an opportunity nine months before school entry for parents to learn about their child's development, and for children who have not already have been identified, to be referred to child and family support programs and appropriate specialty services.

Over 600 children from Perth County completed the NDDS during the CATYO Kindergarten Registrations held in November 2016. Of these children, 13% scored positive — a decline of two percentage points since 2012 (see **Table 2**).

In addition, the Nutrition Screening Tool for Every Preschooler (NutriSTEP) is included in all kindergarten registration packages. This screen is completed by parents and submitted at CATYO. It helps to identify potential nutrition and physical activity concerns. In 2016, 11% of preschoolers in Perth County scored as moderate to high nutritional risk on the NutriSTEP screen — up one percentage point since 2012.

Table 2 - CATYO Screening Results for Perth County, 2012-16

| | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 |
|---|------|------|------|------|------|
| Preschoolers who had an area of concern identified for further follow-up by the Nipissing District Developmental Screen® | 15% | 17% | 16% | 16% | 13% |
| Preschoolers scoring as a moderate to high nutritional risk on the NutriSTEP® screen | 10% | 10% | 11% | 13% | 11% |

Source: Perth District Health Unit, 2017

EARLY DEVELOPMENT INSTRUMENT (EDI)

The Early Development Instrument (EDI) is a questionnaire developed by the Offord Centre for Child Studies to assess the developmental health (skills and behaviour) of senior kindergarten children. Research using EDI has found that children identified as being vulnerable in kindergarten are likely to experience challenges in grade 3, 6, and even high school. Early vulnerability has been established as a predictor of a child’s lifelong learning, earning potential, health status, and behaviours.¹⁷

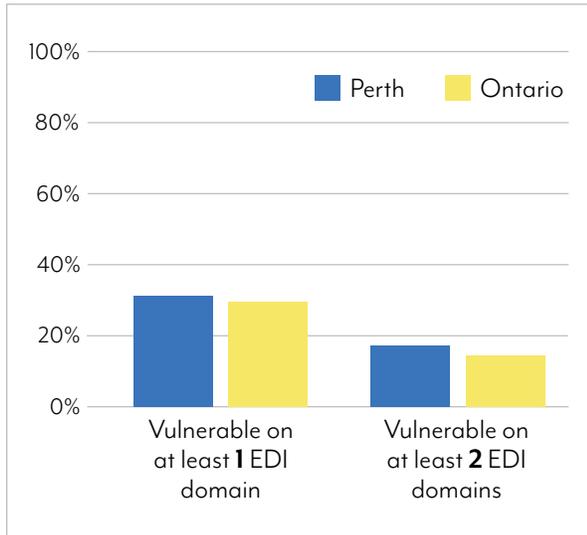
The EDI questionnaire is completed by teachers in public and catholic school boards across Canada, after several months of classroom interaction.¹⁸ Although the EDI is completed for individual children, it is not meant to be used as an individual diagnostic tool. The data derived from the collection of the EDI is important for the planning of early years programs and services and is intended to facilitate and encourage community discussions.

The EDI assesses child development in five domains: physical health and well-being, social competence, emotional maturity, language and cognitive development, and communication and general knowledge. These five domains are most often reported as a percentage of children “vulnerable” (i.e., score below the 10th percentile of the Ontario baseline population on any of the five domains). The graphs on this page show the percentage of children in Perth County who are vulnerable in the most recent cycle (2014-15 school years). As a comparison, the results for Ontario have been provided. However, the results from the previous three cycles have not been included, as there was a change in the methodology of assigning postal codes to municipalities, raising questions about data comparability.

¹⁷ The Offord Centre (2016). The Importance of the EDI. Retrieved from <https://edi.offordcentre.com/parents/importance-of-the-edi/>.

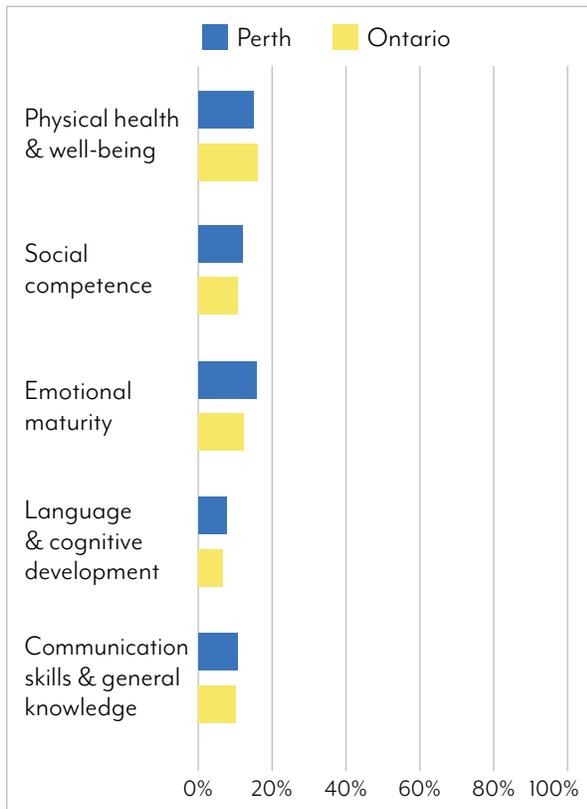
¹⁸ Children attending parochial schools are not included in the EDI assessment.

Figure 10 - Percentage of Children Vulnerable, 2014-15



Source: Offord Centre, EDI Summary Report for Stratford, 2014-15

Figure 11 - Percentage of Children Vulnerable by Domain, 2014-15



Source: Offord Centre, EDI Summary Report for Stratford, 2014-15

Figure 10 illustrates that approximately 31% of Perth children were deemed to be vulnerable on at least one EDI domain and 17% on at least two EDI domains. This is slightly more than for Ontario (29% and 14% respectively). **Figure 11** shows that the percentage of children vulnerable is higher than the provincial average in all domains, except physical health and well-being.

5.6 Community Profiles

Detailed community profiles for the six municipalities in Perth County can be found in **Appendix E**. Each of the profiles contains a map that illustrates the location of key community amenities — early year’s centres (fixed and satellite), licensed child care centres, schools, and recreation centres. In addition, each profile contains a data table that illustrates how the municipality ranks on some of the key socio-economic and school readiness indicators in comparison to Perth County as a whole.

| Rating Scale | What it signifies |
|--------------|---|
| *** | Municipality is ranked above the County average |
| ** | Municipality is ranked at the County average |
| * | Municipality is ranked below the County average |

More stars will always be positive. For example, three stars for unemployment rate means the community has a low rate of unemployment, indicating the municipality is doing better than the County average on that particular indicator. If the indicator is neither a positive nor a negative indicator (e.g., number of Indigenous children), differences between the six municipalities in Perth County are indicated as top 1/3, middle 1/3, or bottom 1/3.¹⁹

¹⁹ The rating scale and community profile template have been adapted from A Community Fit for Children – A Focus on Young Children in Waterloo Region (3rd Edition), 2016.



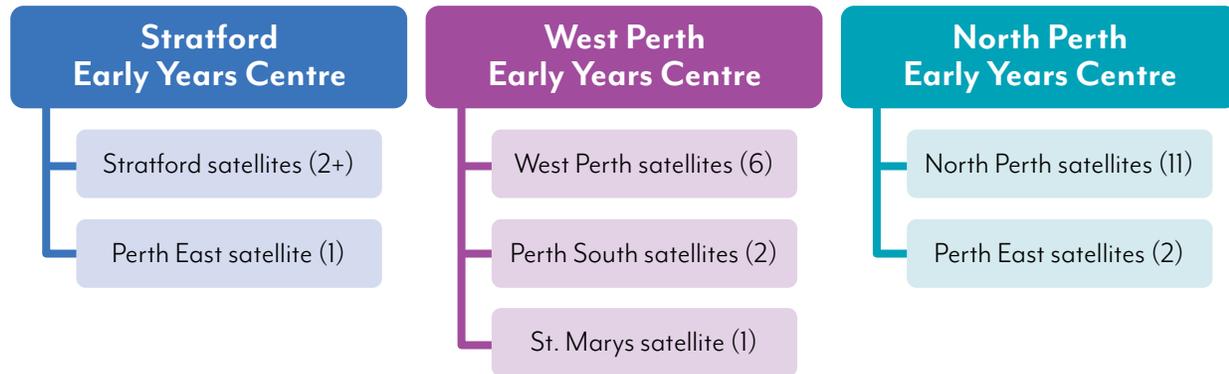
b. Assessment of Current Early Years Programs and Services in Perth County

As mentioned in section 3 above, the Ministry of Education has historically funded four child and family programs: OEYCs, Parenting and Family Literacy Centres, Child Care Resource Centres, and Better Beginnings Better Futures programs. Of these programs, only OEYC programs and services are currently available in Perth County. Since the inception of OEYCs in 2002, Perth Care for Kids has been operating as the lead agency in both Perth and Middlesex. This section of the report provides a detailed examination of the early years programs and services currently offered in Perth County.

b.1 OEYC Locations

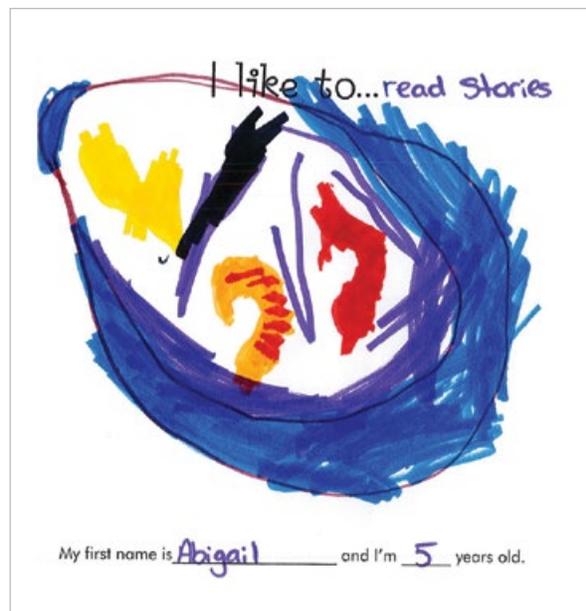
Perth Care for Kids currently operates three fixed early years centres in Perth County — Stratford, West Perth (Mitchell), and North Perth (Listowel) — and the staff of each of these centres provide regular outreach programs in 26 different satellite locations (not including parks) throughout the county. A brief description of these locations is provided below. For additional details, please refer to **Appendix F**.

Figure 12 - OEYC Locations



STRATFORD

The Stratford Early Years Centre is located at the Falstaff Family Centre at 35 Waterloo St. in Stratford. The three-storey building is a former elementary school, which was purchased by a private owner in 2000, from whom Perth Care for Kids has been leasing the space for 15 years. The Centre is situated in a walkable area in central Stratford. It is located on a bus route and has sufficient free parking. The early years space is warm and homey, and employees often use the lawn for outdoor programming during the summertime. The Centre has become a well-loved community hub for many users of the OEYC, and also hosts a number of other community groups including a private school. However, there are a few drawbacks to the facility. The building is partially accessible, with numerous stairs. The OEYC is located on two different levels, which raises staffing challenges for programming. Also, OEYC users do not have access to the kitchen facilities.



The employees at the Stratford Early Years Centre also offer two satellite programs on a regular basis (Friday mornings at Jubilee Hall, and every other Wednesday at Shakespeare Presbyterian Church in Perth East). Also, the location of the Mother Goose program rotates every 6-week session (Falstaff Family Centre, Sobeys, Local Community Food Centre, Stratford Mall, Zehrs Community Room). As well, the Centre runs intergenerational literacy programs in partnership with PLOW²⁰ at two local Retirement Residences (McCarthy Place and Anne Hathaway).

The employees at the Stratford Early Years Centre also offer two satellite programs on a regular basis (Friday mornings at Jubilee Hall, and every other Wednesday at Shakespeare Presbyterian Church in Perth East). Also, the location of the Mother Goose program rotates every 6-week session (Falstaff Family Centre, Sobeys, Local Community Food Centre, Stratford Mall, Zehrs Community Room). As well, the Centre runs intergenerational literacy programs in partnership with PLOW²⁰ at two local Retirement Residences (McCarthy Place and Anne Hathaway).

²⁰ Public Library on Wheels (PLOW) - a literacy initiative of the Stratford Public Library that addresses the low literacy level in children throughout Stratford and area. Specifically, it delivers preschool and toddler reading programs, age appropriate lending collections, and knowledgeable support staff to local communities currently underserved by traditional library facilities.

WEST PERTH

The West Perth Early Years Centre is located at Perth Care for Kids' main headquarters at 177 Frances St. in Mitchell. The Centre is adjacent to an elementary school (Upper Thames Public School) and is fully accessible. This location houses a toy lending library and administration offices. Programming space is only available in the evenings and on the weekends due to the agency's child care operations; therefore, most programs offered by the West Perth Early Years Centre take place off-site.

In 2016-17, the West Perth Early Years Centre ran programs at ten (10) different satellite sites (not including parks), all of which are donated in-kind. In West Perth, satellite programs are offered at four different facilities in Mitchell (Mitchell Arena & Community Centre, Grace Lutheran Church, Ritz Hall, and the West Perth Public Library), as well as the Thamesview United Church in Fullarton, and the Community Centre in Brodhagen. Staff also offer drop-in programs every Tuesday morning at St. James Anglican Church in St. Marys, Thursday mornings at the Community Centre in Kirkton (Perth South), and occasional programs at the Sebringville Community Centre in Sebringville (Perth South). Except for Ritz Hall (Mitchell) and St. James Anglican Church (St. Marys), all of these sites are fully accessible.



NORTH PERTH

In the fall of 2016, the North Perth Early Years Centre relocated to brand new space at the Sprinrite Child and Family Centre at 955 Binning St. W. in Listowel. The OEYC rooms are adjacent to an elementary school (North Perth Westfield Public School) and a licensed child care program and are leased from the Municipality of North Perth. Although the space is modern and fully accessible, there are some limitations. The space configuration is not conducive to multi-age programming or large motor activities; there is no formal reception area (staff who have offices by the entryway informally greet OEYC users), and OEYC participants and community partners do not have full access to the kitchen facilities. Over the past year, employees of the OEYC have begun transferring community-based programs to the site. However, due to the space issues, and the distance of the Centre from where people live and naturally congregate in Listowel, staff have opted to keep some programming off-site.

In 2016-17, the North Perth Early Years Centre staff ran programs at thirteen (13) satellite locations, all of which are donated in-kind. In Listowel, outreach programs are offered at the Salvation Army Church, Upper Deck Youth Centre, public library, and two elementary schools (Listowel Eastdale Public School and North Perth Westfield Public School). Elsewhere in North Perth, programs are offered on a rotational basis at the public libraries and community centres in Monkton, Atwood, and Kurtzville. Centre staff also provide outreach at the public library and recreation complex in Milverton (Perth East).

CENTRE HOURS OF OPERATION

All of the Early Years Centres are currently open five days a week, Monday to Friday, plus some evenings and weekends. Outreach programs may operate outside of these hours (e.g., weekday evenings and full-day special events on weekends).

Table 3 - Centre Hours of Operation, 2017

| Area | Weekdays | Evenings | Weekends |
|---------------------------------------|---|---|---|
| Stratford Early Years Centre | Every day 9 a.m.–5 p.m. | Tuesdays 5–8 p.m. | Saturday mornings 9 a.m.–12 p.m. |
| West Perth Early Years Centre | Every day 9 a.m.–5 p.m. (Resource Centre and Toy Lending Library) | One evening a quarter 6–7:30 p.m. | One Saturday morning a month 9 a.m.–12 p.m. |
| North Perth Early Years Centre | Mondays 9 a.m.–1 p.m. Tuesdays and Fridays 9 a.m.–4:30 p.m. | | Saturday mornings |

STAFF TRANSPORTATION AND OEYC VEHICLES

Perth Care for Kids owns and maintains three vans which are used by OEYC staff to travel to outreach programs. The vans are also used for transporting toys and program supplies, and for marketing purposes. In fact, there is a lack of signage about OEYC programs at the satellite sites, and the van parked outside the location may be the only visible sign that the program is running.

OEYC staff currently travel in pairs to outreach programs. They meet at the respective Early Years Centre (where the vans are parked overnight), pick up the day’s program toys and supplies, and then travel to or from the off-site locations in the van.

6.2 OEYC Program Offerings

Perth Care for Kids offers over 45 different early years programs, which can be grouped into the following categories.

Drop-In Programs

Each of the Early Years Centres offers many programs where children and their parents/caregivers may “drop-in” at the scheduled time without prior registration. Drop-ins offer a diverse range of activities focused on early learning and development, parent and caregiver engagement, and resources and supports for parents and caregivers. These activities include free play and sensory exploration with a variety of age-appropriate toys, crafts, and games, as well as a circle time (songs and stories) led by staff. Often a different activity or theme is featured each week. Some of Perth Care for Kids’ drop-in programs are targeted for particular demographic groups (e.g., infants, toddlers, teen parents, multiples – twins/triplets, etc.), while others are for all young children (ages 0-6). Program days, times and lengths vary, from one to three hours, depending on location. Examples include, but are not limited to, Play & Learn, Baby Time, Toddler Time, Young Parents Place, Multiples Play Group, Wheels on the Bus, Fun in the Park, etc.

Registered Programs

The Early Years Centres currently offer a number of programs that require pre-enrolment. Employees report that registration helps to maintain program quality and staffing ratios and to ensure there are sufficient numbers, particularly when employees need to travel to off-site locations. Like drop-ins, some of the registered programs are targeted for particular demographic groups (e.g., infants, toddlers, preschoolers, fathers, etc.), while others are for all young children (ages 0-6). Registered programs tend to run for a limited period (e.g., once a week for six weeks), multiple times a year. In rural areas, registered programs rotate locations (e.g., In Perth East, Book Bees was offered in Wallace in 2015-16 and Milverton in 2016-17). Examples include, but are not limited to Infant Program, Fun with Mother Goose, Get Ready for Kindergarten, Super Dads Super Kids, Cooking with Kids, Jump Jiggle Jive, Shake Wiggle Roll, Little Counters, Family Math, Field Trips, etc.

Child Minding Programs

Family Time is a free child-minding service for families with young children (ages 0-6), offered at each of the Early Years Centre (Monday mornings at the Early Years Centre in Stratford and Grace Lutheran Church in Mitchell, and Tuesday mornings at the Salvation Army Church in Listowel). Children ages 0-6 participate in a play group, supervised by OEYC staff, while parents (who must remain on the premises) socialize and connect. Often a guest speaker or parenting topic is featured each week. Three OEYC employees provide child minding for up to 15 children at a time. Due to the popularity of these programs, the Family Time programs in Stratford and Mitchell require

pre-registration and priority is given to new families. However, Family Time in Listowel operates on a drop-in basis, as children can remain with their parents/caregivers when the OEYC employees are at capacity.



Toy Lending Library

Perth Care for Kids maintains a toy lending library at the West Perth Early Years Centre in Mitchell. For a small fee, families can borrow toys from the library for a two-week period. Membership rates are \$30 per year to borrow five toys at a time or \$15 per year to borrow one toy at a time.

Parent and Caregiver Education

All of the Early Years Centres in Perth County provide parent/caregiver education on a variety of early years' topics through one-to-one discussions, small group discussions, and large group presentations and workshops with special guest speakers. Also, the Early Years Centres maintain a wide variety of educational resources on early learning and development (i.e., books, videos, brochures, and pamphlets) for parents and caregivers to access.

Special Events

Each of the Early Years Centres participate in a number of special events in their local communities, many of which are delivered in partnership with local businesses and other community groups. Examples include, but are not limited to Big Wheels Little Drivers, Community Book Exchanges, Teddy Bear Play Day, Touch the Truck Event, Listowel Fair Play Day, Stonetown Heritage Festival, Winterfest, etc.

EARLY LITERACY SPECIALIST

Since the inception of the OEYCs in 2002, Perth Care for Kids has maintained an Early Years Literacy Specialist position which serves both Perth and Middlesex. The role of this position is to support and promote early literacy and numeracy skills by working with parents, caregivers and other early childhood professions. Tips, strategies, and tools are shared through hands-on programs, workshops, presentations, and monthly newsletters.

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

A few of the OEYC programs are provided collaboratively with other community partners. The following are examples of some of the long-standing partnerships:

- **Breastfeeding Buddies** - a mother-to-mother breastfeeding support program, where parents receive support, encouragement, and link to breastfeeding and parenting resources. It is delivered in partnership with Perth District Health Unit, and the Stratford Chiropractic and Wellness Centre and the North Perth Family Health Team.
- **Young Parents Place** - a two-hour drop-in play and support group for pregnant and young parents (up to ages 24) and their children (ages 0-6), with a focus on positive parenting and healthy growth and development. It is delivered in partnership with Perth District Health Unit.
- **Strollercise** - a one-hour exercise program for parents with a baby and stroller, which is delivered in partnership with Dynafit (North Perth) and Sherri Kreski (Stratford).
- **Various Children's Programs in partnership with the public libraries of North Perth, Perth East and West Perth and PLOW** - Wheels on the Bus, Book Bees, Acorns and Oak Trees, and Tots and Treasures are examples of early literacy programs that Perth Care for Kids delivers in partnership with the libraries of North Perth, Perth East and West Perth and PLOW. It should be noted that the Stratford and St. Marys Public Libraries operate separate children's programs.

6.3 OEYC Service Utilization

Perth Care for Kids currently tracks program and service statistics in the Early Years Service Information System (EYSIS), and provides regular reports to the Ministry on:

- Number of children served (total visits);
- Number of new children served (unique participants);
- Number of parents and caregivers served (total visits);
- Number of new parents and caregivers attending programs (unique participants); and
- Number of participants attending parent workshops and training (total attendees).

Each of the Early Years Centres enters data into a separate EYSIS database, and then the numbers are tallied. Due to overlaps in the catchment areas of the Early Years Centre (i.e., a family from St. Marys may access programs operated by both the Stratford and West Perth Early Years Centres), the total numbers for Perth County presented below may include some duplicates. For instance,

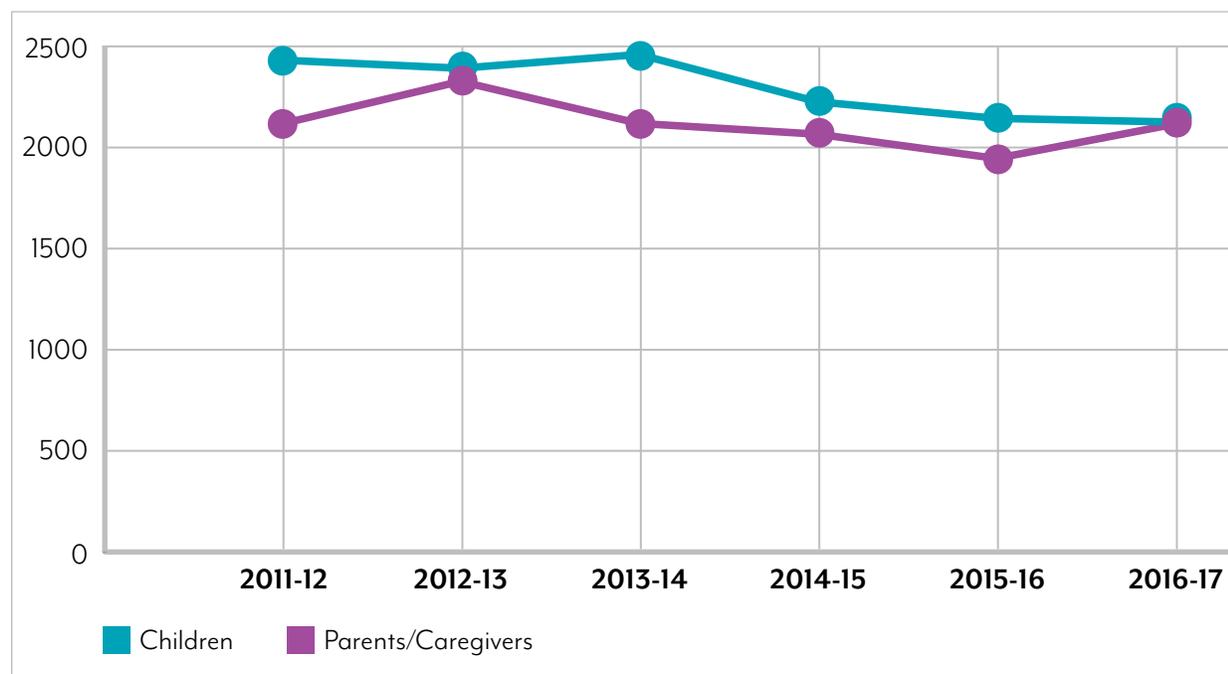
the postal code analysis conducted for this report revealed that the Early Years Centres in Perth County served a total of 2,018 young children (ages 0-6) between April 1, 2016, and March 31, 2017. In comparison, Perth Care for Kids reports that the number of children was 2,126 during the same period – an overcount of 108 users.

TOTAL PARTICIPANTS

In 2016-17, a total of 2,126 unique participants attended the OEYC programs and services in Perth County. Over the past six years, the number of unique children served has declined by 13% (from 2,432 in 2011-12). However, the number of unique parents/caregivers has remained relatively constant over the same period - 2,117 in 2011-12 and 2,116 in 2016-17 (see **Figure 13**). The decline in the number of children served is probably due to the introduction of full-day kindergarten, which came into effect in 2014. In addition, local providers confirm that the age range of children attending early years programs has fallen (more children ages 0-3) due to the introduction of full-time kindergarten.

The majority of children (47%) participated in programs delivered by the Stratford Early Years Centre, 32% in programs delivered by the North Perth Centre, and 22% in programs delivered by the West Perth Centre (see **Figure 14**).

Figure 13 - Total Unique Persons Served by OEYC Programs & Services in Perth County, 2011/12-2016/17



TOTAL VISITS

In 2016-17, the total number of visits to the OEYC programs and services in Perth was 18,272 children, and 14,360 parents/caregivers. Although the number of visits began dropping with the introduction of full-time kindergarten, this past year it rose back to 2011-12 levels (see **Figure 15**).

VISITS PER PARTICIPANT

The average number of visits per participant fluctuates each year. In 2016-17, the average number of visits per child was 8.6, and per parent/caregiver was 6.8 (see **Figure 16**).

PROGRAM ATTENDANCE

Overall, the OEYC programs and parenting workshops are very well attended. The Coordinators regularly review program statistics and plan future programs based on past utilization. The top three highest attended programs for each of the Early Years Centre in 2016-17 are detailed in **Appendix G**.

Figure 14 - Total Unique Children Served by the Early Years Centre in Perth County, 2016-17

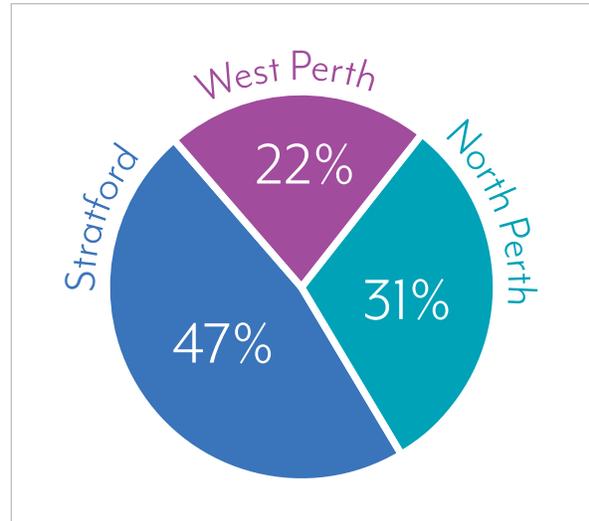


Figure 15 - Total Visits to OEYC Programs & Services in Perth County, 2011/12-2016/17

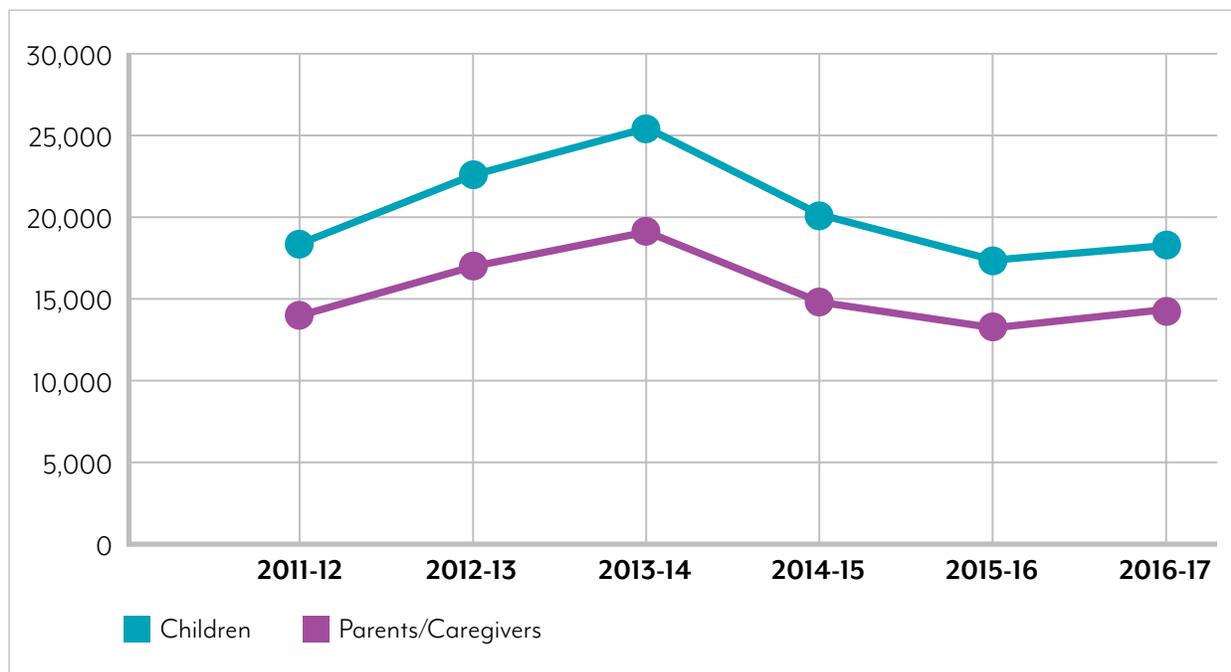
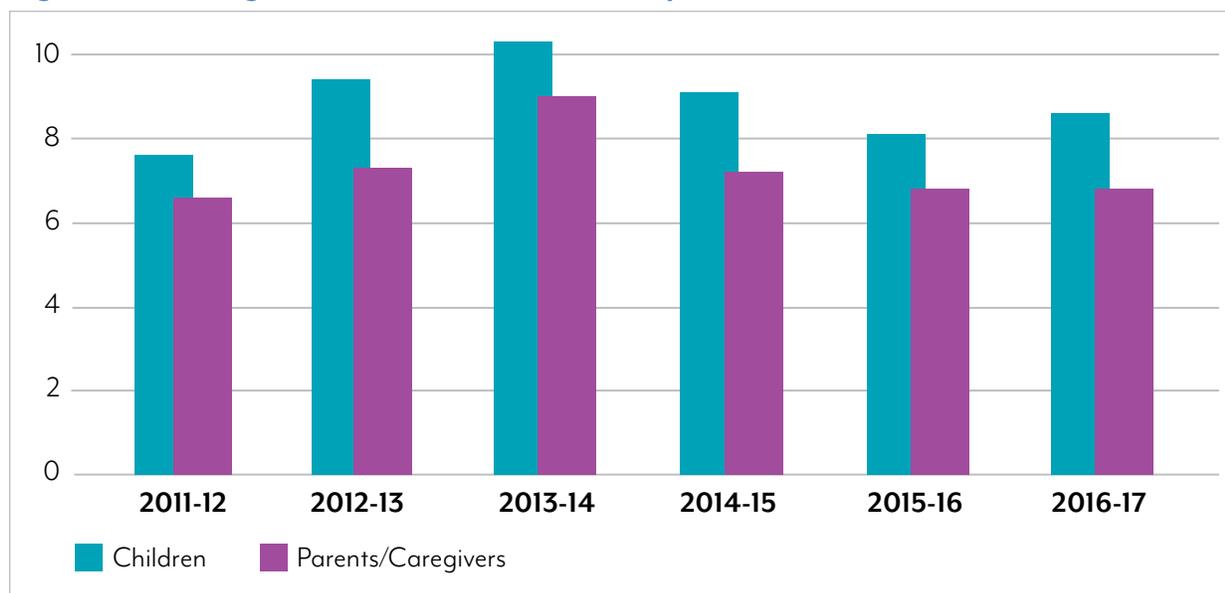


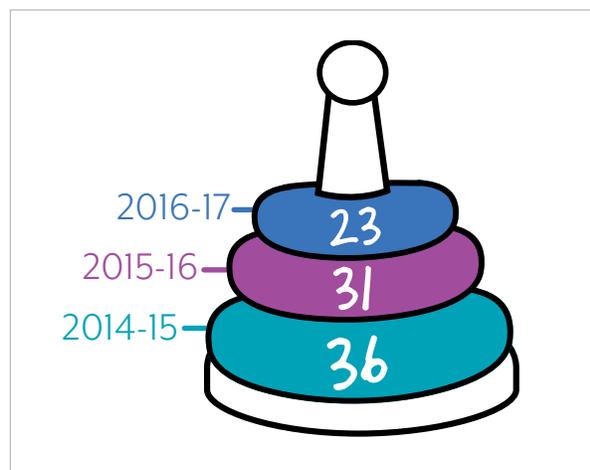
Figure 16 - Average Number of Visits Per Participant, 2011/12-2016/17



TOY LENDING LIBRARY

In 2016-17, there were a total of 23 members of Perth Care for Kids’ Toy Lending Library – a decrease of 36% since 2014-15. The total number of visits made by members to the Toy Lending Library was 192 in 2016-17, meaning that each member visited the West Perth Early Years Centre to borrow toys from the library an average of eight times during the year (see **Figure 17**).

Figure 17 - Perth Toy Lending Library Members, 2014/15-2016/17



GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION OF USERS

Figures H1 to H4 in Appendix H illustrate the distribution of users of the Early Years Centres in Perth County in 2016-17. The dots signify the addresses of the individual participants (both children and parents/caregivers). Larger dot size indicates a greater number of users residing at that particular postal code. However, it is important to note that the dots have no correlation to the number of times a person attended an OEYC program (i.e., if a child attended a program once or thirty times in 2016-17, they will only be represented once on the maps below). For details on how the postal codes have been assigned in rural areas, please refer to **Appendix C**.

The maps reveal that some of OEYC participants come from outside of Perth County. Some of these may be users from neighbouring rural communities (e.g., Huron County, Wellington County, Waterloo Region, etc.), who attend out of convenience; for instance, the proximity of the early years program to their home; or they visit the OEYC when they are in town running errands (e.g., shopping, medical appointments, etc.). It may also signify grandparents and other kin (who reside out of Perth) who participate in early years programs when they visit their families. Regardless of the reason, the participation of users from outside of the county supports the Ministry's goal of improving the consistency of early years programs across the province.

The maps also show that Perth County residents are travelling to programs operated by Early Years Centres outside their immediate catchment area. For example, residents of West Perth and St. Marys are participating in programs operated by the Stratford Early Years Centre, and vice versa (Stratford residents are attending programs operated by the West Perth Early Years Centre).

6.4 Targeted Play Groups supported by the Service Manager

As part of this study, an inventory of child and family support programs in Perth County was compiled. The criteria for inclusion in this inventory were as follows:

- Serves children ages 0-6 and their parents/caregivers (both must participate);
- May be targeted, but must be inclusive;
- Offered on a regular basis; program offered on weekly or multiple times per year (one-time workshops and marketing/promotion events are not included);
- Receives funding support from municipal, provincial or federal government;
- Free (no cost) to participants; and
- Program description is consistent with early years pedagogy (e.g., play-based learning, the involvement of parents, family connections, etc.).

Through the creation of this inventory, it was discovered that the Service Manager currently partners with other community organizations (i.e., Public Health, PLOW, School Boards, Children's Aid Society, Choices for Change, etc.) on a number of intentional programs for hard to reach population groups (e.g., Anabaptist community, teen parents with addiction and mental health problems, wards of the child welfare system, etc.). A brief description of the targeted child and family programs which the Service Manager currently supports through governmental (municipal and provincial) funding is provided below.

Amish Family Play Group

The Amish Family Play Group is an engaging play group, story time, and book lending opportunity for Amish families living in the Millbank area. The program runs on Tuesday mornings from 9:30–11:00 a.m. for a six-week session in the spring and fall at the Heritage Mennonite Church in Perth East. It is delivered by the Service Manager, in partnership with PLOW and the Perth District Health Unit.

Crossing Bridges Play Group

Crossing Bridges is a drop-in program for youth (ages 16 to 24 years) who are struggling with addiction issues. In recognition that some of the participants are young parents, staff initiated a play and learn group for the teens and their children to learn about positive role modeling, healthy childhood development, and to develop strategies for interacting with their children. The program is located at Knox Presbyterian Church in Stratford and is delivered in partnership with the Service Manager and Choices for Change.

ESL program for Low German-Speaking Mennonites

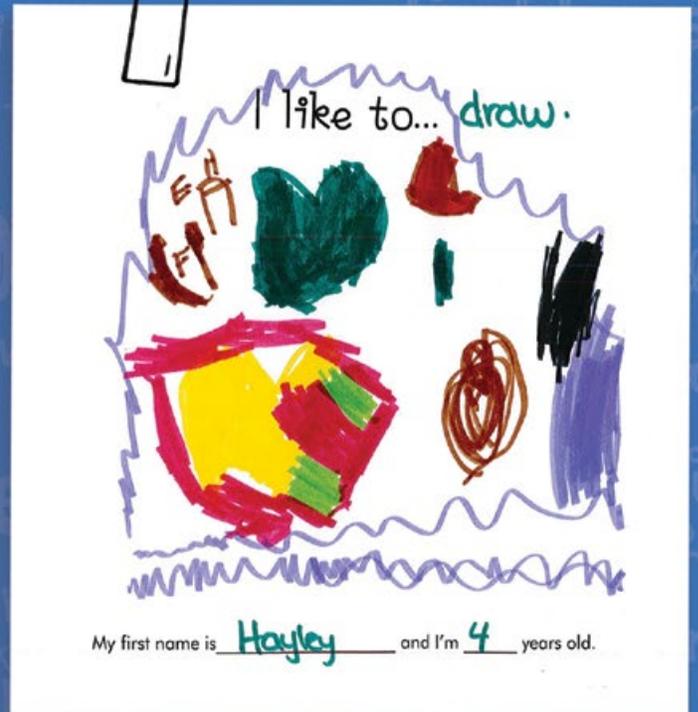
The Avon Maitland District School Board offers English as a Second Language classes for the Low German-Speaking Mennonite families living in the Poole area. The program runs every Thursday morning from 9:30 a.m.–12:30 p.m. throughout the school year at the Poole Mennonite Church. Over 35 women and more than 55 children attend on a regular basis. This program would not be possible without the support of numerous volunteers and community agencies, which provide child minding for the women while they are taking classes and other supports. The Early Literacy Specialist of Perth Care for Kids and PLOW alternate providing story times and literacy activities to the infants, toddlers, and preschoolers in attendance.

Loving Spoonfuls

Loving Spoonfuls is a cooking program for new and expecting moms, which takes place at The Local Community Food Centre in Stratford on Thursdays between 11:00 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. for a 10-week session. Participants learn new recipes and cooking tips that are helpful for feeding young families. A public health nurse is available to answer questions, and an ECE provides activities along with volunteer help with child minding.

Various Children's Programs in partnership with the Huron-Perth Children's Aid Society

Small Wonders, Parent/Child Resource Centre, and Bard of Avon are examples of programs for parents and their children who are involved with the Huron-Perth Children's Aid Society. Parents learn about positive parenting strategies, role-modeling, healthy childhood development and age-appropriate milestones.



7. Community Insights

The Service Manager recognizes that children, families, caregivers and other professionals play an integral role in the early years system. As outlined in **section 4.2**, a wide range of community engagement activities took place to inform this transition plan for Child and Family Centres in Perth County. The focus of these initial consultations has been to better understand how families find out about existing programs and services; why parents and caregivers use these services; who participates and who does not; what are the barriers to accessing services; and where are there service gaps and areas for improvement. This section of the report summarizes the feedback received through children's drawings, the parent/caregiver survey, site visits and pop-up focus groups, and meetings with service providers.



CHILDREN'S VOICES

Over 200 children shared examples of what “I like to” do, through drawings. The expressions in the colouring pages were diverse. Children communicated how, what, where and with whom they like to play. They like interacting with others, whether it be friends, sisters, brothers, or babies. They like to play with cars and trucks, blocks, zoo animals, and dinosaurs. They like to dance, sing, colour, paint, and get messy. They like to play outside, at the park and dig in the sand box. They like to move about, doing things like dancing, skating, biking, and swimming. Due to the timing of the consultations, summer themes were prominent. Several children commented that they like to look for bugs, eat ice cream, roast marshmallows, go to the splash pad, or go to the beach. Finally, some children voiced specific activities that they like to do with their parents and caregivers – “I like to go to the splash pad with my mom and dad and then go for ice cream.” “I like to ride in a tractor with my dad.” “I like to play with my grandma and grandpa at the orange park.”

STRONG CUSTOMER RELATIONSHIPS

Overall, the early years programs and services that are offered by Perth Care for Kids are well liked and appreciated by current participants. Many of the staff have been with the agency for numerous years, and have established strong relationships with participants who use the OEYC programs and services. Several parents recounted stories of having known the staff for many years. They originally started going to the early years programs when their first child was born, and after a hiatus due to work, were pleased to reconnect with staff during a subsequent parental leave. Parents and caregivers report that the OEYC employees are friendly, warm, attentive and caring, and know many of the children by name. As a result, parents and caregivers noted that they are comfortable asking questions, as the play groups provide an open and non-judgmental environment.

PUBLIC AWARENESS

When asked: “How did you find out about this OEYC program?” The most frequent response was by “word of mouth.” Others indicated that they initially learned about the program, after visiting the Perth Care for Kids booth at the local town fair. A third group sought out the OEYC, having relocated to Perth County from elsewhere in the province, or following the birth of a subsequent child.

Once parents and caregivers are connected with the OEYC, they are placed on an email distribution list and invited to join the agency’s Facebook page. Parents and caregivers also learn about programs and workshops via the monthly calendars, which are available on the Perth Care for Kids’ website and in hard copy at the Centres.

MIXED PERCEPTIONS OF WELCOMING

Individuals who regularly use the early years programs report that the programs are inclusive; however, other residents stated that they do not attend the Centres as their first experience was not pleasant. A few parents explained that they first met each other and established friendships through the early years programs, while other community members commented that the families who attend the OEYCs are elitist and not welcoming to outsiders.

LOCATIONS OF OUTREACH PROGRAMS

There is a preference for families from small towns and rural areas to attend outreach programs in their local communities, rather than driving to programs in other areas. Several parents, caregivers and providers identified the need for additional early years programming in Perth East and St. Marys to address community needs. In fact, many service providers were unaware that the OEYC currently offers programs in those two municipalities. A number of parents and caregivers commented that the location of the St. Marys drop-in program is not ideal.

MULTI-AGE PROGRAMMING

A number of the current OEYC programs require pre-registration, and have limited space capacity and/or specific age criteria (e.g., 0-18 months of age) which impedes participation by parents and caregivers who are taking care of other children/siblings. The present program locations (space design and configurations) and the OEYC age range (ages 0-6 only) limit the ability of Perth Care for Kids to operate multi-age groups simultaneously. One of the identified benefits of offering programs in partnership with other organizations, such as public libraries, is that the community partners can run complementary programs at the same time for older siblings.

HOURS OF OPERATION

The most preferred time to attend early years programs is weekday mornings, as most children nap during the afternoons. Parents and caregivers are most open to attending educational workshops on weekday evenings. **Table 4** provides a summary of the parent and caregiver survey responses to the question: “Which of the following programs would you like to try, and when would you like to attend the program?”

Table 4 - Preferred Program Times

| Program | Weekday morning | Weekday afternoon | Weekday evening | Saturday | Sunday |
|--|-----------------|-------------------|-----------------|----------|--------|
| Literacy and family reading programs (e.g., library, story time) | 42% | 22% | 36% | 42% | 24% |
| Parent and child play groups | 50% | 29% | 28% | 43% | 22% |
| Workshops for parents, grandparents, and caregivers | 22% | 13% | 62% | 39% | 20% |
| Local on-line information resources (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, Parent Chats) | 54% | 41% | 62% | 45% | 39% |

Source: Beth Blowes & Associates, 2017.

People also requested that the Centres remain open over the lunch hour, and for participants to have open access to kitchen facilities to prepare and give their children snacks. In addition, community members who have attended Child and Family Centres in other communities and provinces expressed a desire to see harvest tables for communal snacks, coffee hours, and lunch breaks.

SCHOOL READINESS AND SOCIALIZATION

The primary reasons cited for attending early years programs were: “to prepare my child for kindergarten,” and “to help my child learn socialization skills and to overcome separation anxiety when I return to work.” Many parents expressed interest in seeing more offerings of structured learning and literacy programs, such as *Get Ready for Kindergarten*, which preschool children currently attend without their parents. The implementation of the early years pedagogy – *How Does Learning Happen?* – will require not only a shift in program delivery and philosophy, but education among the general public and local providers regarding the benefits of this pedagogical approach, and the Ministry’s goals and expectations of early years programs.

SHORTAGE OF LICENSED CHILD CARE SPACES

Finally, the number one service gap identified by community members is the lack licensed child care. The early years staff are often asked questions about child care: “Can you recommend a provider? How much does child care cost? How do I get a subsidy, and how much money can I get? How do the waiting lists operate?” At present, information is provided on a one-off basis. There is a desire for more easily accessible information, resources and tools about child care (e.g., what to look for when selecting a quality provider, application process, available child care subsidies, etc.).

The Government of Ontario’s commitment to create new licensed child care for 100,000 more children ages 0 to 4 years over the next five years is welcome news. In the meantime, families continue to juggle work obligations with informal care arrangements (i.e., relatives, non-licensed care providers). In fact, there has been a visible growth in the number of OEYC users who are grandparents.

In addition to permanent child care spaces, there is also a need for respite and emergency child care spaces to help families that do not have the support of extended families living in the community (e.g., snow days, funerals, specialist appointments for a spouse or other child at an out-of-town hospital, etc.).



8. Findings and Recommendations

8.1 Children's Services Planning and Coordination

POPULATION NEEDS-BASED PLANNING

Early years programs are currently offered in all municipalities of the county, but at present, they are not distributed in a manner that appropriately meets the socio-demographic needs of the community. An examination of the location of current OEYC programs in comparison to where children live in Perth County indicates that some of the municipalities are underserved relative to the number of programs offered in other areas. For example, Perth East has the second highest quantity of young children (1,385 children ages 0-6), yet there are limited OEYC programs offered in the area. There are 525 young children (ages 0-6) living in St. Marys, but only a 1.5-hour drop-in offered once a week in the town. It is recommended that new resources be used to expand and enhance existing programs and services, to ensure that the content, timing, and location of early years programs are appropriate to the population needs and make-up of Perth County.

SERVICE COORDINATION

At present, the OEYC programs in Perth County are run out of three office sites: Stratford, Mitchell, and Listowel. Programs are also delivered in 26 different satellite sites plus community parks. Program staff are assigned to particular Early Years Centres, and each Centre has a Coordinator

who is responsible for managing the programs offered by that site. Although the Coordinators meet regularly to share information and plan services, actual programming may differ slightly across the county (e.g., program length, drop-in versus registered, parenting education topics, special events, etc.).

To improve service coordination, it is recommended that strategic leadership, planning, and financial decisions be made at the county level by the Service Manager. The Service Manager will be responsible for overall service planning and coordination, management of leasehold arrangements, development, and implementation of a communications and community relations strategy (see **section 8.10**), quality assurance, and monitoring compliance with provincial legislation. The delivery of early years programs will be outsourced to local service providers.

STREAMLINED ACCESS

Currently, each of the Coordinators of the Early Years Centres is responsible for producing a monthly calendar for the site. Each month, the OEYC prints three calendars – one for Stratford, West Perth (with regular programs in Mitchell, Sebringville, St. Marys, Fullarton, Brodhagen, and Kirkton), and North Perth (with regular programs in Atwood, Listowel, Milverton, Monkton and Wallace).

To streamline access for parents and caregivers, it is recommended that program calendars be produced for each municipality. It is also suggested that the program calendars list all of the children’s programs offered in Perth County which meet the following criteria:

- Serves children ages 0-6 and their parents/caregivers (both participate);
- May be targeted, but must be inclusive;
- Receives funding support from municipal, provincial or federal government;
- Free (no cost) to participants; and
- Program description is consistent with early years pedagogy.

In addition to early years programs funded by the Ministry of Education, this would include targeted programs supported by the Service Manager and children’s programs offered by community partners, such as the public libraries.

SYSTEMS PLANNING

Kids First Huron Perth is a consortium of over 60 local agencies and professionals committed to providing an integrated system of prenatal, healthy child development, early identification and intervention, and early learning and care services for children (ages 0-6) and their families who reside in Huron and Perth counties. Kids First serves as the local system planning body for children,



and has provided advice to the Healthy Babies Healthy Children programs, the OEYCs, and the Preschool Speech and Language System. The work of the network is carried out by a number of sub-committees, such as the Perth Service Integration Committee.

Members of the Perth Service Integration Committee have expressed an interest in helping to support the Service Manager with the ongoing planning and implementation of the Child and Family Centres. In keeping with the Service Manager's mandate of overseeing early years and child care services in Perth County, members have suggested that the Service Manager take a more active leadership role on this Committee.

It is recommended that the membership and terms of reference of the Perth Service Integration Committee be reviewed to clarify the mandate of this Committee with respect to the Child and Family Centres. Also, consideration should be given to the role Kids First Huron Perth could play in helping support the Service Manager with developing the forthcoming five-year plan for child care and early years services.

Furthermore, it is recommended that methods to engage children, parents and caregivers in ongoing monitoring and evaluation activities of the Child and Family Centres be established (e.g., Parent Advisory Committee).

| Recommended Activities | Lead Responsibility | Timing |
|--|--|--|
| <p>1. Establish a new full-time position reporting to the Service Manager, under the Child Care Division, who will be responsible for ensuring overall service coordination. This will include strategic planning (in collaboration with the early years and child care sector), administration of purchase of service agreements and leasehold arrangements, development, and implementation of a communications and community relations strategy, quality assurance and monitoring compliance with provincial legislation.</p> | <p>Service Manager (Social Services Department, Child Care Division)</p> | <p>Fall 2017: Establishment of new position January to March 2018: hiring and recruitment</p> |
| <p>2. Review the membership and terms of reference of the Perth Service Integration Committee to clarify its mandate with respect to the Child and Family Centres. Consider the role the Kids First Huron Perth could play in helping support the Service Manager with developing the forthcoming five-year plan for child care and early years services.</p> | <p>Kids First Huron Perth</p> | <p>January to June 2018</p> |
| <p>3. Ensure that the content, timing, and location of early years programs are appropriate to the population needs and make-up of each municipality within Perth County.</p> | <p>Service Manager</p> | <p>July 2018 and ongoing</p> |
| <p>4. Establish methods to engage children, parents and caregivers in ongoing monitoring and evaluation activities of the Child and Family Centres (e.g., Parent Advisory Committee).</p> | <p>Service Manager</p> | <p>July 2018 and ongoing</p> |
| <p>5. Redesign the program calendars, ensuring that they are more easily searchable by service location and that they contain information on all available early years programs offered in the community (also see section 8.10).</p> | <p>Service Manager</p> | <p>September 2018 and ongoing</p> |

8.2 Program Locations – Permanent and Satellite

LOCATIONS OF PERMANENT CHILD AND FAMILY CENTRES

In accordance with the Ministry’s guidelines, the Service Manager must establish Centre-based core services that are open year-round and at least five days per week, including either Saturday or Sunday. At present, there are three OEYC sites in Perth County. However, only the Early Years Centres in Stratford and Listowel meet the Ministry of Education’s planning criteria. The OEYC in Mitchell currently houses a toy lending library, resource centre and administration offices; however, space for drop-in play groups and other programs is only available in the evenings and on the weekends due to the agency’s child care operations.

Based on a detailed analysis of the population size, density and distribution, the utilization of existing OEYC services, feedback from parents, caregivers and providers, and the financial resources available for the provision of early years services, it is recommended that there be two permanent Child and Family Centres. These Centres should be located in the main population centres of Stratford and in Listowel, which are located at opposite ends of the county. Furthermore, it is recommended that early years programs continue to be offered in multiple satellite locations throughout the community, to simplify access for rural residents.

STRATFORD CHILD AND FAMILY CENTRE

For the time being, it is recommended that space continue to be leased at the Falstaff Family Centre for the Stratford Child and Family Centre. However, due to the current limitations of this space (see **section 6.1**), it is recommended that a new Child and Family Centre in Stratford be built when capital funding becomes available.

Concerning the location of the new Centre, consideration should be given to co-locating it with an elementary school and child care centre, as per the **Ministry’s schools-first approach**. Key factors in determining the location of the Centre should be the socio-demographic profile of the student population and surrounding neighbourhood, as well as the physical capacity for additional programming space on the school site.

Furthermore, it is recommended that children, parents, caregivers and other professionals be consulted about the future space design to ensure it meets community needs. Community members should also be surveyed to see if they would like outreach programs to remain at the Falstaff Family Centre, to offer some continuity of service for current participants who use that location.

LISTOWEL CHILD AND FAMILY CENTRE

It is recommended that the Child and Family Centre in Listowel remain where it is, as it is currently co-located with a new elementary school and child care centre. In addition, it is situated in an area that is projected to become a community hub when the planned recreation complex next door is opened. However, due to the current limitations of this space (see **section 6.1**), it is recommended that the feasibility of renovating and expanding the current Child and Family Centre be explored, as additional funding becomes available. In the meantime, it is recommended that satellite programs (e.g., public library, elementary schools, etc.) in Listowel continue, to meet programming needs and provide continuity of service for families and community partners.

ADDITIONAL CHILD CARE SPACES IN MITCHELL

As mentioned above, the OEYC in Mitchell currently houses a toy lending library, resource centre and administration offices. It is recommended that this space be repurposed and expanded to accommodate 49 new child care spaces.



OUTREACH PROGRAMS

The provision of outreach programs in various community settings is a key strength of the current OEYC system. This includes library branches, community recreation centres, and community rooms in retirement homes and social housing complexes (see **Appendix F** for an inventory of current service locations). It is recommended that programs at physically accessible satellite locations throughout Perth County continue.

As described above (**section 6.1**), Perth Care for Kids owns and maintains three vans which are used by OEYC staff to travel to outreach programs, and the employees provide outreach services in pairs. It is recommended that opportunities for improving the efficiency and costs involved with delivering outreach programs be explored (e.g., ECE to parent/child ratios, use of personal vehicles for business travel, toy storage at designated locations in the community, etc.).

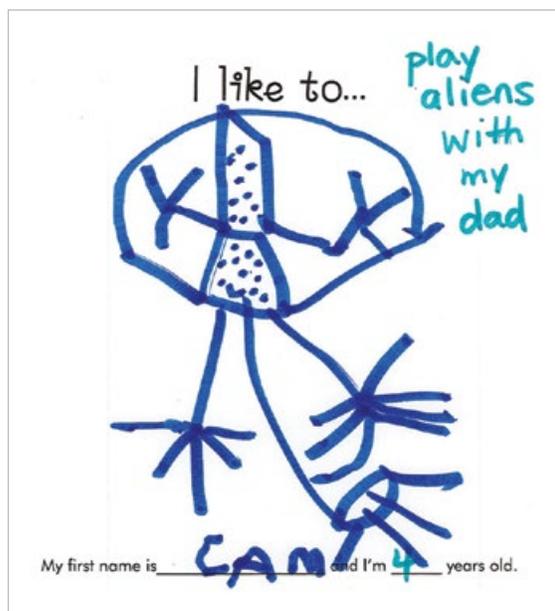
| Recommended Activities | Lead Responsibility | Timing |
|--|--|--|
| 6. Repurpose and expand the current early years centre space in Mitchell to accommodate additional child care spaces. | Service Manager, in collaboration with Perth Care for Kids and the Avon Maitland District School Board | Underway. Capital request submitted to Ministry of Education on August 4, 2017 |
| 7. Renew the existing lease agreements at the Falstaff Family Centre in Stratford and at the North Perth - Spinrite Child and Family Centre in Listowel. | Service Manager | Fall 2017 - leases renewed for a one-year period (2018) |
| 8. Explore the feasibility of accessing the Early Years Capital Program (EYCP) to first, create a new Child and Family Centre in Stratford, and second, expand and renovate the Child and Family Centre in Listowel. | Service Manager, in collaboration with the local school boards and existing child care providers | Fall 2017 and ongoing |
| 9. Hold public consultations to engage families (parents and children), caregivers and other professionals in sharing their ideas and helping to shape the design of future Child and Family Centre spaces. | Service Manager, in collaboration with the local school boards, child care providers, and selected architectural firms | 2018 |

| Recommended Activities | Lead Responsibility | Timing |
|---|---------------------|-------------------------|
| 10. Continue to offer outreach programs at physically accessible satellite locations throughout Perth County. | Service Manager | Spring 2018 and ongoing |
| 11. Explore the feasibility of storing toys and resources at satellite locations. | Service Manager | Spring 2018 |
| 12. Negotiate signage at satellite sites. | Service Manager | Spring 2018 |
| 13. Explore opportunities to improve the efficiency of the delivery of outreach programs. | Service Manager | July 2018 and ongoing |
| 14. Establish a new staffing ratio for the delivery of early years programs (i.e., one ECE per program, unless participant numbers require more staffing to maintain appropriate ECE to parent/child ratios). | Service Manager | July 2018 |

8.3 Virtual Services and Resources

In addition to offering interactive play groups and pre and postnatal support programs, Child and Family Centres are intended to be places where parents and caregivers can:

- Find information about programs and services that are available for young children and families in their area;
- Discover answers to questions about child development, parenting, nutrition, play and inquiry-based learning, and other topics that support them in their role; and
- Talk to Early Years Professionals, as well as other parents and caregivers in their community.



Some of these activities will happen in person at the Child and Family Centres, but it is also recommended that such services be accessible by phone and through virtual resources (e.g., website, social media, Skype, etc.). The Ministry of Education is planning to establish an on-line hub for parents to easily access information, resources and tools connecting them to a range of government early years programs. It is recommended that the Service Manager develop complementary virtual resources for Perth County, following the release of the further information on the provincial website this fall.

| Recommended Activities | Lead Responsibility | Timing |
|---|------------------------|--|
| <p>15. Establish one interactive, central website, where families can easily find information, tools, and resources on early years programs in Perth County. The website will be simple, accessible, legible, intuitive, easy to navigate, and current. It will be searchable by each municipality and by age range, and there will be electronic sign-up features for parents to register for programs. It will also include information and resources about child care (e.g., a listing of local licensed providers with the current wait list, how to find and what to look for in a child care provider, child care subsidies, etc.).</p> | <p>Service Manager</p> | <p>2018, following the release of the Ministry’s on-line hub</p> |
| <p>16. Create a social media strategy which will allow Early Years Professionals to engage in ongoing “conversations” with parents, caregivers, and the other interested community members about child development, parenting, nutrition, play and inquiry-based learning, and other topics that are important and relevant to them.</p> | <p>Service Manager</p> | <p>Fall 2018</p> |

8.4 Service Providers

UNIVERSAL PROGRAMS

It is recommended that the Service Manager outsource the delivery of the following mandatory core services:

- Drop-in programs and services which build responsive adult-child relationships and encourage children’s exploration, play, and inquiry, supported by early years pedagogy;
- Pre and postnatal support programs which enhance parent and caregiver well-being, enrich adult-child interactions and support them in their role(s); and
- Information sharing with parents and caregivers about healthy child development, parenting, nutrition, play and inquiry-based learning, and other children’s programs and services (e.g., parenting workshops, responding to parent/caregiver questions and concerns, referrals to specialists, etc.).

To minimize service disruptions to families and staff, it is recommended that the Service Manager enters into a provisional purchase of service agreement with Perth Care for Kids for a six-month period (January to June 2018) at the current OEYC budget level, including the funding currently provided for the Early Literacy Specialist.

It is also recommended that in the spring of 2018, the Service Manager issue a Request for Proposal (RFP) – competitive bid process – for the delivery of the above-mentioned core services, which will be open to all existing service providers in Perth County. The duration of the initial service contract(s) will be from July 2018 to December 2019, as per the timeline of the Ministry of Education’s funding agreement with the Service Manager.

The key criteria for selecting service delivery providers will include but is not limited to in-depth knowledge of the community, direct service delivery experience, and the capacity to deliver the mandatory core services. Employees of the selected service provider(s) will be expected to maintain relationships with community partners, to facilitate “warm hand-offs” for families who may benefit from access to specialized services, such as pre-school speech and language, public health, education, child care, and child welfare.



TARGETED PROGRAMS

Certain population groups experience systemic access barriers to mainstream early years programs (e.g., low-income families, teen parents, Indigenous families and other cultural groups). It is important for Early Years Professionals to be as well informed as possible about these population groups before working in the community. It takes time (often years) to develop trust and credibility among certain communities. Consistent staffing is extremely important. New play groups and supports will be most successful if introduced and supported by Early Years Professionals that are already known and trusted. All resource material needs to be in clear language with due consideration given to participant literacy levels and knowledge of English.

It is recommended that the Service Manager integrate the targeted outreach programs, currently supported through municipal contributions, into the Ontario Early Years Child and Family Centre framework to ensure the long-term sustainability of these programs. In addition, it is suggested that the Service Manager explore opportunities to expand the frequency and locations of targeted programs, based on community need and interest (e.g., high child poverty rate in North Perth).

| Recommended Activities | Lead Responsibility | Timing |
|---|---------------------|--|
| 17. Establish a provisional purchase of service agreement with Perth Care for Kids for a six-month period (January to June 2018) at the current OEYC budget level. | Service Manager | Fall 2017: provisional contract signed |
| 18. Integrate the targeted outreach programs, currently supported through municipal contributions, into the Ontario Early Years Child and Family Centre framework to ensure the long-term sustainability of these programs. | Service Manager | January 2018 and ongoing |
| 19. Issue an RFP and select a service provider(s) for the delivery of mandatory core services. | Service Manager | April 2018: RFP issued July 2018-December 2019: duration of purchase of service agreement |
| 20. Explore opportunities to expand the frequency and locations of targeted programs, based on community need and interest (e.g., high child poverty rate in North Perth). | Service Manager | Fall 2018 and ongoing |

8.5 Qualifications of Early Years Professionals

Programming in Child and Family Centres will be designed to foster positive outcomes and support nurturing relationships for children, parents, and caregivers based on the latest evidence and research. Registered Early Childhood Educators (RECEs) play a key role in delivering high-quality early years programs, as they bring specialized knowledge and expertise in child development and play and inquiry-based learning.

As per the Ministry guidelines, all services providers will be required to demonstrate through the purchase of service agreements that they can meet the required ECE qualifications for Early Years Professionals. It is expected that all agencies providing early years services will continue to help support their employees to upgrade their current qualifications through the ECE Qualifications Upgrade Program. This program helps support individuals working in the early years the sector to obtain an early childhood educator diploma and become eligible to apply for membership with the College of ECEs.

Service providers will also be required to demonstrate through purchase of service agreements their agencies’ plans for future wage enhancements, to bring employees in line with the Ministry of Education’s target salaries for RECEs. It is preferred that the lowest wage rate for employees working in Child and Family Centres not fall below the living wage rate for Huron-Perth.²¹

Moving forward, the Service Manger will support ongoing professional learning and development training opportunities for Early Years Professionals to maintain and further develop their knowledge and skills. Examples of training topics include healthy child development, pre and postnatal care, adult and parent education, early literacy and numeracy, diversity and inclusion, community development and outreach, and cultural competency.

| Recommended Activities | Lead Responsibility | Timing |
|---|--|-----------------------|
| 21. Advocate for better compensation for Early Years Professionals working in Perth County. | Service Manager | Underway |
| 22. Hold regular professional learning and development workshops to help support individuals working in the early years sector in Perth County to maintain and further develop their knowledge and skills. | Service Manager | Underway |
| 23. Ensure that programs and services are delivered by qualified Early Years Professionals. Qualified staff teams must include at least one RECE on site during the delivery of mandatory core programs and services. | Service Manager through purchase of service agreement(s) | July 2018 and ongoing |

²¹ In 2015, the Living Wage Rate for Huron-Perth was \$16.47 per hour. The Social Research & Planning Council – a division of the United Way of Huron-Perth is planning to release an updated living wage rate in November 2017.



8.6 Early Literacy

The funding that has been included in the early years budget from the Ministry of Education for early literacy is intended to help enhance the community capacity of all organizations and professionals working in the early years sector. Using the early years pedagogy – *How Does Learning Happen?* - providers are encouraged to consider how they can best integrate numeracy and literacy behaviours into every part of a child's day.

Existing literacy programs delivered by the OEYC (e.g., Fun with Mother Goose, Discovery Time, Family Math, Little Counters, Shake Wiggle Roll, Jump Jiggle Jive, etc.) will need to be reviewed, and if necessary updated, to ensure they fit with the early years pedagogy and expected program outcomes.

To minimize service disruptions for families and staff, it is recommended that the Service Manager enters into a provisional purchase of service agreement with Perth Care for Kids for the Early Literacy Specialist position for a six-month period (January to June 2018). Following this period, it is recommended that the Service Manager take on responsibility for ensuring that the early literacy resources are used to build community capacity. Service providers will be required to demonstrate through the purchase of service agreements how appreciative-based literacy activities are embedded into mandatory core programs and services.

| Recommended Activities | Lead Responsibility | Timing |
|---|--|--|
| <p>24. Establish a provisional purchase of service agreement for the Early Literacy Position with Perth Care for Kids for a six-month period (January to June 2018) at the current OEYC budget level.</p> | <p>Service Manager</p> | <p>Fall 2017: provisional contract signed</p> <p>January to June 2018: duration of purchase of service agreement</p> |
| <p>25. Review existing literacy programs to ensure they are appreciative-based, and if necessary update the program design to ensure that they fit with the early years pedagogy and expected program outcomes.</p> | <p>Service Manager, in partnership with members of the Perth County Information Network (libraries) and the Literacy Network of Kids First Huron Perth</p> | <p>Spring 2018 and ongoing</p> |
| <p>26. Ensure that appreciative-based literacy activities are integrated into mandatory core programs and services.</p> | <p>Service Manager through purchase of service agreement(s)</p> | <p>Fall 2018 and ongoing</p> |
| <p>27. Hold regular professional learning and development activities about early literacy for Early Years Professionals.</p> | <p>Service Manager, in partnership with the service providers</p> | <p>Fall 2018 and ongoing</p> |

8.7 Toy Lending Library

In 2016-17, there were a total of 23 members of Perth Care for Kids Toy Lending Library – a decrease of 36% since 2014-15. The low usage may be due to the location of the service in Mitchell. However, many OEYCs and public libraries located in other communities do not offer toy lending libraries due to lack of community interest and the challenges involved in maintaining the service. The cost and staff time involved in maintaining the toy lending library in Mitchell is not practical, given the low utilization patterns. It is recommended that funding for the toy lending library be discontinued effective January 1, 2018, the toys be reallocated to other early years and child care programs in the community for greater utilization of the resources, and the storage space be repurposed to support the agency's child care operations.

| Recommended Activities | Lead Responsibility | Timing |
|--|---|-----------------|
| 28. Cease funding for the Toy Lending Library, and reallocate the resources toward other early years programs. | Service Manager and Perth Care for Kids | January 1, 2018 |

8.8 French Language Services

As described in **section 5.3**, the most current Census data (2011) about language reveals that 465 persons (0.6% of the total population) have a mother tongue of French, and only 95 individuals (0.1%) speak French at home.²² Due to the low population level of French language speakers in Perth County, the Service Manager is not designated to provide services in French.

8.9 Indigenous Programs and Services

Through the Journey Together: Off-Reserve Early Years Commitments, the Service Manager is working in close partnership with the Indigenous International Consulting Corporation, Six Nations of the Grand River Territory, to plan for and deliver culturally responsible early years programs and services off-reserve.

²² Statistics Canada. 2013. National Household Survey Profile. 2011 Census. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 99-004-XWE. Ottawa. Released June 26, 2013.

8.10 Branding and Public Awareness

Increasing public awareness of Child and Family Centres is critical to the success of the programs. The Ministry of Education is currently developing a branding strategy, which will unite all four of the Ministry-funded child and family support programs into one brand. In addition, the Ministry is planning to release an integrated marketing campaign to help increase awareness of child care and early years programs available to parents and caregivers in Ontario, and to launch an online hub for parents to easily access information, resources and tools. Once the provincial branding strategy and marketing campaign are released, it is recommended that the Service Manager develop a complementary communication and community relations strategy for Perth County, which should include ongoing public engagement opportunities (e.g., creation of a local Children’s Charter, Parent Advisory Committee).

In the meantime, it is recommended that the Service Manager undertake three activities. First, the childcare division should be renamed the “Early Years and Child Care” division. Secondly, information about the Child and Family Centre programs and transition plan should be communicated to families, caregivers, OEYC Board members and employees, and other community partners through a variety of mechanisms (i.e., Service Manager’s website, hard copy Q&As available at the OEYCs, and site visits). And finally, the program calendars should be re-designed to be more accessible, web-friendly, and searchable by municipality.

| Recommended Activities | Lead Responsibility | Timing |
|---|---------------------|---|
| 29. Rename the childcare division the “Early Years and Child Care” division to reflect the new program component delivery from the Ministry of Education. | Service Manager | Fall 2017 |
| 30. Update the City of Stratford’s website to include key messages about the transition plan, and provide Perth Care for Kids with key messages and Q&As to handle inquiries from parents and caregivers. | Service Manager | Fall 2017 |
| 31. Implement the recommendations from the provincial branding strategy and marketing campaign, and develop a complementary communications and community relations strategy for Perth County. | Service Manager | 2018, following the release of the Ministry’s branding and marketing plan |

| Recommended Activities | Lead Responsibility | Timing |
|---|---------------------|-----------------------|
| 32. Visit the OEYCs during some of the highly attended programs to talk with parents and caregivers, explain the transition, what to expect, and answer questions. | Service Manager | Spring 2018 |
| 33. Redesign the program calendars, with the assistance of a professional graphic designer, who can help to ensure that the layout is simple, legible, accessible, user-friendly, and interactive (for on-line viewing). As well, the program calendars need to be easy to navigate by municipality and have a consistent look. | Service Manager | Fall 2018 and ongoing |

8.11 Monitoring and Evaluation

The Service Manager is currently in the process of recruiting a Research and Program Analyst to support the child care and early years division. This position will be responsible for leading local knowledge mobilization efforts and acting as a resource for the community regarding early years research and data, including the EDI (Early Development Instrument) and related community measures.

Through the development of this need assessment and initial plan, the Service Manager has begun to collect quantitative and qualitative data that will inform ongoing early years community planning processes. A data sharing agreement was established with Perth District Health Unit for this project, and data sharing discussions with the local School Boards are underway. It is recommended that these data sharing conversations and arrangements continue, and that future community planning efforts continue to be based on relevant, current research and evidence.

It is understood that the Ministry of Education is working on the development of an outcomes and measurement strategy, to monitor the effectiveness of the early years system. Consideration should be given to updating EYSIS (Early Years Service Information System) so that it can produce more robust reports about the socio-demographic profile of Child and Family Centre users as well as program outcomes.

Wherever possible, it is recommended that any program changes and/or enhancements be piloted before making any long-term commitments (e.g., pop-up play group with a focus group/evaluation component). In addition, it is recommended that the Service Manager continue to engage children, parents, caregivers and other Early Years Professionals in regular program monitoring and evaluation activities of early years services (e.g., satisfaction and outcome surveys).

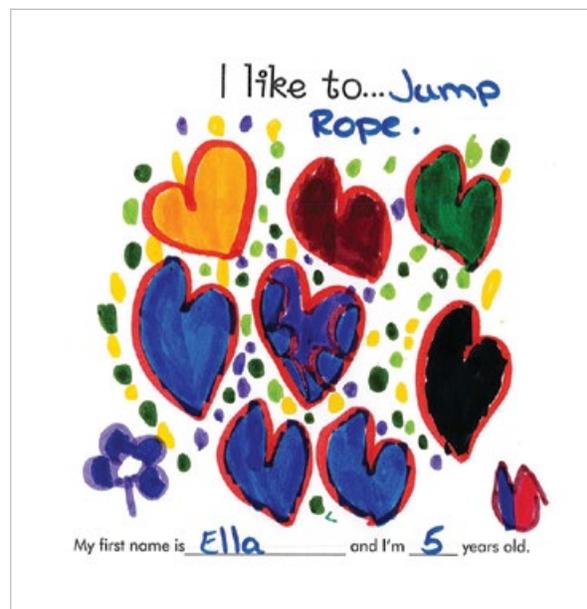
| Recommended Activities | Lead Responsibility | Timing |
|---|---|-----------------------|
| 34. Regularly engage with community partners in knowledge mobilization activities, and data sharing discussions and arrangements. | Service Manager and the Research and Evaluation Committee of Kids First Huron Perth | 2018 and ongoing |
| 35. Pilot and test program changes and enhancements (i.e., content, locations, days and times) before making any long-term commitments. | Service Manager | Fall 2018 and ongoing |
| 36. Continue to engage children, parents, caregivers and other Early Years Professionals in regular program monitoring and evaluation activities. | Service Manager | Fall 2018 and ongoing |



9. Conclusion

All children are complex thinkers, and as they grow, they thrive in responsive and caring relationships that support how learning happens. All children are curious and learn through play, making connections and testing theories as they interact with their world. High-quality early years programs recognize children as born learners and as citizens with rights who deserve to have beneficial experiences every day in enriching environments.²³

The overall goal of this transition plan is to help ensure that all children living in Perth County are given opportunities to explore their innate curiosity through high-quality early years experiences.



²³ Ontario Ministry of Education. 2014. *How Does Learning Happen? Ontario's Pedagogy for the Early Years*. Toronto, ON: Queen's Printer for Ontario.

Appendix A – Planning Criteria

PLANNING ASSUMPTIONS

- We know how important the early years are in forming a solid foundation for a child’s entire life, and are committed to delivering programs and services that promote early learning and development, and support parents and caregivers.
- We are committed to building on the strengths and assets of existing programs, as well as identifying new opportunities to realign services to better meet the needs of children and families in our community.
- We will ensure that programs and services are delivered by qualified Early Years Professionals, and will continue to advocate for better compensation for staff.
- We will ensure that children, parents, and caregivers have ample opportunities to provide ongoing input to inform local programs and services.
- We will take a phased-in approach to the implementation of the new system in order to minimize any disruptions to families and staff.

PLANNING CRITERIA

The recommendations included in this report are based on a comprehensive review of available socio-demographic data, healthy child development indicators and OEYC service utilization statistics, as well as community input and feedback. In determining the location of programs and services throughout Perth, and the scope of services to be offered, the following guiding principles and decision-making criteria were taken into consideration.



Decision-making Criteria re Service Delivery Methods (Centres, Mobile Services, Virtual Resources and Phone Lines)

Level of community need

- Extent to which the program is situated in close proximity to its intended target population;
- Extent to which the program will address unmet needs in the community or enhance existing efforts;
- Extent to which the program is likely to reach a significant number of children and families; and
- Extent to which the program is likely to achieve the intended outcomes for Child and Family Centres.

Accessibility and space availability

- Extent to which rural residents can access programs (travel time and distance, parking for cars and horse/buggy, etc.);
- Extent to which urban sites are accessible for individuals without a car (transit, walkability, etc.);
- Space is compliant with Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act; and
- Day of week and time of day space could be open/available.

Service integration

- Extent to which other services and supports for children of all ages are available on site (schools first, but not schools only);
- Proximity to complementary and specialized community services; and
- Type of facility (if shared).

Service continuity

- Extent to which local families have engaged with existing services, supports, locations and providers.

Resource implications

- Existing lease agreements and employment arrangements; and
- Future leasing costs, and capital costs involved with enhancing, relocating or reconfiguring sites.

Appendix B – Participating Organizations

| Community Meetings | Participating Organizations |
|---|--|
| <p>Community Forum (December 6, 2016)¹</p> | <p>Avon Maitland District School Board Child and Parent Resource Institute Choices for Change City of Stratford Child Care Division Clinton Co-Operative Childcare Centre Community Living Central Huron Huron County Children’s Services Huron County Health Unit Huron County Library Huron County Ontario Works Huron Perth Children’s Aid Society Huron Perth Healthcare Alliance London Bridge Child Care Services Inc. Ministry of Education North Huron Children’s Centre Perth Care for Kids Perth District Health Unit Seaforth Co-operative Children’s Centre Thames Valley Children’s Centre Vanastra Early Childhood Learning Centre Walton’s Little School YMCA of Stratford-Perth</p> |
| <p>Perth Child Care Supervisors Network (March 20, 2017)</p> | <p>123 Look at Me Cooperative Nursery School Anne Hathaway Daycare Avon Cooperative Preschool City of Stratford Children’s Resource Consultant Program Ministry of Education North Perth – Spinrite Child and Family Centre Perth Care for Kids St Johns Cooperative Preschool St. Marys Child Care Centre YMCA of Stratford-Perth</p> |

¹ The community forum held on December 6, 2016 was facilitated by Beth Blowes, and involved representatives from Huron County as well as Perth County. The remaining nine consultations were facilitated by Eden Grodzinski of JPMC, in collaboration with the City of Stratford Social Services Department.

| Community Meetings | Participating Organizations |
|--|---|
| Perth Service Integration Committee (March 27 and May 23, 2017) | Avon Maitland District School Board Child and Parent Resource Institute (CPRI) City of Stratford Child Care Division Huron-Perth Catholic District School Board Huron-Perth Children's Aid Society Ministry of Education Perth Care for Kids Perth County Information Network Perth District Health Unit SmallTALK Preschool Speech Language System United Way Perth-Huron YMCA of Stratford-Perth |
| Perth County Information Network (May 24, 2017) | North Perth Public Library Perth East Public Library St. Marys Public Library Stratford Public Library West Perth Public Library |
| Perth Care for Kids (June 7 and August 16, 2017) | Board of Directors |
| School Boards (June 19, 2017) | Avon Maitland District School Board Huron-Perth Catholic District School Board |
| Perth East Advisory Committee (June 26, 2017) | City of Stratford Child Care Division Countryside Midwifery Services Knollcrest Lodge Perth Care for Kids Perth District Health Unit Township of Perth East |
| Public Health (August 21, 2017) | Perth District Health Unit |

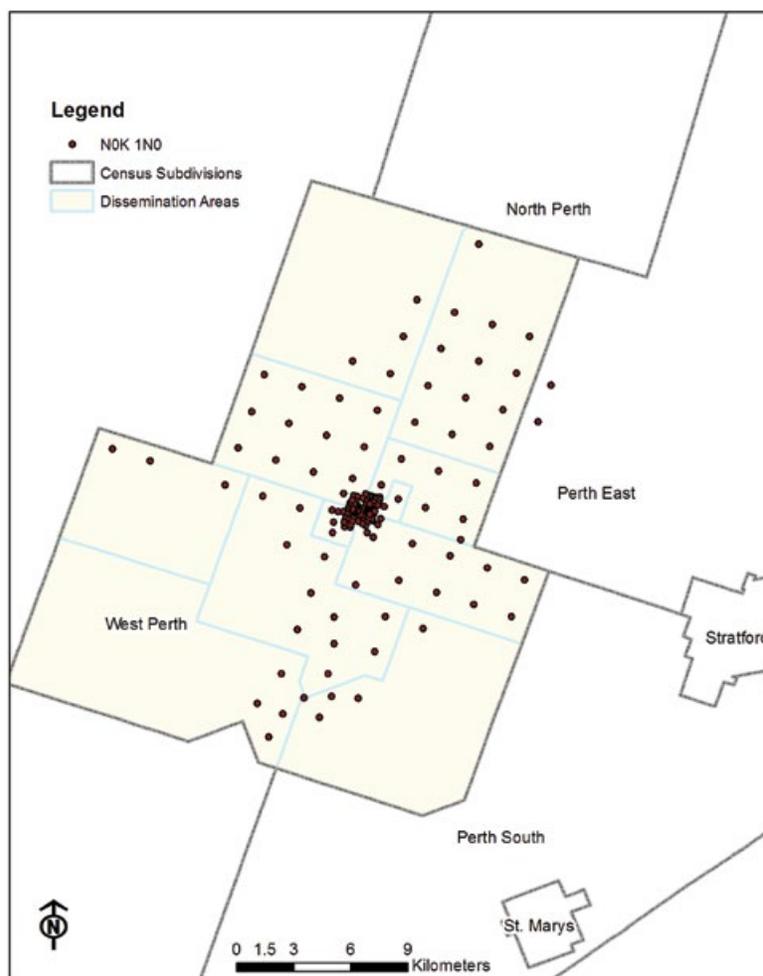
Appendix C – Mapping Methodology

The use of postal codes is generally regarded as one of the more precise methods of geocoding (assigning geographic location) to data in Canada. However, the accuracy and precision of data geocoded using postal codes is not universal, and results are much better in urban areas where data can generally be located within a 100-metre radius from the postal code location. In rural and remote areas, a single postal code may encompass a large geographic area, and therefore, the accuracy and precision of geocoding is reduced dramatically. Postal codes in rural areas are also frequently represented by multiple points, and there is no way to identify which of the points is the most appropriate match.

In Perth County, outside of the major centres, the use of postal codes to geocode locations is challenging, particularly in West Perth including the town of Mitchell. Some postal codes are located across multiple Dissemination Areas (DA) and also cross Census Subdivisions (CSD). For instance, the postal code NOK 1N0 is represented by 195 points and is found in 10 unique DAs and 2 CSDs. The majority of this postal code is located in West Perth (193 of the 195 points), and the points cover nine separate DAs within West Perth (see **Figure C1**).

In the rural areas, the use of a DA for mapping is often more accurate than a postal code. Unless otherwise specified, the maps in this report are based on DAs.

Figure C1 - Location Points of Postal Code NOK 1N0



Appendix D – Demographic Maps

Figure D1 - Population Ages 0-6 in Perth County and Location of Early Years Centres, 2016

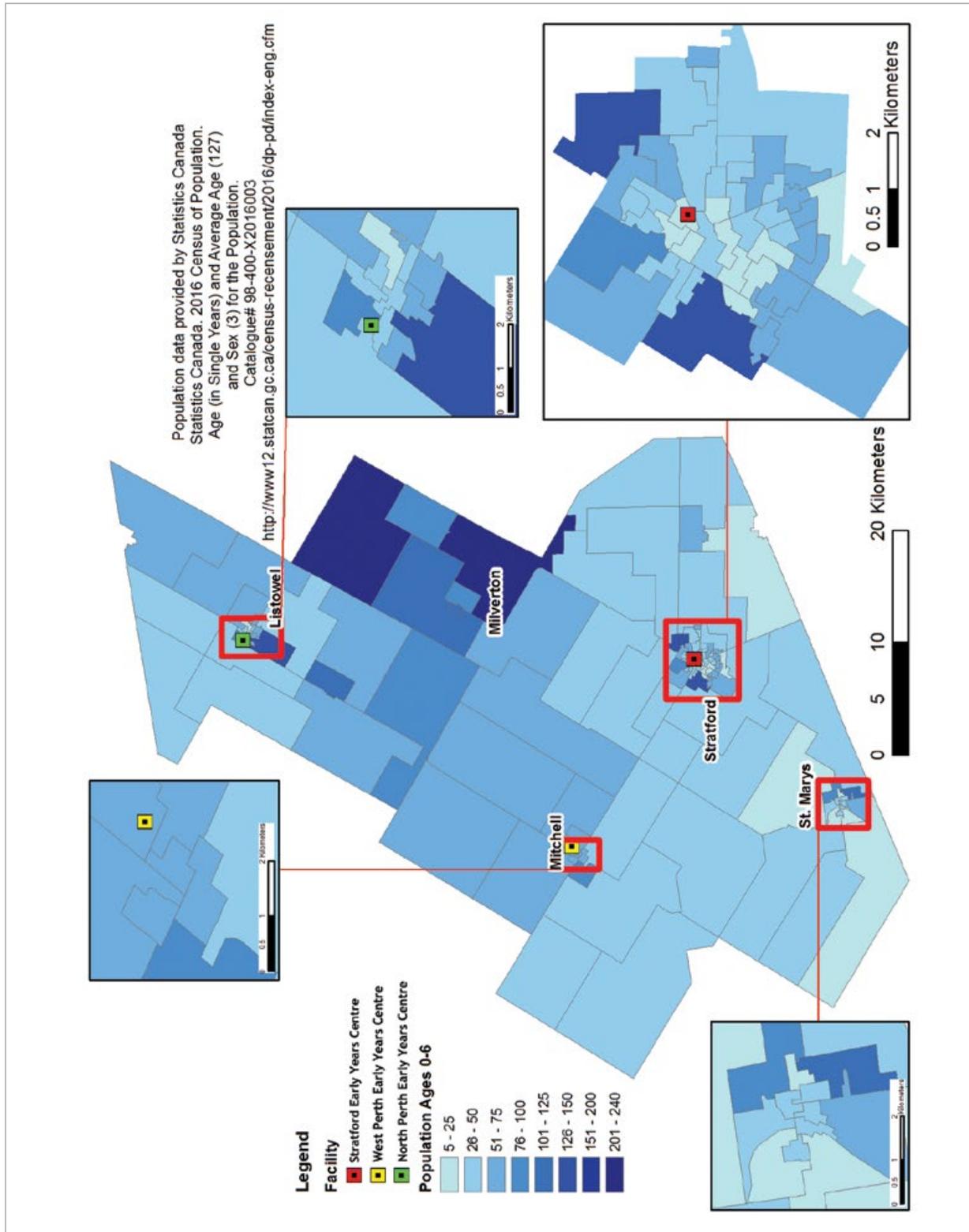


Figure D2 - Prevalence of Households that Speak a Language other than English or French at Home, 2011

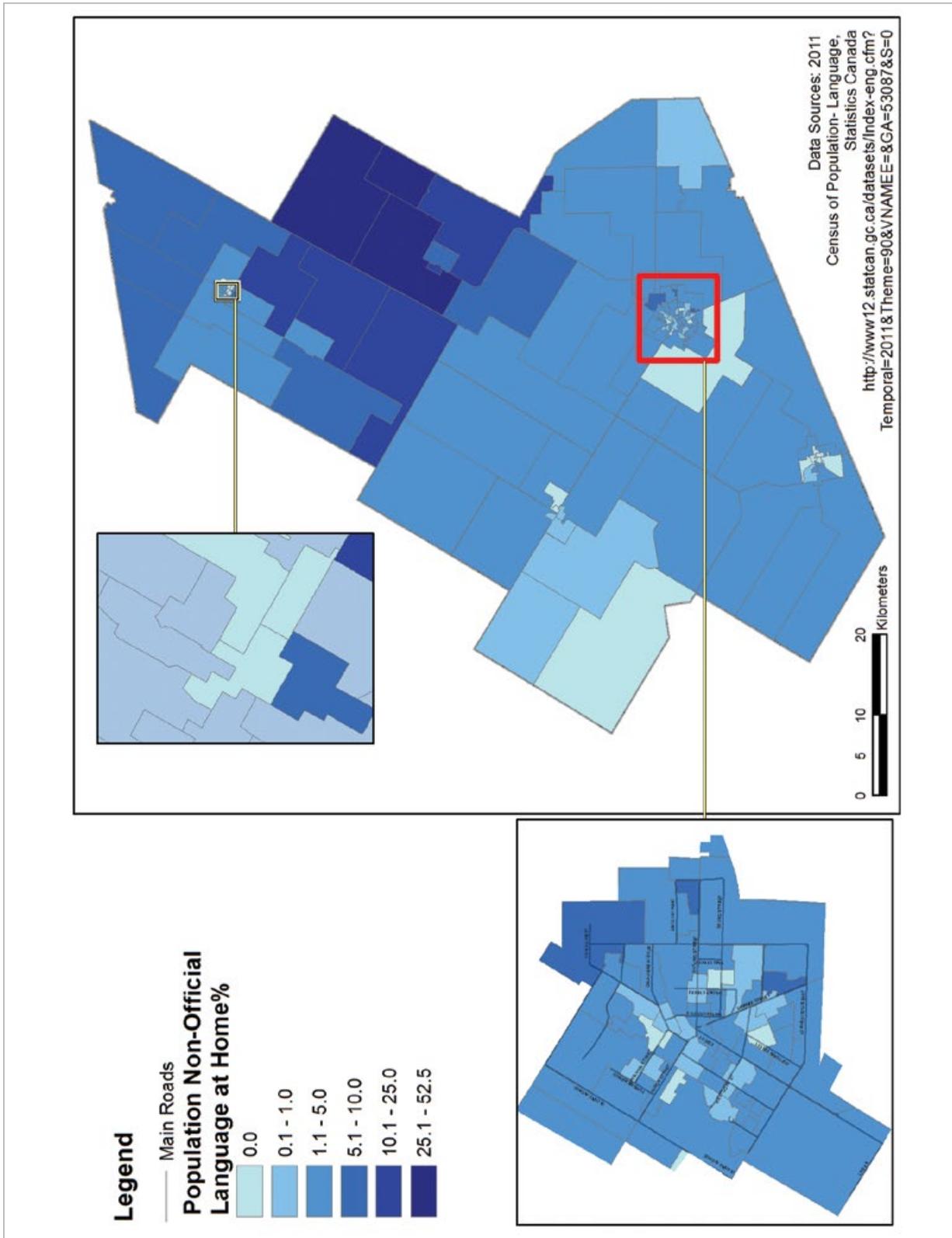


Figure D3 - Indigenous Population Ages 0-6 in Perth County, 2011

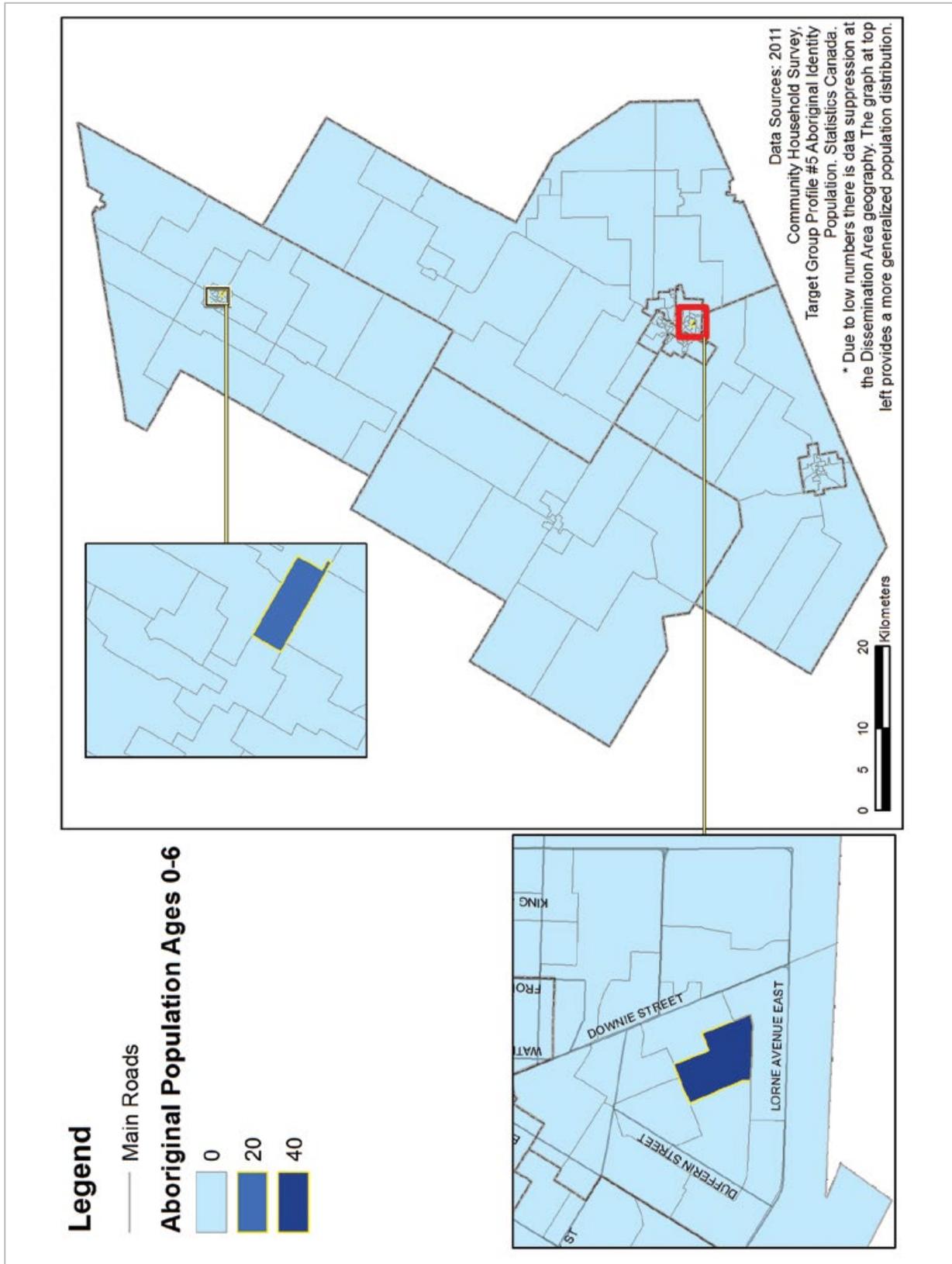
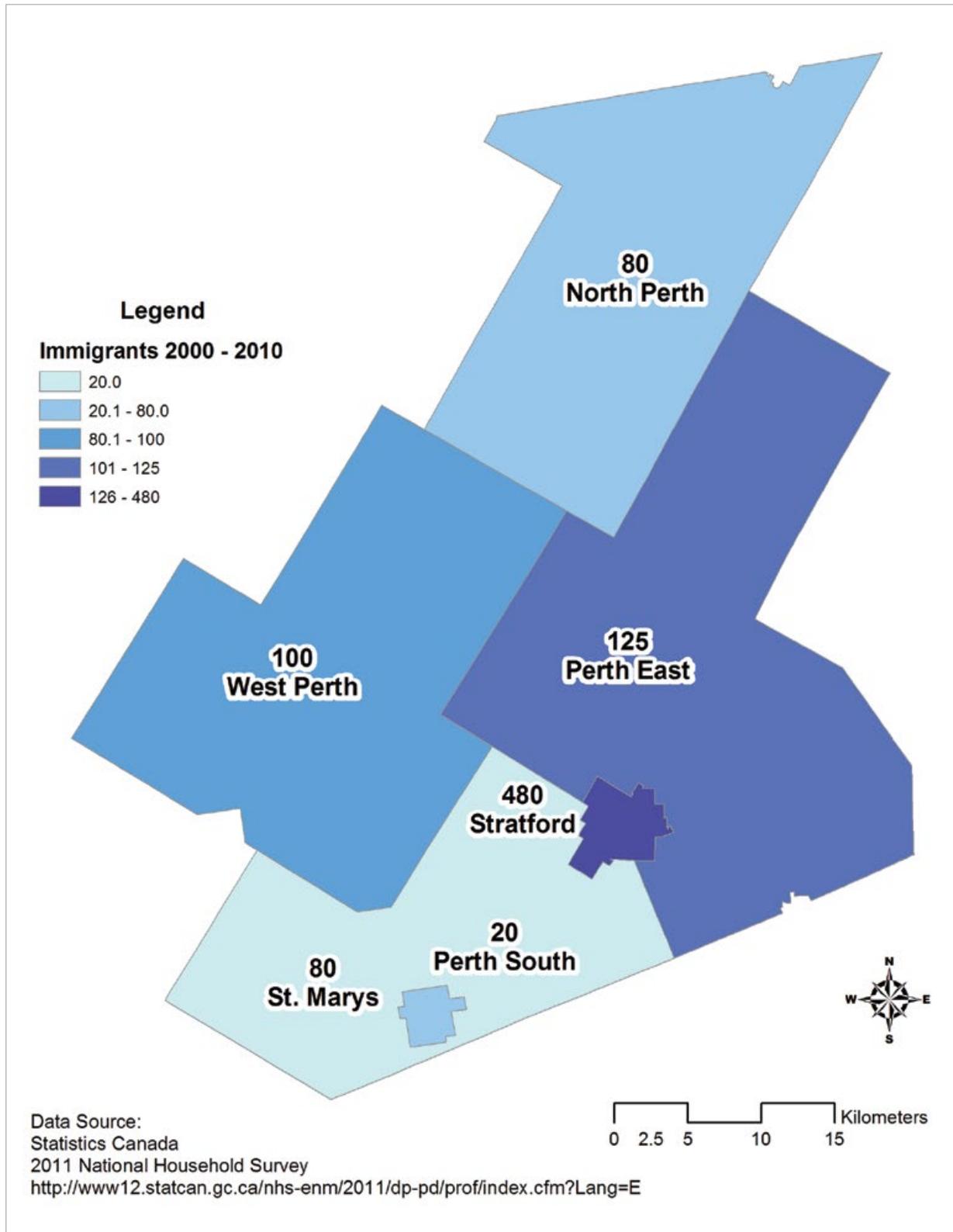
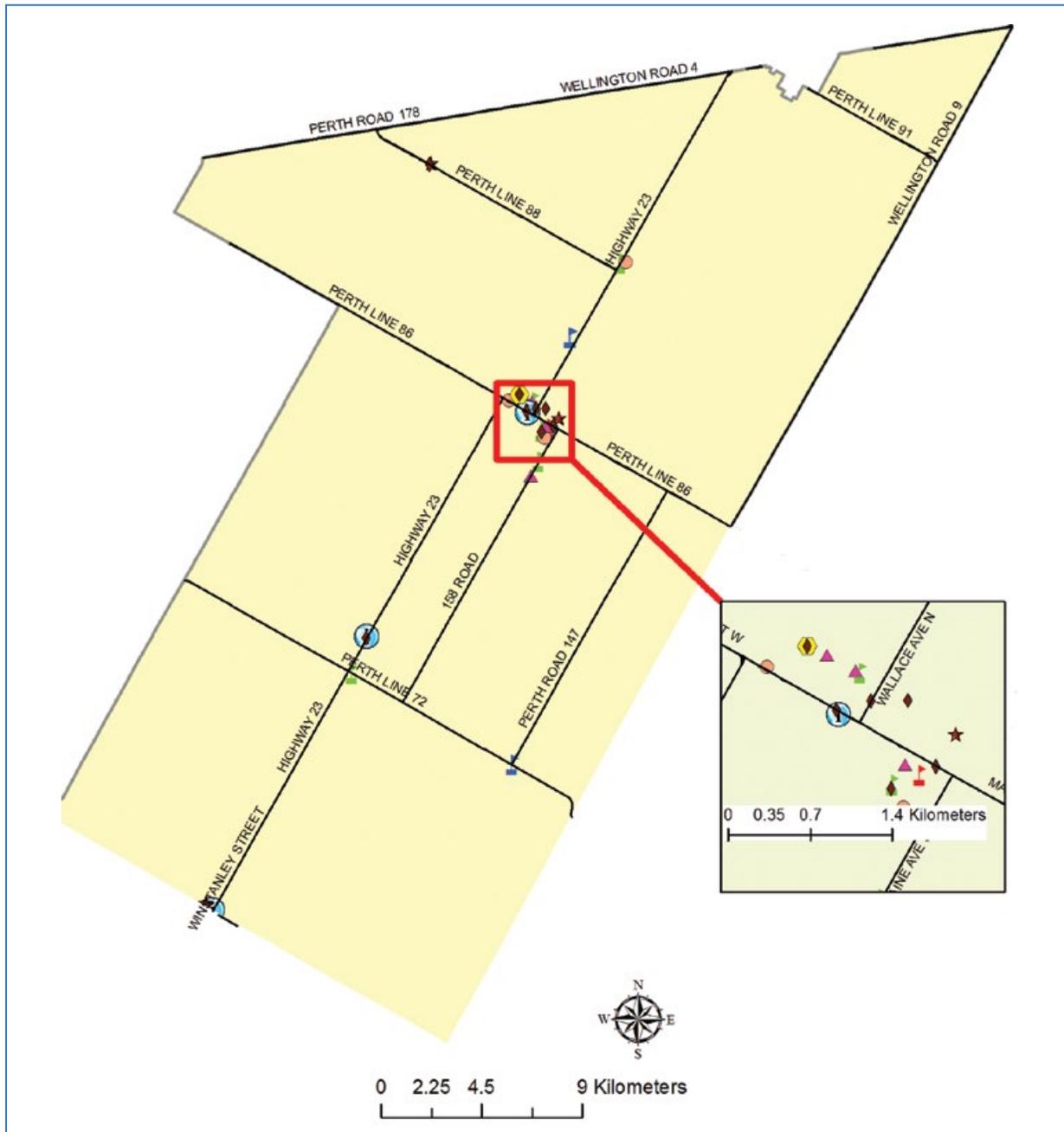


Figure D4 - Recent Immigrants to Canada Arriving Between 2000-2010, Living in Perth County by Census Subdivision as of 2011



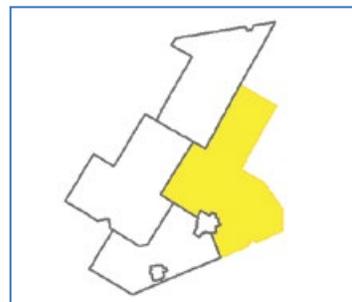
Appendix E – Municipal Maps and Profiles

NORTH PERTH COMMUNITY PROFILE



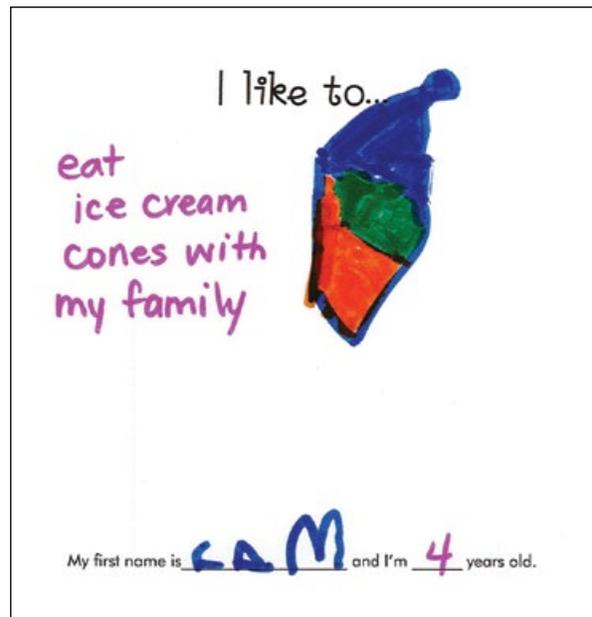
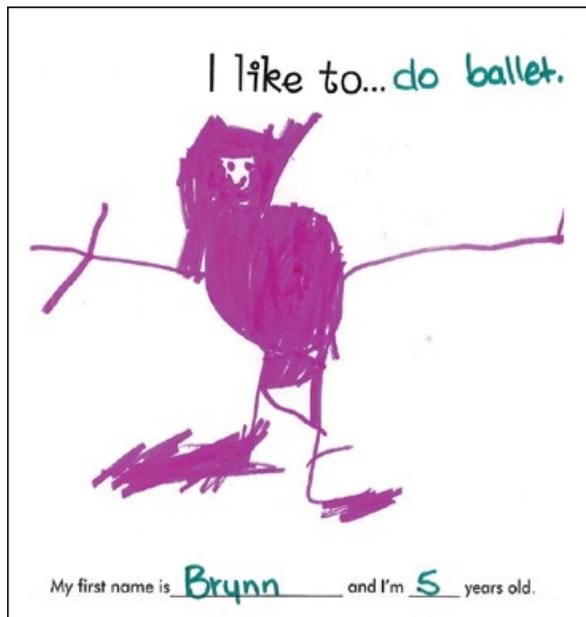
Legend

- | | |
|--|---|
|  OEYC |  Licensed Child Care |
|  OEYC Satellite |  Parochial School |
|  Recreation Centres |  Elementary School |
|  Libraries |  Secondary School |
|  Before and After School Programs | |

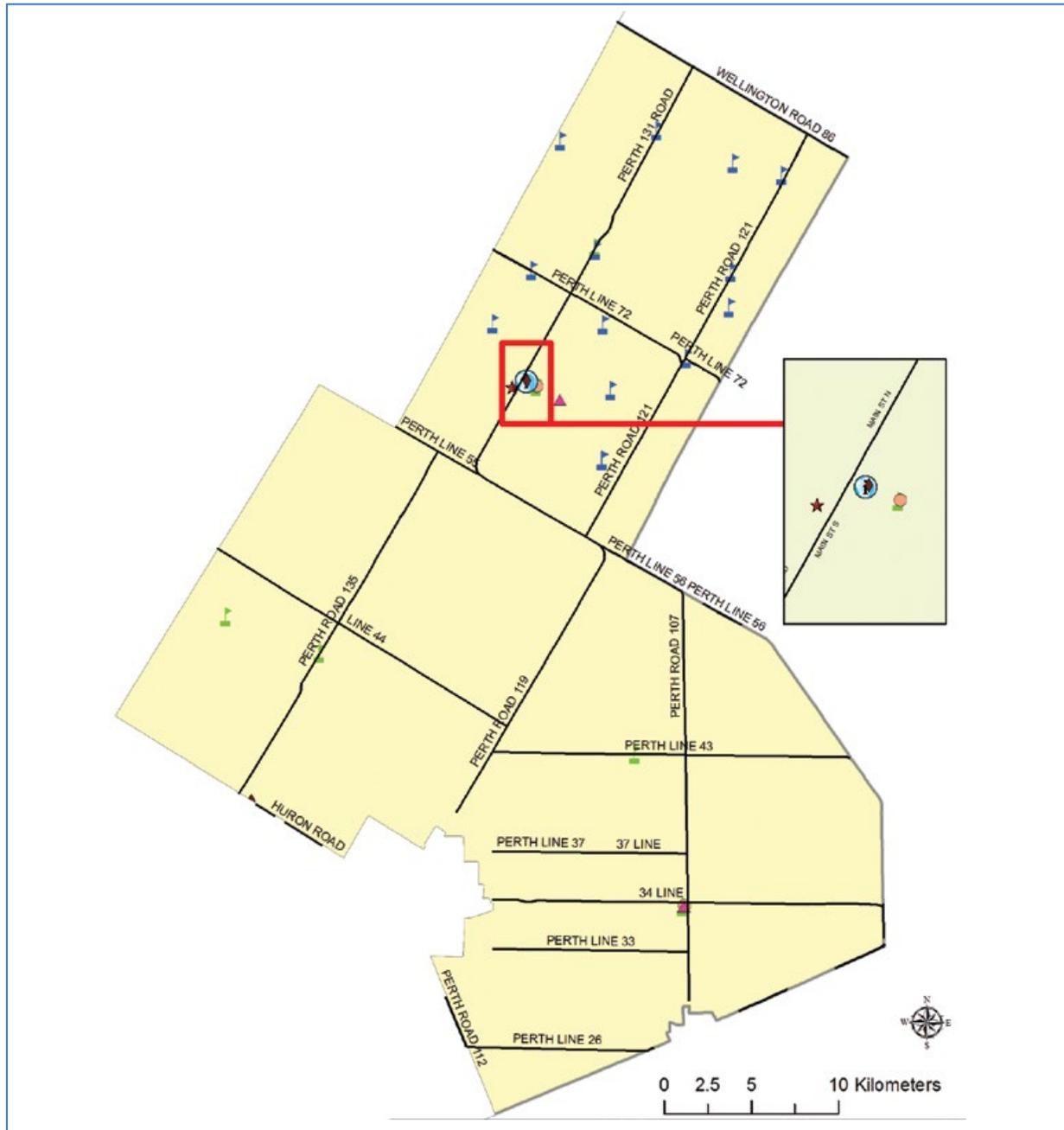


| | Perth County | North Perth | Municipal Ranking |
|---|--------------|-------------|-------------------|
| Population (2016 Census) | | | |
| Total Population (#) | 76,815 | 13,130 | top 1/3 |
| Less than 1 | 895 | 225 | top 1/3 |
| 1 year olds | 900 | 200 | |
| 2 year olds | 895 | 185 | |
| 3 year olds | 955 | 205 | |
| 4 year olds | 870 | 190 | |
| 5 year olds | 970 | 190 | |
| 6 year olds | 945 | 195 | |
| Children 0-6 (#) | 6,430 | 1,390 | |
| Children ages 0-6 of total population (%) | 8.4% | 10.6% | top 1/3 |
| Language (2011 NHS) | | | |
| Population speaking French at home (%) | 0.1% | 0.1% | |
| Population speaking neither official language at home (%) | 4.2% | 5.0% | top 1/3 |
| Population speaking German at home (%) | 2.7% | 3.4% | |
| Population speaking Dutch at home (%) | 0.3% | 0.6% | |
| Indigenous (2011 NHS) | | | |
| Total Indigenous Population (#) | 645 | 70 | middle 1/3 |
| Indigenous children ages 0-4 (#) | 100 | 35 | |
| Indigenous Children ages 0-4 of total Indigenous population (%) | 15.5% | 50.0% | |
| Immigration (2011 NHS) | | | |
| Recent immigrants, 2006-2011 (#) | 565 | 55 | middle 1/3 |
| Recent immigrants (% of total pop) | 0.8% | 0.4% | bottom 1/3 |
| Family Make-up (2011 Census) | | | |
| Number of families | 21,080 | 3,595 | top 1/3 |
| Average number of children living at home | 1.1 | 1.2 | ** |
| Lone parent families (#) | 2,200 | 320 | top 1/3 |
| Lone parent families (% of all families) | 10.4% | 8.9% | ** |
| Economic Security - The Home Environment (2011 NHS) | | | |
| Individuals age 15+ without a high school education (%) | 26.0% | 31.1% | *** |
| Unemployment rate (%) | 5.5% | 3.8% | ** |
| Households spending 30% or more on housing (%) | 23.9% | 23.8% | ** |
| Median Family Income | \$78,713 | \$75,676 | bottom 1/3 |
| Low Income Measure After Tax (LIM-AT) | | | |
| LIM-AT All individuals (%) | 10.1% | 12.1% | ** |
| LIM-AT Children ages 0-6 (%) | 17.6% | 27.8% | * |
| LIM-AT Children ages 0-18 (%) | 12.9% | 18.4% | * |

| | Perth County | North Perth | Municipal Ranking |
|--|--------------|-------------|-------------------|
| Calling All Three Year Olds (2016, Perth District Health Unit) | | | |
| Preschoolers who had an area of concern identified for further follow-up by the Nipissing District Developmental Screen® | 13% | 10% | *** |
| Early Development Instrument (2014-15, Offord Centre) | | | |
| EDI Mean Scores (scale of 0-10; 10 being best possible score) | | | |
| Physical Health & Well-being | 8.9 | 8.7 | ** |
| Social Competence | 8.1 | 8.0 | ** |
| Emotional Maturity | 7.7 | 7.8 | ** |
| Language & Cognitive Development | 8.8 | 8.8 | ** |
| Communication Skills & General Knowledge | 8.1 | 8.0 | ** |
| Vulnerable on at least 1 domains (%) | 31% | 31% | ** |

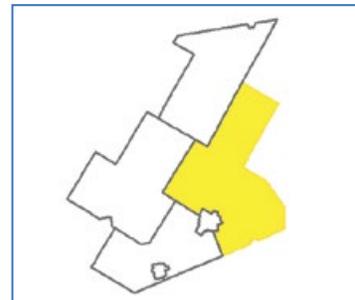


PERTH EAST COMMUNITY PROFILE



Legend

- | | |
|--|---|
|  OEYC |  Licensed Child Care |
|  OEYC Satellite |  Parochial School |
|  Recreation Centres |  Elementary School |
|  Libraries |  Secondary School |
|  Before and After School Programs | |

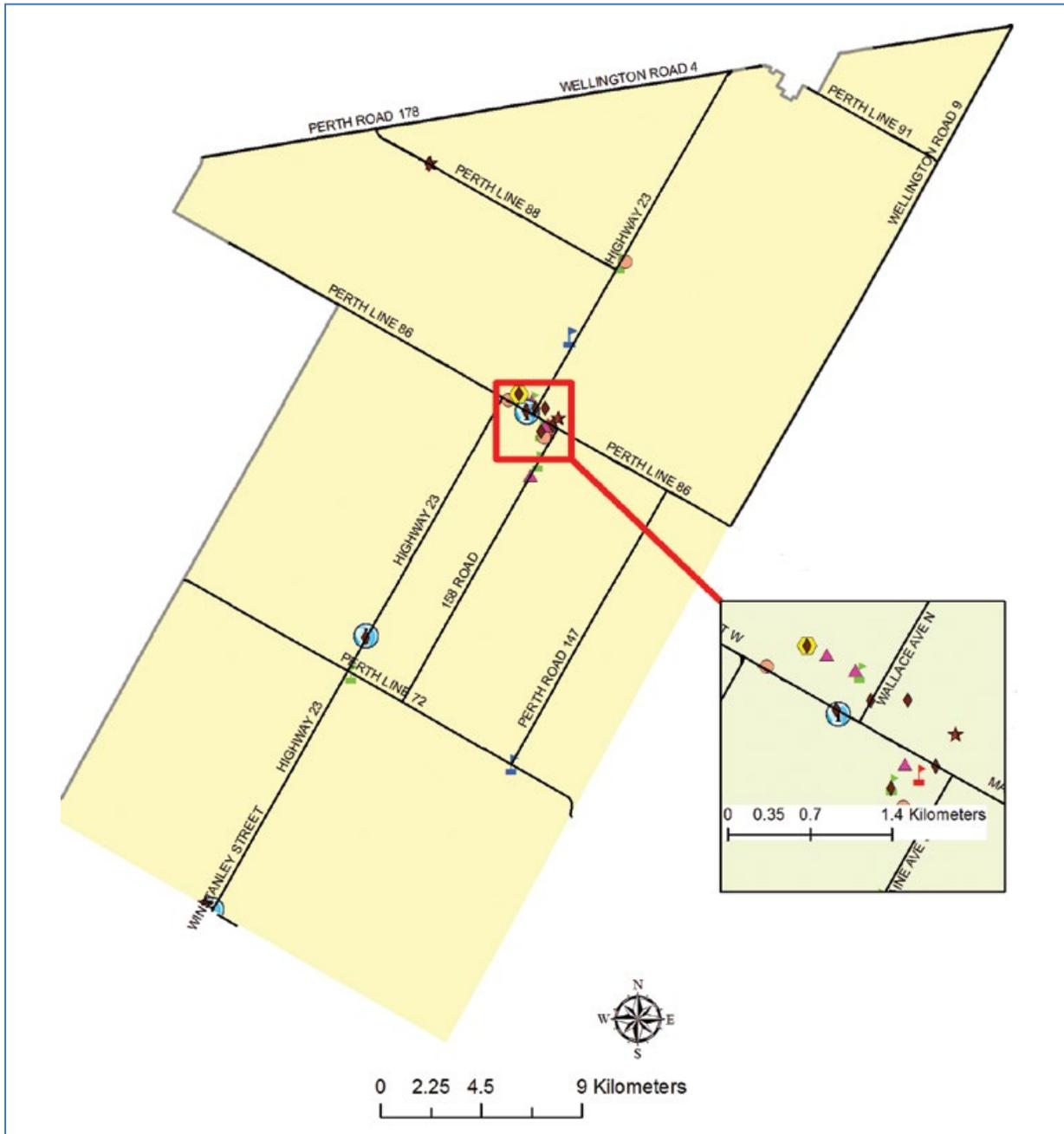


| | Perth County | Pert East | Municipal Ranking |
|---|--------------|-----------|-------------------|
| Population (2016 Census) | | | |
| Total Population (#) | 76,815 | 12,261 | middle 1/3 |
| Less than 1 | 895 | 180 | middle 1/3 |
| 1 year olds | 900 | 185 | |
| 2 year olds | 895 | 210 | |
| 3 year olds | 955 | 210 | |
| 4 year olds | 870 | 175 | |
| 5 year olds | 970 | 220 | |
| 6 year olds | 945 | 190 | |
| Children 0-6 (#) | 6,430 | 1,370 | |
| Children ages 0-6 of total population (%) | 8.4% | 11.2% | top 1/3 |
| Language (2011 NHS) | | | |
| Population speaking French at home (%) | 0.1% | 0.1% | |
| Population speaking neither official language at home (%) | 4.2% | 13.4% | top 1/3 |
| Population speaking German at home (%) | 2.7% | 12.3% | |
| Population speaking Dutch at home (%) | 0.3% | 0.7% | |
| Indigenous (2011 NHS) | | | |
| Total Indigenous Population (#) | 645 | 55 | middle 1/3 |
| Indigenous children ages 0-4 (#) | 100 | 0 | |
| Indigenous Children ages 0-4 of total Indigenous population (%) | 15.5% | 0.0% | |
| Immigration (2011 NHS) | | | |
| Recent immigrants, 2006-2011 (#) | 565 | 75 | top 1/3 |
| Recent immigrants (% of total pop) | 0.8% | 0.6% | top 1/3 |
| Family Make-up (2011 Census) | | | |
| Number of families | 21,080 | 3,210 | middle 1/3 |
| Average number of children living at home | 1.1 | 1.4 | *** |
| Lone parent families (#) | 2,200 | 160 | bottom 1/3 |
| Lone parent families (% of all families) | 10.4% | 5.0% | *** |
| Economic Security - The Home Environment (2011 NHS) | | | |
| Individuals age 15+ without a high school education (%) | 26.0% | 34.4% | *** |
| Unemployment rate (%) | 5.5% | 3.5% | ** |
| Households spending 30% or more on housing (%) | 23.9% | 20.8% | *** |
| Median Family Income | \$78,713 | \$85,016 | top 1/3 |
| Low Income Measure After Tax (LIM-AT) | | | |
| LIM-AT All individuals (%) | 10.1% | 9.6% | ** |
| LIM-AT Children ages 0-6 (%) | 17.6% | 16.1% | ** |
| LIM-AT Children ages 0-18 (%) | 12.9% | 12.4% | ** |

| | Perth County | Pert East | Municipal Ranking |
|--|--------------|-----------|-------------------|
| Calling All Three Year Olds (2016, Perth District Health Unit) | | | |
| Preschoolers who had an area of concern identified for further follow-up by the Nipissing District Developmental Screen® | 13% | 13% | ** |
| Early Development Instrument (2014-15, Offord Centre) | | | |
| EDI Mean Scores (scale of 0-10; 10 being best possible score) | | | |
| Physical Health & Well-being | 8.9 | 8.5 | ** |
| Social Competence | 8.1 | 7.8 | * |
| Emotional Maturity | 7.7 | 7.7 | ** |
| Language & Cognitive Development | 8.8 | 8.4 | ** |
| Communication Skills & General Knowledge | 8.1 | 7.4 | * |
| Vulnerable on at least 1 domains (%) | 31% | 43% | * |

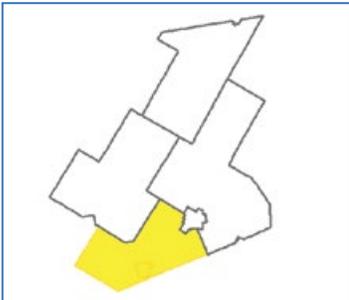


PERTH SOUTH AND ST. MARYS COMMUNITY PROFILE



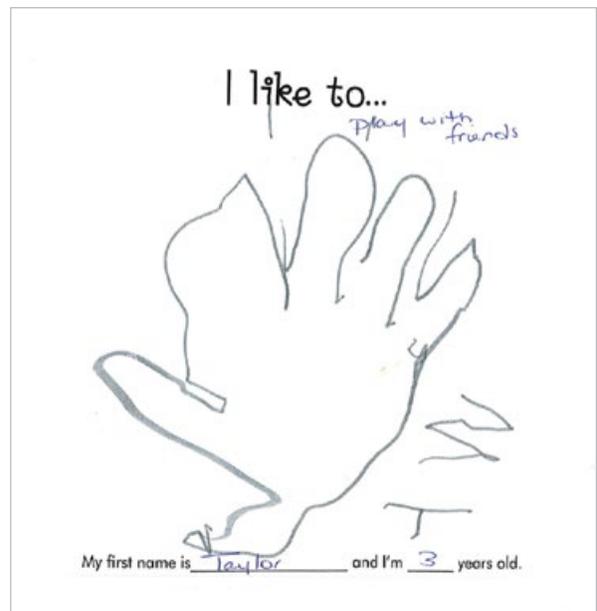
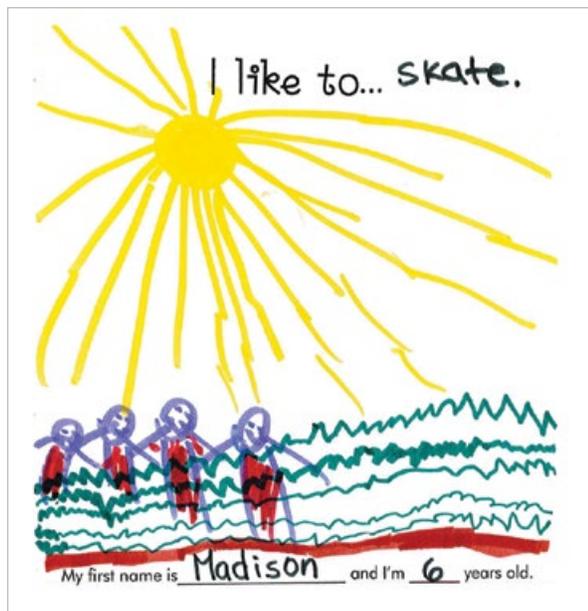
Legend

| | |
|--|---|
|  OEYC |  Licensed Child Care |
|  OEYC Satellite |  Parochial School |
|  Recreation Centres |  Elementary School |
|  Libraries |  Secondary School |
|  Before and After School Programs | |

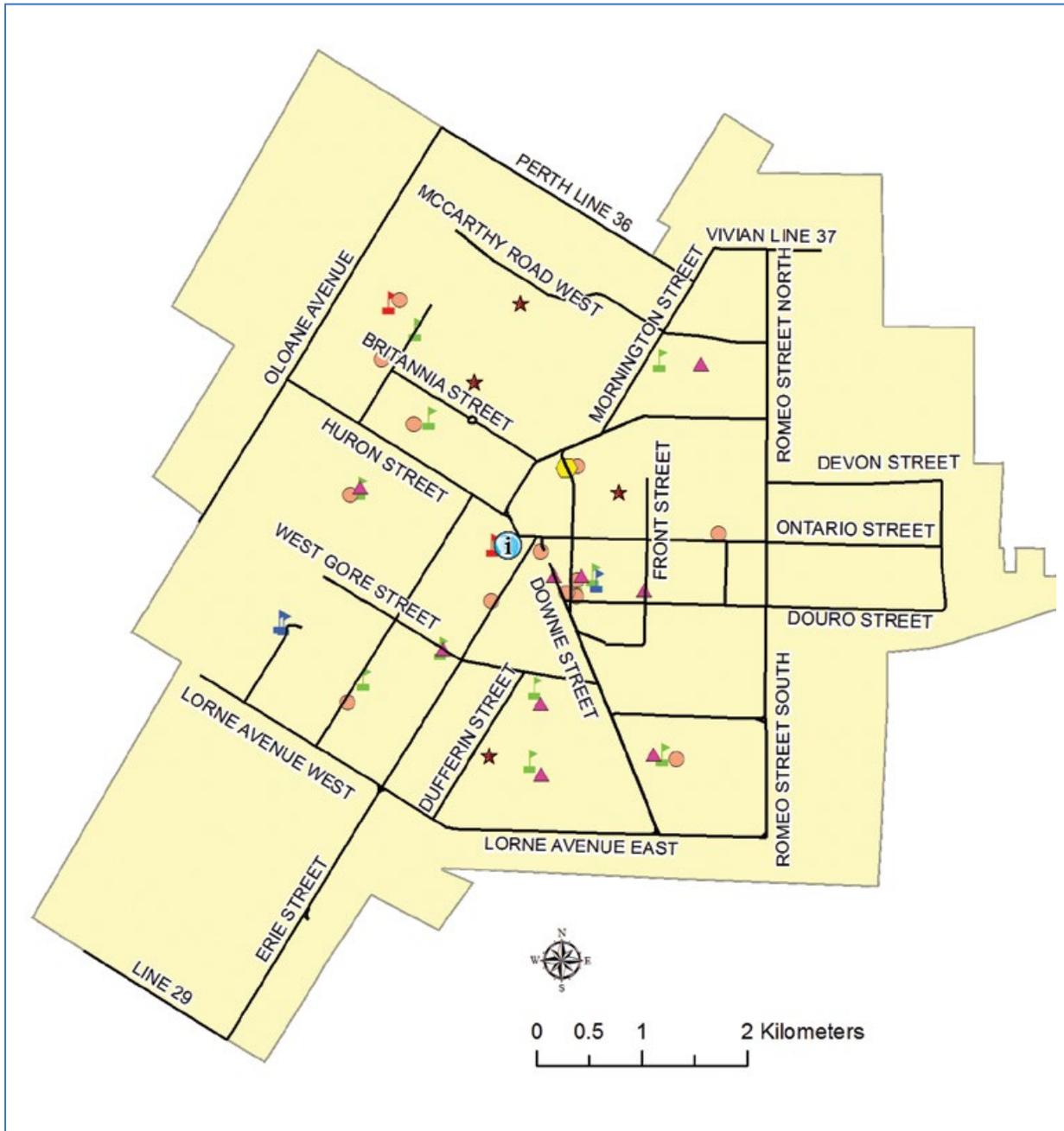


| | Perth County | Perth South | Municipal Ranking | St. Marys | Municipal Ranking |
|---|--------------|-------------|-------------------|------------|-------------------|
| Population (2016 Census) | | | | | |
| Total Population (#) | 76,815 | 3,810 | bottom 1/3 | 7,265 | bottom 1/3 |
| Less than 1 | 895 | 35 | bottom 1/3 | 60 | bottom 1/3 |
| 1 year olds | 900 | 40 | | 75 | |
| 2 year olds | 895 | 35 | | 65 | |
| 3 year olds | 955 | 40 | | 70 | |
| 4 year olds | 870 | 45 | | 85 | |
| 5 year olds | 970 | 40 | | 75 | |
| 6 year olds | 945 | 35 | | 90 | |
| Children 0-6 (#) | 6,430 | 270 | | 520 | |
| Children ages 0-6 of total population (%) | 8.4% | 7.1% | | bottom 1/3 | |
| Language (2011 NHS) | | | | | |
| Population speaking French at home (%) | 0.1% | 0.1% | | 0.3% | |
| Population speaking neither official language at home (%) | 4.2% | 1.4% | bottom 1/3 | 0.6% | bottom 1/3 |
| Population speaking German at home (%) | 2.7% | 0.3% | | 0.1% | |
| Population speaking Dutch at home (%) | 0.3% | 0.9% | | 0.1% | |
| Indigenous (2011 NHS) | | | | | |
| Total Indigenous Population (#) | 645 | 25 | bottom 1/3 | 0 | bottom 1/3 |
| Indigenous children ages 0-4 (#) | 100 | 0 | | 0 | |
| Indigenous Children ages 0-4 of total Indigenous population (%) | 15.5% | 0.0% | | 0.0% | |
| Immigration (2011 NHS) | | | | | |
| Recent immigrants, 2006-2011 (#) | 565 | 0 | bottom 1/3 | 45 | bottom 1/3 |
| Recent immigrants (% of total pop) | 0.8% | 0.0% | bottom 1/3 | 0.7% | top 1/3 |
| Family Make-up (2011 Census) | | | | | |
| Number of families | 21,080 | 1175 | bottom 1/3 | 1925 | bottom 1/3 |
| Average number of children living at home | 1.1 | 1.2 | ** | 1 | * |
| Lone parent families (#) | 2,200 | 60 | bottom 1/3 | 200 | middle 1/3 |
| Lone parent families (% of all families) | 10.4% | 5.1% | *** | 10.4% | ** |
| Economic Security - The Home Environment (2011 NHS) | | | | | |
| Individuals age 15+ without a high school education (%) | 26.0% | 27.2% | ** | 24.1% | ** |
| Unemployment rate (%) | 5.5% | 9.6% | * | 5.2% | ** |
| Households spending 30% or more on housing (%) | 23.9% | 17.6% | *** | 20.1% | *** |
| Median Family Income | \$78,713 | \$84,882 | top 1/3 | \$82,828 | middle 1/3 |
| Low Income Measure After Tax (LIM-AT) | | | | | |
| LIM-AT All individuals (%) | 10.1% | 4.1% | *** | 8.6% | ** |
| LIM-AT Children ages 0-6 (%) | 17.6% | 6.5% | *** | 0.0% | *** |
| LIM-AT Children ages 0-18 (%) | 12.9% | 3.9% | *** | 8.3% | *** |

| | Perth County | Perth South/ St. Marys | Municipal Ranking |
|--|--------------|---------------------------|-------------------|
| Calling All Three Year Olds (2016, Perth District Health Unit) | | | |
| Preschoolers who had an area of concern identified for further follow-up by the Nipissing District Developmental Screen® | 13% | 11% | ** |
| Early Development Instrument (2014-15, Offord Centre) | | | |
| EDI Mean Scores (scale of 0-10; 10 being best possible score) | | | |
| Physical Health & Well-being | 8.9 | 8.6 | ** |
| Social Competence | 8.1 | 7.7 | ** |
| Emotional Maturity | 7.7 | 7.5 | ** |
| Language & Cognitive Development | 8.8 | 8.7 | ** |
| Communication Skills & General Knowledge | 8.1 | 7.4 | * |
| Vulnerable on at least 1 domains (%) | 31% | 39% | * |

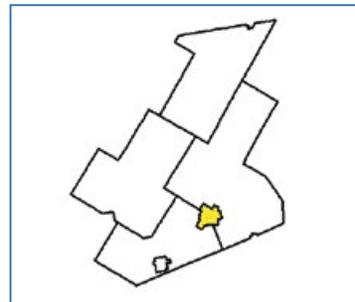


STRATFORD COMMUNITY PROFILE



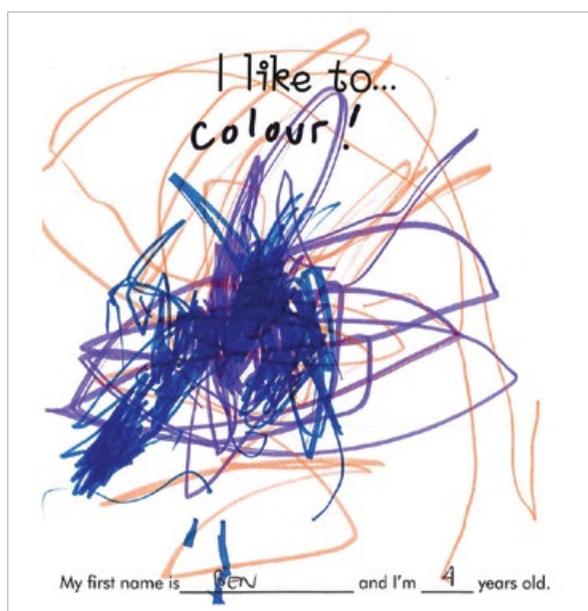
Legend

- | | |
|--|---|
|  OEYC |  Licensed Child Care |
|  OEYC Satellite |  Parochial School |
|  Recreation Centres |  Elementary School |
|  Libraries |  Secondary School |
|  Before and After School Programs | |



| | Perth County | Stratford | Municipal Ranking |
|---|--------------|-----------|-------------------|
| Population (2016 Census) | | | |
| Total Population (#) | 76,815 | 31,465 | top 1/3 |
| Less than 1 | 895 | 295 | top 1/3 |
| 1 year olds | 900 | 290 | |
| 2 year olds | 895 | 285 | |
| 3 year olds | 955 | 295 | |
| 4 year olds | 870 | 275 | |
| 5 year olds | 970 | 310 | |
| 6 year olds | 945 | 335 | |
| Children 0-6 (#) | 6,430 | 2,085 | |
| Children ages 0-6 of total population (%) | 8.4% | 6.6% | bottom 1/3 |
| Language (2011 NHS) | | | |
| Population speaking French at home (%) | 0.1% | 0.1% | |
| Population speaking neither official language at home (%) | 4.2% | 2.1% | middle 1/3 |
| Population speaking German at home (%) | 2.7% | 0.1% | |
| Population speaking Dutch at home (%) | 0.3% | 0.0% | |
| Indigenous (2011 NHS) | | | |
| Total Indigenous Population (#) | 645 | 400 | top 1/3 |
| Indigenous children ages 0-4 (#) | 100 | 65 | top 1/3 |
| Indigenous Children ages 0-4 of total Indigenous population (%) | 15.5% | 16.3% | top 1/3 |
| Immigration (2011 NHS) | | | |
| Recent immigrants, 2006-2011 (#) | 565 | 335 | top 1/3 |
| Recent immigrants (% of total pop) | 0.8% | 1.1% | top 1/3 |
| Family Make-up (2011 Census) | | | |
| Number of families | 21,080 | 8,655 | top 1/3 |
| Average number of children living at home | 1.1 | 1 | * |
| Lone parent families (#) | 2,200 | 1245 | top 1/3 |
| Lone parent families (% of all families) | 10.4% | 14.4% | * |
| Economic Security - The Home Environment (2011 NHS) | | | |
| Individuals age 15+ without a high school education (%) | 26.0% | 22.2% | * |
| Unemployment rate (%) | 5.5% | 6.9% | ** |
| Households spending 30% or more on housing (%) | 23.9% | 27.0% | * |
| Median Family Income | \$78,713 | \$74,841 | bottom 1/3 |
| Low Income Measure After Tax (LIM-AT) | | | |
| LIM-AT All individuals (%) | 10.1% | 11.7% | ** |
| LIM-AT Children ages 0-6 (%) | 17.6% | 18.3% | ** |
| LIM-AT Children ages 0-18 (%) | 12.9% | 15.6% | * |

| | Perth County | Stratford | Municipal Ranking |
|--|--------------|-----------|-------------------|
| Calling All Three Year Olds (2016, Perth District Health Unit) | | | |
| Preschoolers who had an area of concern identified for further follow-up by the Nipissing District Developmental Screen® | 13% | 18% | * |
| Early Development Instrument (2014-15, Offord Centre) | | | |
| EDI Mean Scores (scale of 0-10; 10 being best possible score) | | | |
| Physical Health & Well-being | 8.9 | 8.9 | ** |
| Social Competence | 8.1 | 8.2 | ** |
| Emotional Maturity | 7.7 | 7.6 | ** |
| Language & Cognitive Development | 8.8 | 8.9 | ** |
| Communication Skills & General Knowledge | 8.1 | 8.4 | ** |
| Vulnerable on at least 1 domains (%) | 31% | 30% | ** |

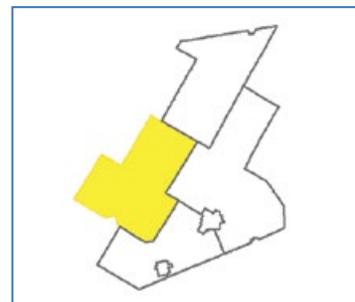


WEST PERTH COMMUNITY PROFILE



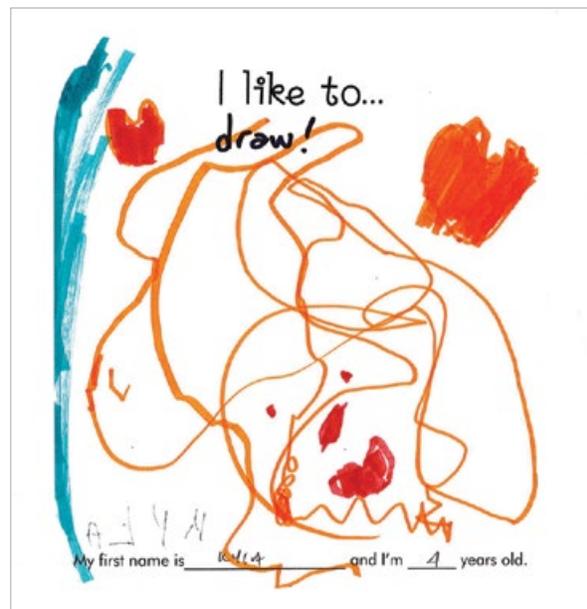
Legend

-  OEYC
-  OEYC Satellite
-  Recreation Centres
-  Libraries
-  Before and After School Programs
-  Licensed Child Care
-  Parochial School
-  Elementary School
-  Secondary School



| | Perth County | West Perth | Municipal Ranking |
|---|--------------|------------|-------------------|
| Population (2016 Census) | | | |
| Total Population (#) | 76,815 | 8,865 | middle 1/3 |
| Less than 1 | 895 | 100 | middle 1/3 |
| 1 year olds | 900 | 110 | |
| 2 year olds | 895 | 115 | |
| 3 year olds | 955 | 135 | |
| 4 year olds | 870 | 100 | |
| 5 year olds | 970 | 135 | |
| 6 year olds | 945 | 100 | |
| Children 0-6 (#) | 6,430 | 795 | |
| Children ages 0-6 of total population (%) | 8.4% | 9.0% | middle 1/3 |
| Language (2011 NHS) | | | |
| Population speaking French at home (%) | 0.1% | 0.1% | |
| Population speaking neither official language at home (%) | 4.2% | 1.5% | middle 1/3 |
| Population speaking German at home (%) | 2.7% | 1.0% | |
| Population speaking Dutch at home (%) | 0.3% | 0.2% | |
| Indigenous (2011 NHS) | | | |
| Total Indigenous Population (#) | 645 | 85 | top 1/3 |
| Indigenous children ages 0-4 (#) | 100 | 0 | |
| Indigenous Children ages 0-4 of total Indigenous population (%) | 15.5% | 0.0% | |
| Immigration (2011 NHS) | | | |
| Recent immigrants, 2006-2011 (#) | 565 | 50 | middle 1/3 |
| Recent immigrants (% of total pop) | 0.8% | 0.6% | middle 1/3 |
| Family Make-up (2011 Census) | | | |
| Number of families | 21,080 | 2,510 | middle 1/3 |
| Average number of children living at home | 1.1 | 1.2 | ** |
| Lone parent families (#) | 2,200 | 215 | middle 1/3 |
| Lone parent families (% of all families) | 10.4% | 8.6% | ** |
| Economic Security - The Home Environment (2011 NHS) | | | |
| Individuals age 15+ without a high school education (%) | 26.0% | 22.0% | * |
| Unemployment rate (%) | 5.5% | 4.2% | ** |
| Households spending 30% or more on housing (%) | 23.9% | 19.8% | *** |
| Median Family Income | \$78,713 | \$77,934 | middle 1/3 |
| Low Income Measure After Tax (LIM-AT) | | | |
| LIM-AT All individuals (%) | 10.1% | 6.1% | * |
| LIM-AT Children ages 0-6 (%) | 17.6% | 6.4% | * |
| LIM-AT Children ages 0-18 (%) | 12.9% | 5.4% | * |

| | Perth County | West Perth | Municipal Ranking |
|--|--------------|------------|-------------------|
| Calling All Three Year Olds (2016, Perth District Health Unit) | | | |
| Preschoolers who had an area of concern identified for further follow-up by the Nipissing District Developmental Screen® | 13% | 11% | ** |
| Early Development Instrument (2014-15, Offord Centre) | | | |
| EDI Mean Scores (scale of 0-10; 10 being best possible score) | | | |
| Physical Health & Well-being | 8.9 | 9.5 | *** |
| Social Competence | 8.1 | 8.7 | ** |
| Emotional Maturity | 7.7 | 8.6 | *** |
| Language & Cognitive Development | 8.8 | 9.0 | ** |
| Communication Skills & General Knowledge | 8.1 | 8.9 | *** |
| Vulnerable on at least 1 domains (%) | 31% | 14% | *** |



Appendix F – Summary of OEYC Program Locations

| Site Name | Address | Permanent v. Satellite | Service Continuity (# of years here) | Lease Arrangement | Physical Accessibility | Toy Storage | Transportation Access (parking, public transit etc.) | Community Partners on site |
|--|--------------------------------|------------------------|---|--|------------------------|-------------|---|---|
| North Perth | | | | | | | | |
| North Perth - Spinrite Child & Family Centre | 955 Binning St. W., Listowel | P | 1 | Lease agreement with Municipality of North Perth | Fully accessible | Y | Walkable (located on outskirts of town, and most children are bused to school); parking | North Perth Westfield Public School, Spinrite Child & Family Centre |
| Atwood Community Centre | 251 Main St., Atwood | S | 10+ | In kind | Fully accessible | N | Walkable; parking | Municipality of North Perth - Parks and Recreation |
| Elma Logan Community Centre | 200 Nelson St., Monkton | S | 10+ | In kind | Fully accessible | Y | Walkable; parking | Municipality of North Perth - Parks and Recreation |
| Listowel Eastdale School | 365 Nichol Ave. S., Listowel | S | 10+ | In kind | Fully accessible | N | Walkable; parking | |
| North Perth Public Library - Atwood Branch | 218A Main St., Atwood | S | 15 | In kind | Fully accessible | N | Walkable (central location); parking | Library |
| North Perth Public Library - Listowel Branch | 260 Main St. W., Listowel | S | 15 | In kind | Fully accessible | N | Walkable (central location); parking | Library |
| North Perth Public Library - Monkton Branch | 216 Winstanley St., Monkton | S | 15 | In kind | Fully accessible | N | Walkable (central location); parking | Library |
| North Perth Westfield Public School | 955 Binning St. W., Listowel | S | 1 | In kind | Fully accessible | N | Walkable; parking | |
| Salvation Army Church | 625 Main St. E., Listowel | S | 12 | In kind | Fully accessible | Y | Walkable; parking | Salvation Army |
| Upper Deck Youth Centre | 280 Wallace Ave. S., Listowel | S | 5+ | In kind | Fully accessible | N | Walkable; parking | |
| Wallace Community Centre | 6670 Perth Line 88, Kurtzville | S | 10+ | In kind | Fully accessible | Y | Walkable; parking | Municipality of North Perth - Parks and Recreation |

| Site Name | Address | Permanent v. Satellite | Service Continuity (# of years here) | Lease Arrangement | Physical Accessibility | Toy Storage | Transportation Access (parking, public transit etc.) | Community Partners on site |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------|---|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|-------------|---|--|
| Perth East | | | | | | | | |
| Perth East Public Library | 19 Mill St., Milverton | S | 15 | In kind | Fully accessible | Y | Walkable; parking | Library |
| Perth East Recreation Complex | 40 Temperance St., Milverton | S | 5+ | In kind | Fully accessible | Y | Walkable; parking | Township of Perth East - Parks and Recreation |
| Shakespeare Presbyterian Church | 3964 Huron St., Shakespeare | S | 15+ | In kind | Partially accessible | N | Walkable; parking | |
| Perth South and St. Marys | | | | | | | | |
| Kirkton-Woodham Community Centre | 70497 Rd. 164, Kirkton | S | 11 | In kind | Fully accessible | N | Parking | Huron County Library; Kirkton community swimming lessons |
| Sebringville Community Centre | 302 Huron Rd., Sebringville | S | 13 | In kind | Fully accessible (no family washroom) | N | Parking | |
| St. James Anglican Church | 65 Church St., St. Marys | S | 5 | In kind | Not accessible | Y | Walkable; central location (but most families live closer to Pyramid Centre), parking | various church groups |
| Stratford | | | | | | | | |
| Falstaff Family Centre | 35 Waterloo St. N., Stratford | P | 15 | Lease agreement with private landlord | Partially accessible | Y | On a bus route; walkable; parking | Stratford Middle Years School, Big Brothers Big Sisters, Multicultural association, YMCA (summer camps), and various other community groups rent the space |
| Jubilee Hall | 707 Downie St, Stratford | S | 11 | In kind | Yes | N | On a bus route; walkable; located near a social housing complex; parking | |

| Site Name | Address | Permanent v. Satellite | Service Continuity (# of years here) | Lease Arrangement | Physical Accessibility | Toy Storage | Transportation Access (parking, public transit etc.) | Community Partners on site |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------|---|-------------------|------------------------|-------------|---|---|
| West Perth | | | | | | | | |
| Perth Care for Kids | 177 Frances St., Mitchell | P | 15 | n/a | Fully accessible | Y | Walkable; parking | Child care centre, Upper Thames Public School |
| Brodhagen Community Centre | 6708 Perth Line 44, Brodhagen | S | 9 | In kind | Fully accessible | N | Parking | |
| Grace Lutheran Church | 114 St. David St., Mitchell | S | 15 | In kind | Fully accessible | N | Walkable; parking | various church groups |
| Mitchell Arena & Community Centre | 185 Wellington St., Mitchell | S | 15 | In kind | Fully accessible | Y | Walkable; parking | various community agencies |
| Ritz Hall | 25 Frances St. E., Mitchell | S | 10 | In kind | Not accessible | Y | Walkable; parking | Child care and nursery school |
| Thamesview United Church | 5262 16 Line, Fullarton | S | 8 | In kind | Fully accessible | N | Parking | |
| West Perth Public Library | 105 St. Andrew St., Mitchell | S | 15 | In kind | Fully accessible | N | Walkable; parking | |

In addition to the above sites, Perth Care for Kids also operates outdoor play groups during the summertime at local parks (e.g. Anne Hathaway Park in Stratford, Keterson Park and Lion's Park in West Perth, and Listowel Memorial Park in North Perth).

Appendix G – Examples of Highly Attended Early Years Programs

The following chart summarizes the top three highest attended programs for each of the Early Years Centres in Perth County in 2016-17.

| Program Title | Program Description | Target Population | Location | Day & Time | Program Statistics, 2016-17 (C = children / A = adults) | | |
|---------------------------------------|--|--|---|--|--|--------------------|--------------------------------|
| | | | | | Unique Participants | Total Visits | Average Attendance per Session |
| North Perth Early Years Centre | | | | | | | |
| Family Time | A 2-hour drop-in for parents to socialize and connect. Features a weekly topic and speaker. Child minding provided by OEYC staff. | Parents | Salvation Army Church, 625 Main St. E., Listowel | Tuesdays 9:30–11:30 a.m. | 231 C 133 A | 1,016 C 670 A | 23 C 15 A |
| Tot Time | A 45-minute drop-in program featuring crafts, games, songs and playtime. | Children and their parents/ caregivers. No age restriction because of partnership with library | North Perth Public Library, 260 Main St. W., Listowel | Fridays 10:30–11:15 a.m. | 210 C 125 A | 742 C 485 A | 17 C 11 A |
| Play & Learn | A 1.5-hour drop-in play time. Activities include crafts, games, circle time, songs and stories. | Children and their parents/ caregivers. No age restriction because of partnership with library | Perth East Public Library, 19 Mill St., Milverton | Thursdays 10–11:30 a.m. | 116 C 74 A | 754 C 395 A | 17 C 9 A |
| Stratford Early Years Centre | | | | | | | |
| Play & Learn (Mornings) | A 2.5-hour drop-in play based program. Diverse range of activities including crafts, active games, sing-a-longs, stories, and circle time. | Children (0-6) and their parents/ caregivers | Falstaff Family Centre, 35 Waterloo St. N., Stratford | Tuesdays, Wednesday and Thursdays 9–11:30 a.m. | 526 C 432 A | 2,370 C 1,626 A | 17 C 12 A |
| Jubilee Play Group | A 2-hour drop-in play group. Diverse range of activities including crafts, active games, sing-a-longs and stories. Circle time at 11:00 a.m. | Children (0-6) and their parents/ caregivers | Jubilee Hall, 707 Downie St., Stratford | Fridays 9:30–11:30 a.m. | 189 C 144 A | 587 C 387 A | 14 C 9 A |

| Program Title | Program Description | Target Population | Location | Day & Time | Program Statistics, 2016-17 (C = children / A = adults) | | |
|--------------------------------------|--|--|---|-------------------------------|--|----------------|--------------------------------|
| | | | | | Unique Participants | Total Visits | Average Attendance per Session |
| Baby Time | A 3-hour drop-in play and learn program in an infant friendly space. Opportunity for parents to socialize and share information on various infant topics. There is a special speaker/ discussion topic each month. Circle time at 10:30 a.m. | Infants (0-18 months) and their parents/ caregivers | Falstaff Family Centre, 35 Waterloo St. N., Stratford | Fridays 9 a.m.– 12 p.m. | 153 C 186 A | 744 C 780 A | 17 C 17 A |
| West Perth Early Years Centre | | | | | | | |
| Toddler Time | A 1.5-hour drop-in program featuring crafts, games, songs and playtime | Toddlers (18 months - 3 years) and their parents/ caregivers | Mitchell Arena & Community Centre, 185 Wellington St., Mitchell | Wednesdays 9:30–11 a.m. | 103 C 56 A | 437 C 249 A | 11 C 6 A |
| Family Time | A 1.5-hour drop-in for parents to socialize and connect. Features a weekly topic and speaker. Child minding provided by OEYC staff. | Parents | Grace Lutheran Church, 114 St. David St., Mitchell | Mondays 10–11:30 a.m. | 94 C 43 A | 404 C 213 A | 12 C 6 A |
| Play & Learn | A 1.5-hour drop-in plays time. Activities include crafts, games, circle time, songs and stories. | Children (0-6) and their parents/ caregivers | St James Anglican Church, 65 Church St., St. Marys | Tuesdays 10–11:30 a.m. | 86 C 55 A | 436 C 255 A | 11 C 6 A |

Appendix H – Service Utilization Maps

Figure H1 - Distribution of Users of the Early Years Centres in Perth County, 2016-17

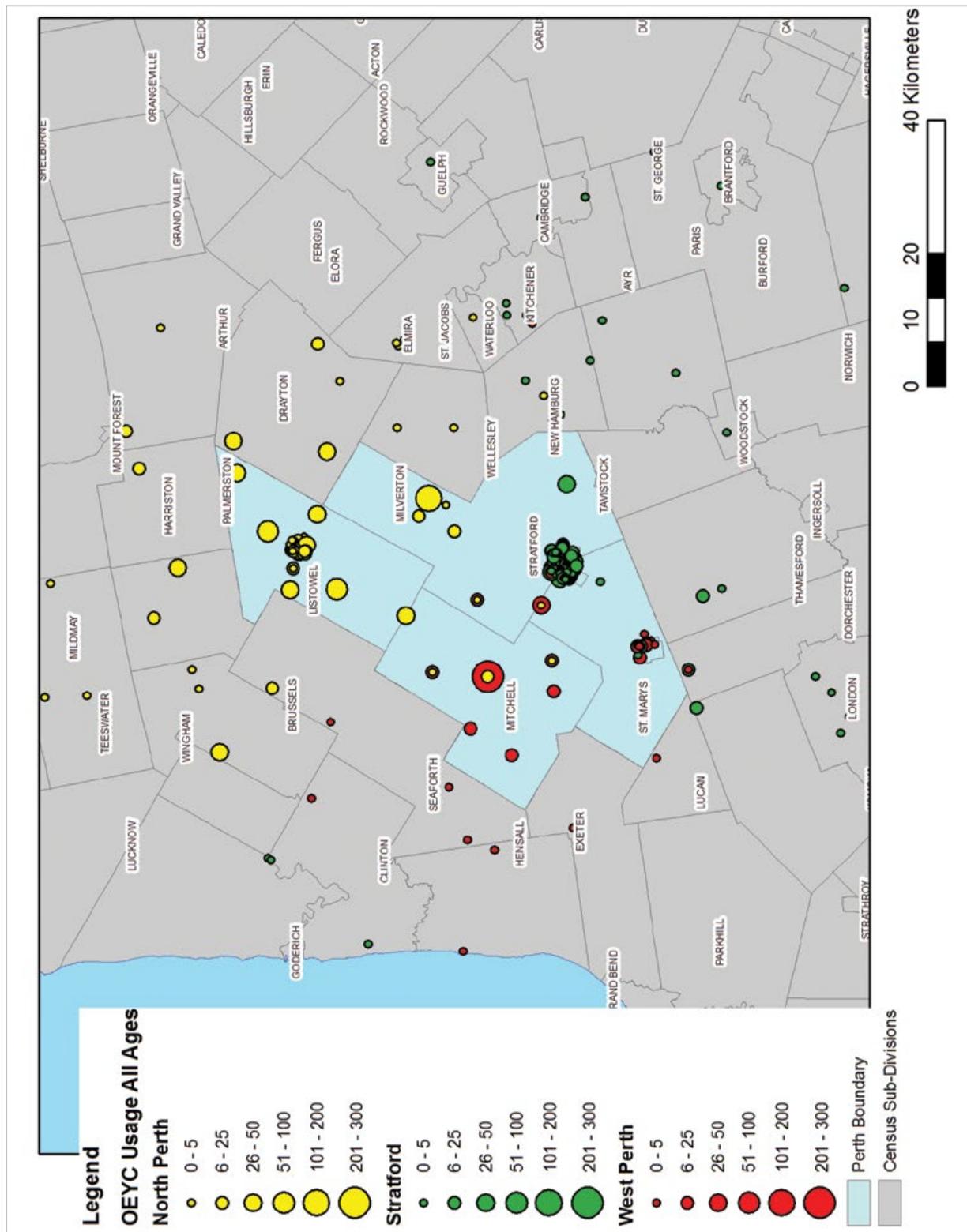


Figure H2 - Distribution of Users of the Stratford Early Years Centre and its Satellite Locations, 2016-17

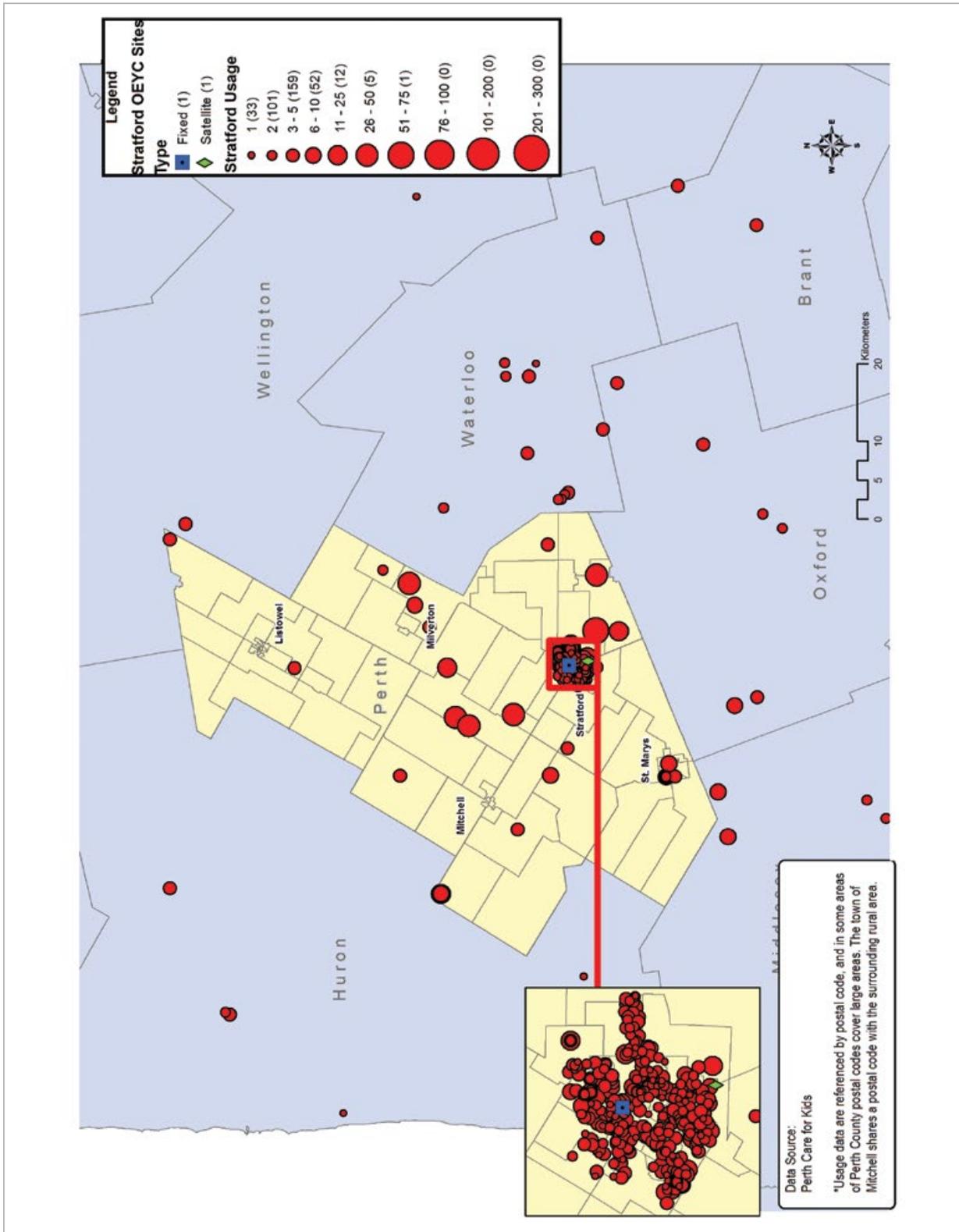


Figure H3 - Distribution of Users of the West Perth Early Years Centre and its Satellite Locations, 2016-17

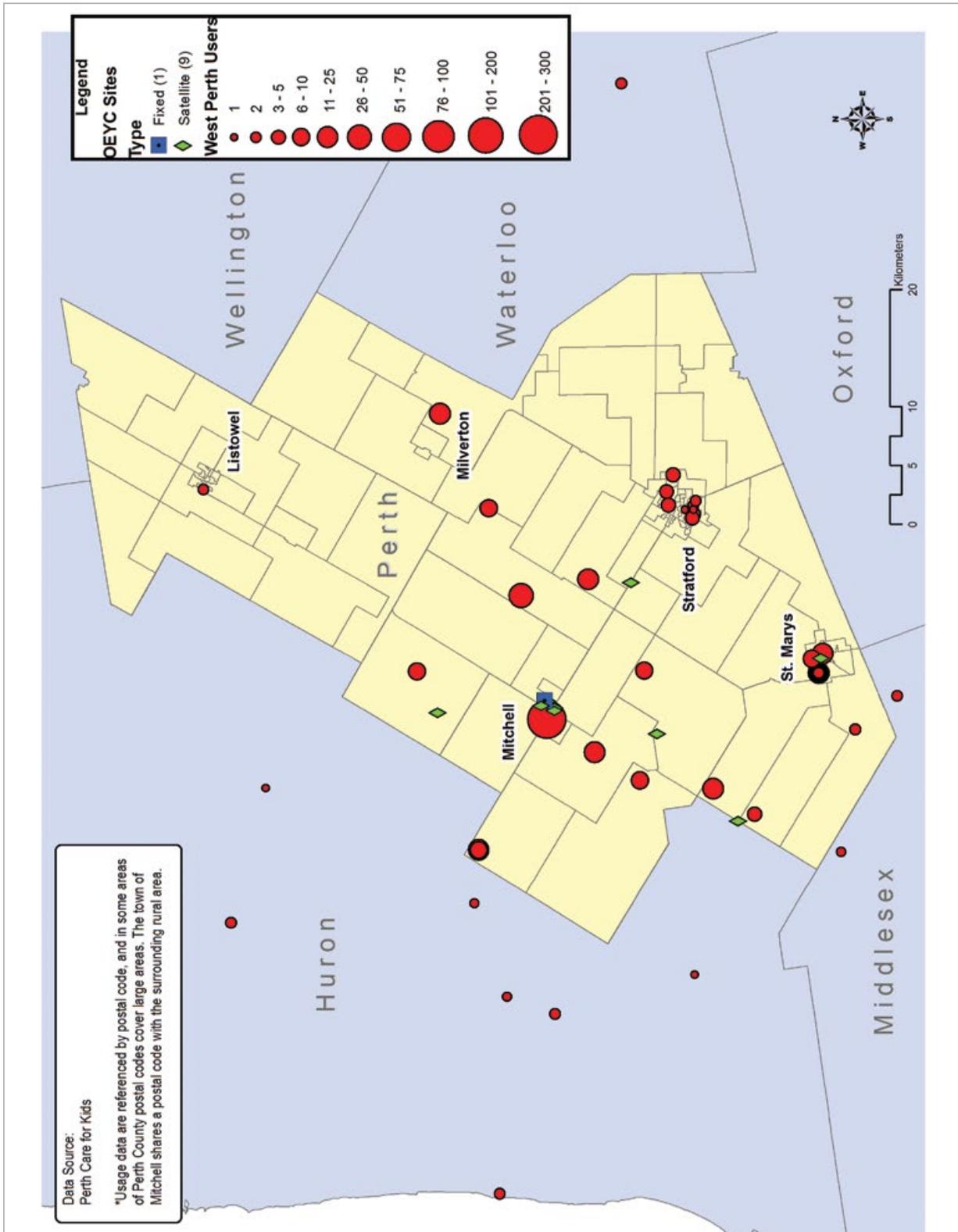
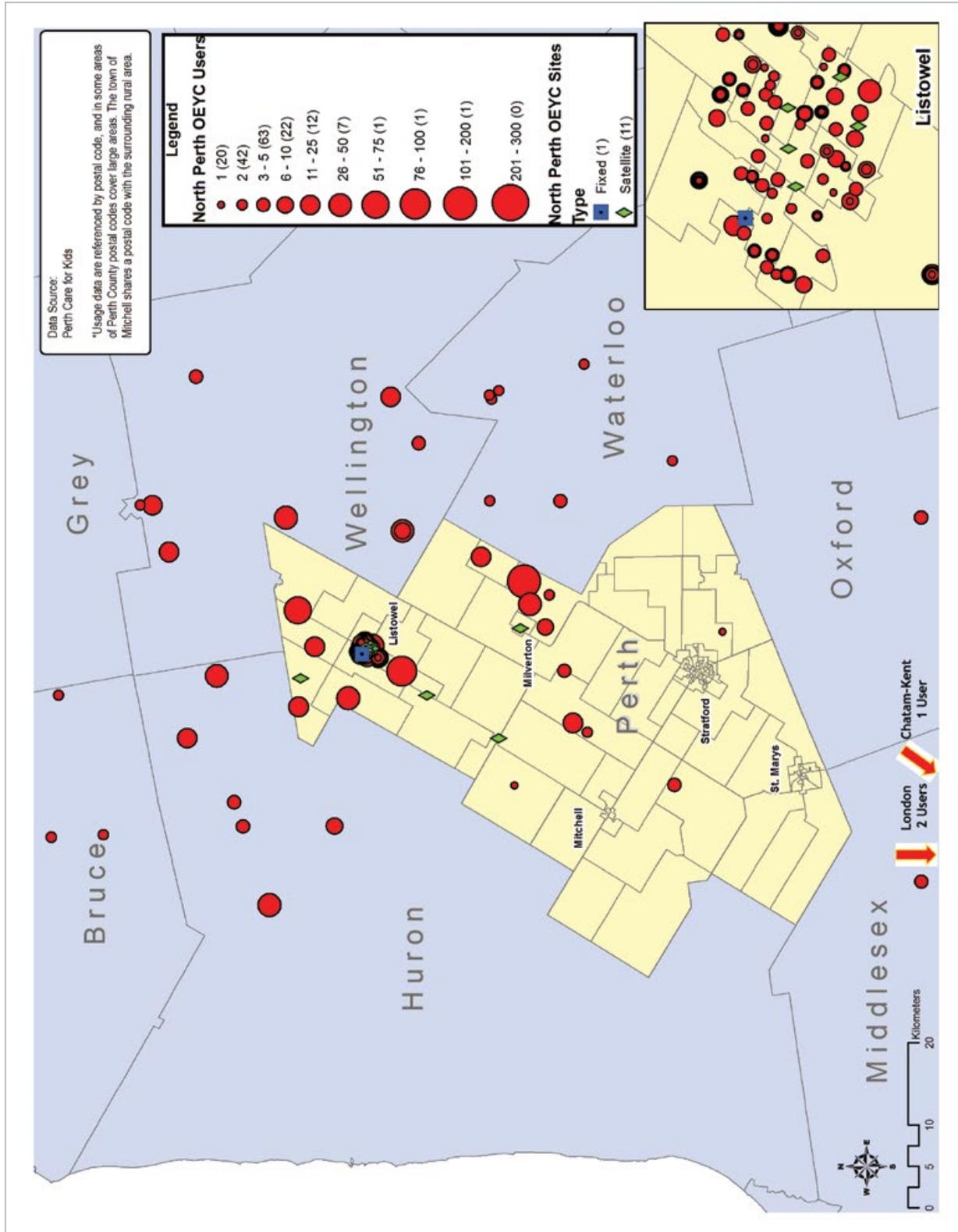


Figure H4 - Distribution of Users of the North Perth Early Years Centre and its Satellite Locations, 2016-17





I like to...play
outside.



My first name is Carter.W and I'm 6 years old.



I like to...
play with transformers!



My first name is LUCA and I'm 3 years old.



I like to...



My first name is Charlie. and I'm 4 years old.



I like to... use colours
like my tractor



My first name is owen and I'm 2 years old.



City of Stratford – Social Services Department

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