



Ontario Early Years Child and Family Centres Needs Analysis and Initial Plan



September 2017

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Section 1: Setting the Stage

Background

In 2018, child and family programs currently funded by the Province will become a unified system of services and supports for children ages 0 to 6 and their families, called Ontario Early Years Child and Family Centres (OEYCFCs). The four Ministry-funded child and family programs that will be combined include Ontario Early Years Centres (OEYCs), Parenting and Family Literacy Centres (PFLCs), Child Care and Resource Centres (CCRCs), and Better Beginning and Better Futures programs (BBBFs). The new OEYCFCs will offer programs and services for children ages 0 to 6, their parents¹ and caregivers², including playgroups, information workshops for parents, and referrals to specialized services.

As Consolidated Municipal Service Manager (CMSM), the City of Ottawa is responsible for the local planning, integration, transformation, and management of OEYCFCs as part of its responsibility for the service system management of child care and other human services.

As requested by the Ministry, this report presents the City of Ottawa's Needs Analysis and Initial Plan for the implementation of the Ontario Early Years Child and Family Centres (OEYCFCs) in Ottawa. The report summarizes the planning structure and process, the needs analysis process and preliminary findings, and an initial plan that includes a one-year transition period and next steps for the development of an integrated OEYCFC system for implementation beginning in 2019.

Initial Plans represent a point in time and may change over the course of the first few months and years of program implementation in response to changing community needs and capacity related to program planning, management and delivery.

Local Planning Structure and Approach

The Community and Social Services Department, City of Ottawa, is leading the planning process to develop the new integrated system of OEYCFCs in Ottawa.

¹ In this report, the term 'parents' is used to describe both parents and legal guardians.

² In this report, the term 'caregivers' is defined as all adults that care for young children including child care providers, grandparents, informal caregivers, and other family members.

On September 20, 2016, the City of Ottawa held two information sessions with key stakeholders (one in English and one in French) to share information about the provincial vision and direction, timelines, proposed community engagement plans and broad next steps for the project. This initial information session was attended by currently funded Ministry of Education service providers, Best Start Networks, School Boards, and City Departments identified as part of the provincial guidelines.

To ensure that service system planning decisions are informed by a wide range of early years sector partners, the City of Ottawa created an OEYCFC Planning Advisory Group (“Advisory Group”) in October 2016. The Advisory Group includes representation from the four existing Ministry-funded programs (OEYCs, PFLCs, CCRCs, and BBBF), the four local school boards (two English and two French school boards), the Coalition of Community Health and Resource Centres of Ottawa, the Aboriginal Best Start Circle, the Francophone Best Start Table, and Ottawa Public Health.

The mandate of the Advisory Group is to work collaboratively with the City and advise on the first phase of the development of the new OEYCFCs in Ottawa. The Advisory Group is chaired by Community and Social Services (CSS) staff and has been meeting on a regular basis since October 2016. To date, the Advisory Group has provided feedback on draft deliverables, stakeholder engagement strategy and tools, and transition plan for 2018. The mandate of the Advisory Group was recently extended until the end of December 2017.

Engagement with francophone service partners has been accomplished through separate meetings with the Francophone Best Start Table, with representation from local OEYCs, Grandir Ensemble (francophone CCRC), francophone school boards, Regroupement des services éducatifs à l'enfance d'Ottawa, Centre de ressource pour parents, Services d'intégration pour jeunes enfants, francophone community agencies, the Réseau régional de langue française de l'Est, and the City of Ottawa (Community and Social Services, Ottawa Public Health, and Ottawa Public Libraries). These meetings have served to increase our collective understanding of the specific needs, gaps, and opportunities facing the delivery of francophone programs and services in Ottawa. The City of Ottawa will continue to meet with the Francophone Best Start Table in the coming months, specifically to plan for a model of OEYCFC service delivery that responds to the needs of the francophone children and families in Ottawa.

Through The Journey Together – Ontario’s Early Years Initiative, the City of Ottawa has been collaborating with the Aboriginal Best Start Circle and local Indigenous organizations that provide child care and child and family programs in Ottawa, to determine a culturally appropriate and Indigenous-led process for determining the local needs and opportunities. The partners include the leadership from the following organizations: Makonsag Aboriginal Head Start; Minwaashin Lodge Aboriginal Women’s Support Centre; Odawa Native Friendship Centre - Sweetgrass Home Child Care Program; Ottawa Inuit Children’s Centre; Tungasuvvingat Inuit; Wabano Centre for Aboriginal Health; Métis Nation of Ontario / Elder; The Ottawa Aboriginal Coalition ; and the Aboriginal Best Start Circle.

Indigenous service partners have been leading the process of determining local needs, by conducting needs assessments with their constituency groups, including with parents, family members, caregivers, elders, program staff, partner organizations and other Indigenous organizations in the community. The City hired an Indigenous firm to provide coordinating support to Indigenous service providers who will then develop proposals that address the local needs. Those proposals will be signed off by the City and each provider and submitted by the City to the Province for approval by September 29, 2017.

Finally, the City of Ottawa created an OEYCFC section on Ottawa.ca to share information about the OEYCFC project with service providers, parents, and other interested parties.

Activities and Deliverables

The City of Ottawa reviewed the requirements of the Province as set out in the *Planning Guidelines for Service System Managers* (“Guidelines”). The following key activities were identified for the project:

- Establish guiding principles to inform system-level planning and implementation decisions.
- Collect and analyze demographic data for the 0-6 population and families in Ottawa.
- Inventory all existing child and family programs and services (Ministry funded and non-Ministry funded).

- Collect detailed financial and service data for existing OEYCs, PFLCs, CCRCs, and BBBF.
- Collect information on the physical characteristics of existing Ministry-funded child and family program locations and available or potential program space within these locations (space review).
- Conduct a needs analysis (through stakeholder engagement) that fosters participation and collaboration from community partners and different stakeholder groups, including service users (existing as well as potential) and service providers.
- Develop a decision-making matrix to assist in identifying the relative service needs of neighborhoods and guide decisions related to site distribution/locations and investments.
- Develop a local implementation plan for the OEYCFCs that encompasses a transition period in order to minimize the impact on service providers, children and families, as well as caregivers.
- Develop a framework for future system planning and ongoing relationships with community partners invested in early years.

At this time, the City of Ottawa has completed, or is in the process of completing, the work on the above-mentioned activities. Preliminary research and public engagement findings are presented in the following two sections of this report. Additional reports, namely the *2017 OEYCFC Data Booklet* (Parent Resource Centre, 2017) and the *OEYCFC Needs Analysis Report* (Nanos Research, 2017) include the comprehensive and detailed findings related to the demographic analysis and needs analysis. These will be shared separately with the Province.

In the coming months, in collaboration with the Advisory Group, the City will continue the data analysis in order to identify system strengths, gaps and opportunities towards the development of a new integrated OEYCFC system that maximizes resources, optimizes service delivery, and meets the needs and expectations of families, caregivers, and service providers.

Section 2: Ottawa Context

Demographic Portrait

To inform the intended outcomes for OEYCFCs, it is essential that local planning decisions be informed by an in-depth understanding of the demographic portrait of the community, especially at the neighborhood level. More specifically, the Guidelines require that local OEYCFC planning take into consideration information related to (p.23):

- Location, number, and language (English, French or non-official) of families with children ages 0-6.
- Children and/or families with identified social or developmental vulnerabilities and their approximate location.
- Number and location of children and/or families that self-identify as Indigenous.

To complete this work, the City of Ottawa engaged the Parent Resource Centre- PRC (Data Analysis Services), to collect and summarize key demographic data on children ages 0-6 and families living in Ottawa. The main goal was to identify key facts and demographic trends that may have implications for child and family service planning and delivery.

The PRC produced the *2017 OEYCFC Data Booklet*, which summarizes the following demographic and socio-economic characteristics of children 0-6 and families living in Ottawa:

- Population Counts and Projections
- Family and Marital Status
- Household and Dwelling Characteristics
- Language
- Employment and Income Status
- Early Health Risks
- Early Childhood Development (EDI)
- Special Needs

The booklet presents the data for Ottawa as a whole as well as for each of the 50 [Best Start neighborhoods](#). Data sources include: Statistics Canada (Census, 2011 and 2016, Canadian National Household Survey, 2011; CANSIM, 2017); Better Outcomes

Registry Network (BORN), 2013-2015; City of Ottawa Child Care Registry and Waitlist, 2016; City of Ottawa Social and Affordable Housing, 2013; Early Development Instrument (EDI) Results, 2015.

Key findings include:³

- 69,880 children between the ages of 0 and 6 years old live in Ottawa (2016 Census). Neighborhoods with large numbers of children 0-6 tend to be located in the suburban areas including: Orleans/Cumberland, Barrhaven, Nepean West, and Stittsville.
- Ottawa experienced an increase of 2.1% in the number of children 0 to 6 years old since the 2011 census. Ottawa neighborhoods experiencing the highest growth in children 0-6 since the 2011 census include: Rockcliffe Park, Nepean West, and Glencairn.
- 7,745 children 0-6 (11.8%) speak French most often at home⁴ (2011 Census). The majority of French-speaking children live in neighborhoods located on the East side of Ottawa, especially in Orleans/Cumberland.
- 7,755 children 0-6 (11.8%) speak a non-official language most often at home⁵ (2011 Census). Non-official languages most often spoken include: Arabic, Chinese, and Spanish. Neighborhoods with high number of children 0-6 who speak a non-official language most often at home include: Barrhaven, Hunt Club East, and Pinecrest/Queensway.
- 1,600 children 0-6 living in Ottawa self-identify as Aboriginal (2011 Canadian National Household Survey). The three neighborhoods with higher numbers of Aboriginal children include: Barrhaven, Cumberland, and Orleans East.⁶
- 8,895 children 0-6 years old (12.7%) live in low income households (2011 Canadian National Household Survey). Neighborhoods experiencing a high proportion of children living in low income households include: Overbrook (57.3%), Ottawa South East (45.8%), and Sandy Hill (44.4%). Neighborhoods

³ General findings for Ottawa as a whole; Additional findings and findings per neighborhood are included in the 2017 OEYCFC Data Booklet.

⁴ Language most spoken at home captures whether a family has a preferred language for communicating. Thus, this variable reflects a linguistic/cultural need for service.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ This data set is not considered reliable due to anecdotal accounts of under-reporting, reported by Indigenous partners.

with high numbers of children living in low income households include: Hunt Club East, Pinecrest/Queensway, and Alta Vista.

- Neighborhoods with high proportions of children who are vulnerable on one or more EDI domains tend to be located in more central areas of the city, while neighborhoods with the highest numbers of children who are vulnerable on one or more EDI domains tend to be located in suburban areas.

The detailed demographic data will be used to inform planning decisions related to service delivery and programming to ensure that the new system meets the needs of children and families in each neighborhood. The *2017 OEYCFC Data Booklet* will be updated once the 2016 Census data is available.

Child and Family Programs and Services

An important component of the planning for a new integrated system of OEYCFC is the gathering of in-depth knowledge on all existing child and family programs serving children 0-6, parents and caregivers. More specifically, the Guidelines require that local OEYCFC planning take into consideration information related to programs offerings, locations and utilization (p.23).

In Ottawa, child and family programs are provided by a variety of community agencies, school boards, and the City of Ottawa (e.g. Ottawa Public Health and Ottawa Public Library). While the majority of programs and services are funded by the Province and the City of Ottawa, others receive funding from other sources (e.g. Federal funding).

For the purpose of planning for the new integrated OEYCFC system, the City of Ottawa inventoried child and family programs (operating at no cost or minimal cost to families), including types of programs, locations, and language of programming (English and French). In addition, detailed service data was collected from the Ministry-funded organizations (OEYCs, PFLCs, CCRCs, and BBBF). A separate inventory is also being finalized for all child and family programs provided by Indigenous organizations, as part of the Journey Together project.

Ministry-Funded Child and Family Programs and Services

As a first step, the City of Ottawa inventoried and analyzed the Ministry-funded child and family programs (OEYCs, PFLCs, CCRCs, and BBBF) that will be integrated into the new system of OEYCFCs. In Ottawa, these four child and family programs are currently provided by 13 not-for-profit local service providers and school boards through

contribution agreements held with the Province and/or the City of Ottawa (see Table 1). A map showing all Ministry-funded child and family program locations is included in Appendix A.

Table 1. Existing Ministry-Funded Child and Family Service Providers

Ontario Early Years Centres
Andrew Fleck Child Care Services
Canadian Mothercraft of Ottawa-Carleton
City View Centre for Child and Family Services
Orleans-Cumberland Community Resource Centre
Pinecrest-Queensway Community Health Centre
Vanier Community Service Centre
Western Ottawa Community Resource Centre
Parent and Family Literacy Centres
Ottawa Catholic School Board (5 locations)
Ottawa-Carleton District School Board (8 locations)
Child Care Resource Centres
Grandir Ensemble (Centre de ressources le Carrousel)
Child Care Providers Resource Network
Parent Resource Centre
Better Beginnings Better Futures
South-East Ottawa Community Health Centre

Ontario Early Years Centres (OEYCs)

There are seven (7) OEYCs operating in Ottawa, with an additional satellite sites. OEYCs offer a variety of services for children, parents and caregivers. These services include drop-in playgroups, workshops on a variety of parenting topics, pre/post-natal services and information and referral services.

The seven OEYC service areas include: Kanata, West-Carleton, Stittsville, Nepean Carleton, Ottawa Centre, Ottawa Orleans, Ottawa South, Ottawa Vanier, and Ottawa West Nepean (see Figure 1). The service areas are currently based on political ridings while planning table boundaries are organized around seven geographical areas rationalized to acknowledge natural neighbourhoods in Ottawa. The seven planning table boundaries and the OEYC service boundaries do not match exactly, thereby creating overlap in certain areas.

Figure 1. Existing OEYC Service Boundaries



The City of Ottawa receives early years funding from the Province, which is distributed on behalf of the Ministry of Education to the OEYCs and their satellites. All OEYCs also receive 100 per cent municipal dollars to fund their programs and services.

Parenting and Family Literacy Centres (PFLCs)

Similar to the OEYCs, PFLCs offer play-based activities within a school setting for parents, grandparents and caregivers with children 0-6 years of age. Service users can also discuss their parenting concerns with a program facilitator and access information about other resources in their community. The two English school boards, the Ottawa-Carleton District School Board (OCDSB) and the Ottawa Catholic School Board (OCSB), administer the PFLC programs in schools located throughout the city. There are eight PFLC locations available within the OCDSB and five locations available through the OCSB. PFLCs are funded directly by the Ministry and do not receive any municipal funding.

Child Care Resource Centres (CCRCs)

CCRCs offer play-based learning activities for children, as well as support and education for families and caregivers. CCRCs also provide resources, referrals and training opportunities for families and professionals in the early year's sector. There are three CCRCs located in Ottawa: The Parent Resource Centre (PRC); Grandir Ensemble; and the Child Care Providers Resource Network (CCPRN). Similar to the funding structure with the OEYCs, the City distributes provincial funding on behalf of the Ministry of Education, as well as funds the three CCRCs with municipal dollars.

Better Beginnings Better Futures (BBBF)

BBBF is a community-based program that provides supports and services for parents and caregivers with children 0 to 5 years of age and pregnant women living in low income neighbourhoods in the South-East area of Ottawa. Programs and services available through BBBF include playgroups, community nurse support, connections and referrals to community resources as well as the Family Visitor Program-offering in home supports and information on parenting, pre/postnatal care and child development. The BBBF program is funded directly by the Ministry of Education and does not receive any municipal funding.

The City of Ottawa collected detailed service data from all 13 Ministry-funded organizations, through a survey that was implemented in October 2016. Organizations were asked to provide data on the following variables:

- Program locations – Physical sites
- Services (e.g. Playgroups, workshops, etc)
- Language of programs (e.g. English, French, other)
- Primary target groups (e.g. Fathers, LGBTQ, etc)
- Service delivery method (e.g. centre, mobile, phone lines)
- RECE staffing
- Direct service hours per month
- Number of parents and children served (per year)
- Number of visits made by parents and children (per year)

The data collected as part of the survey was aggregated and analyzed. The survey found that the 13 Ministry-funded organizations are providing programs and services at

99 unique physical locations (centre, satellite, or mobile sites), serving over 27,000 children a year.

Table 2. Summary of Service Data from As-Is Inventory of Ministry Funded Child and Family Service Providers

As-Is Inventory of Ministry-funded Service Providers	#s
Program sites	99
Unique children served/ year	27,212
Direct Service Hours/ month	3,975

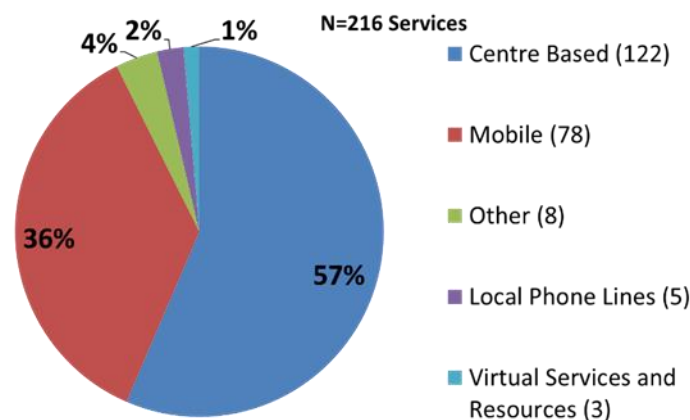
Source: Survey of Ministry-funded child and family service providers, 2016

Key findings from the analysis of the service data include:

- Some suburban areas of the city with high concentrations of children 0-6 (e.g. Goulbourn, South March) have few child and family program locations;
- Most Ministry-funded child and family programs in Ottawa are provided in person, at physical locations (see Figure 2). The “Other” category in Figure 2 includes: Family Visitors, Early Literacy Specialists, community events, print resources, and program coordination.

Figure 2. Service Delivery Methods - Existing Child and Family Programs in Ottawa

Source: Survey of Ministry-funded child and family service providers, 2016



- Playgroups represent 71% of the total child and family programs (see Table 3), followed by workshops at 21%.

*Table 3. Types of Child and Family Services - Existing Ministry-Funded Child and Family Service Providers**

Current Services	Number of Services	% of Number of Services
Playgroups	140	71%
Workshops	41	21%
Toy Lending Libraries	12	6%
Phone Lines	5	2%
Total	198	100%

**Does not include Family Visitors or Early Literacy Specialists*

Source: Survey of Ministry-funded child and family service providers, 2016

- 88% of workshops are designed for parents, while 12% are for child care providers.
- 60% of playgroups are delivered by a Registered Early Childhood Educator (RECE).
- About half of the playgroups (53%) and workshops (49%) are provided in English. About a third of playgroups (31%) and workshops (34%) are delivered in a bilingual environment. Ten per cent of playgroups and 13% of workshops are provided in French. See Table 4.
- Every OEYC provides both bilingual and French programming. Grandir Ensemble, a Child Care Resource Centre, is the only Ministry-funded agency providing French-only programming (no bilingual or English programming).
- None of the Ministry-funded organizations providing child and family programs or services specifically serve Indigenous children and families.
- Two organizations provide services in clients' homes (home visiting services).

Table 4. Language of Programming (Playgroups and Workshops) - Existing Ministry-Funded Service Providers

Language	Playgroups		Workshops	
	Number	% of total	Number	% of total
English	74	53%	20	49%
Bilingual	44	31%	14	34%
French	18	13%	4	10%
Other	4	3%	3	7%
Total	140	100%	41	100%

Source: Survey of Ministry-funded child and family service providers, 2016

Indigenous Child and Family Programs and Services

One of the OEYCFC program goals is for Indigenous children and families to have access to culturally responsive programming. In Ottawa, a number of local Indigenous organizations provide culturally specific childcare and child and family programs serving Indigenous children and families. These organizations include: Ottawa Inuit Children's Centre, Makonsag Aboriginal Head Start, Odawa Native Friendship Centre, Tungasuvvingat Inuit, Minwaashin Lodge, and the Wabano Centre for Aboriginal Health. These agencies are funded through other sources and do not receive Ministry-funding under the OEYC, PFLC, CCRC or BBBF funding streams.

Through the Journey Together project and in partnership with local Indigenous organizations, the City of Ottawa is currently in the process of finalizing an inventory of Indigenous-led child and family programs and needs assessment. Findings will become part of the overall data set to inform the OEYCFCs. Indigenous partners have indicated to the City of Ottawa that the Journey Together and OEYCFCs provide the opportunity to connect previous systems designed without input from the Indigenous community.

Other Child and Family Programs and Services

The City of Ottawa engaged the Parent Resource Centre - PRC (Data Analysis Services) to inventory and map all no-cost/low-cost child and family programs and services provided by not-for-profit organizations, school boards, and City of Ottawa. To complete this work, the PRC drew from the [Go Family! Interactive Family Services Map](#)

which had already been developed in collaboration with the Ottawa Best Start Network. The interactive map allows the user to search for programs and services according to type of program and location.

In February 2017, the PRC worked with community partners to update the GoFamily! data and collect additional relevant data. Concurrently, the City of Ottawa engaged Ottawa Public Health, Ottawa Public Library, and Recreation, Cultural, and Facility Services to identify no-cost/minimal-cost programs targeting children 0-6 and/or parents, for inclusion in the inventory. The Parent Resource Centre then organized the data into nine service categories of relevance to the OEYCFC project. French programs and services were inventoried separately.⁷ Aboriginal programs and services were inventoried as part of The Journey Together process and will be added to the data analysis for the OEYCFCs.

A set of maps were created to show the presence and relative density of programs and services in each neighborhood (see Table 5). The maps of programs and services were created to align with the list of OEYCFC core services found in the Guidelines (p. 11). Each map presents the programs and services by funding category (Ministry-funded, Other Funding Sources, or provided by City of Ottawa). A separate set of maps was created for francophone programs and services. See Appendix B for a map of all services (Map #1 from Table 5).⁸

The City of Ottawa is currently analyzing the data collected through this process.

⁷ Definitions of French programs and services:

1. Playgroups or Family Storytime in French:
 - A program whose delivery, support services and resources are in French\
 - Excludes playgroups and Family Storytime offered in a bilingual context (i.e. in both languages at once)
2. French service for children and their families (other than playgroups and Family Storytime)
 - A program that is offered in French (e.g. a meeting with a specialist) or whose delivery, support services and resources are in French

⁸ Maps #2-7 available upon request.

Table 5. List of Maps - Child and Family Programs in Ottawa

Framework	Map #	Service Data (Symbols on Map)
All services	1.	Overall map showing all services by service category
Engaging Parents and Caregivers	2.	Parenting Resources by funding category
	3.	Postnatal services for children (0-18 months) and their families by funding category
	4.	Prenatal Services by funding category
Supporting Early Learning and Development	5.	Playgroups/Libraries/Story time by funding category
Making Connections for Families	6.	Screening, Assessment, and Family Health Services by funding category
	7.	Services for Children with Special Needs by funding category

Child and Family Financial Investments

The funding for early years and child and family programs in 2017 includes \$6.7 million from the Province and \$1.0 million in 100% municipal investments, for a total investment in Ottawa of \$7.7 million. One-time provincial funding of \$298,539 was also provided to assist with planning in 2017.

The existing provincial funding includes directly-funded provincial programs (\$5.8 million) and provincial funding flowed through the municipality to local service providers (\$0.9 million) for Ontario Early Years Centres (OEYCs), Parenting and Family Literacy Centres (PFLCs), Child Care Resource Centres (CCRCs) and Better Beginnings, Better Futures (BBBF) Data Analysis Services and service system planning, referred to as Early Years Child Development (ECD) – Planning, for both childcare and early years.

The City of Ottawa, through Children's Services and Community Funding, has invested \$1.0 million in 100% municipal funding. Children's Services has historically funded child and family services in order to respond to local needs (\$644,704 in 2017) and Renewable Community Funding has also funded early years related services (\$410,681 in 2017).

Section 3: Needs Analysis (Stakeholder Engagement)

As per the Guidelines, the City of Ottawa conducted a local needs analysis by engaging and consulting with stakeholders and parents/caregivers. The purpose of this local needs analysis was to develop an in-depth understanding of community needs, as they relate to child and family programs, in order to support the OEYCFC planning and implementation in Ottawa.

In September 2016, the City of Ottawa retained Nanos Research to implement the needs analysis among service users and providers of child and family programs and services in Ottawa. As part of this needs analysis, Nanos engaged service users and providers through a variety of methods.

The objective of the engagement process was to understand the barriers and concerns service users are experiencing with the current early years system in Ottawa. The research sought to identify existing gaps and/or duplication in services, as well as opportunities for the City to consider to best ensure that the new early years system would meet the needs of all children, parents, and caregivers in Ottawa. Additionally, the engagement process gauged the perceptions of service providers with regards to the service user experience, and their opinions related to the OEYCFC integration process.

Through The Journey Together, Indigenous partners are conducting needs assessments with their constituency groups, including parents, family members, caregivers, elders, knowledge keepers, program staff, partner organizations and other Indigenous organizations in the community in order to determine local needs. In collaboration with Indigenous partners, the decision was made not to explore Indigenous views through the OEYCFC engagement process in order to avoid a duplication of efforts and to ensure a culturally appropriate engagement process through the Journey Together. The Journey Together needs assessment findings will be integrated by the City of Ottawa into the planning for OEYCFC programs and services to ensure that these are culturally responsive to the community.

Methodology

The methodologies utilized by Nanos Research consisted of focus groups and in-person group sessions with current and potential service users, in-depth telephone interviews

with service providers, and two open online consultation surveys, developed for current and potential service users and service providers. Using a variety of methods to engage Ottawa residents helped to ensure that the City would receive feedback from those using and/or working in the early years system, and subsequently be able to use this feedback to plan for the future state of the system.

The engagement process began in January 2017 and was completed by March 2017, with a final report in April 2017. All questions used in the surveys and the in-person sessions were developed in collaboration between Nanos Research, City staff and the OEYCFC Advisory Group.

Service users

Service User Survey

Nanos Research hosted an online, open link survey, between February 3 and March 7, 2017. The survey link was posted in French and English on the City of Ottawa website as well as on the individual websites of service providers. In addition to the online survey, paper surveys were also made available. Furthermore, in collaboration with the OEYCFC Advisory Group, the City developed a short questionnaire that assisted service providers in engaging with families who were unable to complete an online survey, or attend an in-person session.

In order to promote participation, the City utilized a variety of methods, including advertising on social media outlets such as Facebook, Twitter and local parenting blogs. Posters detailing the survey were sent to a large number of community partners, including service providers, City of Ottawa recreation facilities and libraries. City councillors also supported the distribution of information by using their various communication outlets.

In total, 1,547 residents completed the online survey, while 65 residents completed the paper survey and 85 residents completed the shorter questionnaire.

Service User Group Sessions

Nanos Research conducted nine group discussion sessions with the general public and 8 focus groups with special populations between February 6 and 17, 2017 in a variety of locations across the city of Ottawa. The number of available sessions and varying locations provided ample opportunity for participation.

Both the sessions and focus groups were conducted in either French or English or bilingually, according to participant preference. The focus groups were held with unique populations such as families living on low-income, rural families, immigrant families, LGBTQ families, Francophone families, and families with children experiencing special needs.

Participants for the group discussions were recruited by the City of Ottawa using the same methods for promoting the online survey. Focus groups were hosted by community agencies, and all participants were recruited by those agencies.

In total, 183 residents participated in the group sessions and focus groups. An analysis of participants showed that:

- 96% were female.
- Nearly half (48 per cent) identified as a parent or guardian of a child 0-6 years old; 29% were caregivers of a child 0-6 years old; 4% identified as grandparents; and 12% self-identified as “Other”. “Others” included service providers, participants with children over 6, and interested citizens.
- Half of the participants were born in Canada (51%), while eight per cent had been in Canada for less than five years. The remainder of participants identified as having been in Canada between 5 and 20 plus years.

Service Providers

Telephone Interviews

Nanos Research conducted 21 in-depth telephone interviews with key service providers between January 12 and February 27, 2017. This included members of the OEYCFC Advisory Group and other key service providers related to child and family programs. Interviews were conducted in either French or English, according to participant preference.

Service Provider Survey

The City of Ottawa emailed an open link online survey, in French and English, to 306 service providers. The link was made available between February 7 and March 8, 2017. Of the 306 service providers who were sent the survey link, 133 participated.

Key Findings from the Engagement Process⁹

Service Users

Service users who participated in the engagement process highlighted accessibility to child and family programs and services as a concern. Concerns with accessibility include the physical location of a program, the hours of operation, and limited space within a location, as well as individual barriers, such as access to transportation or a lack of awareness of existing services.

Playgroups are the most widely used service in Ottawa and are considered to be the most important to service users. However, respondents frequently mentioned a lack of playgroups in their area or being turned away from a playgroup upon arrival due to full capacity.

Overall, service users are interested in programs and services being held in a variety of locations, so long as the location is welcoming and accepting of all.

Francophone service users frequently expressed concerns of bilingual services having a primarily Anglophone focus. They also stated that services must be linguistically and culturally Francophone and must be provided by Francophone agencies. Francophone service users often mentioned a lack of Francophone services in Ottawa and are concerned about the impact of their children being exposed to non-Francophone services.

Service Providers

Service providers who participated in the engagement process emphasized a need to reach service users where they are, particularly those who are considered to be the most vulnerable. Service providers who are members of the City of Ottawa's OEYCFC Advisory Group feel that services being accessible to the most vulnerable children is marginally more important than access for all children.

Service providers also acknowledge the barriers faced by service users, specifically in regards to access and awareness of programs and services. Mentioned efforts to subvert these barriers include coordinating and partnering with other agencies, and

⁹ The section provides a high level summary of the findings from the stakeholder engagement. Detailed findings are presented in the report *OEYCFC Needs Analysis Report*, Nanos Research, 2017.

offering consistent hours and community outreach. With respect to program locations, service providers emphasized that the focus should be on meeting families within their communities.

Service providers expressed concern that the OEYCFC integration could potentially lead to the cutting of existing services, funding and resources, however recognize the potential to offer more services to meet community needs.

Francophone service providers who participated in the engagement process also discussed the need for Francophone services and programs to be linguistically and culturally Francophone, and provided by Francophone agencies.

Recommendations for consideration by the City of Ottawa

A thorough analysis of all of the findings from the engagement process resulted in several recommendations with respect to the integration and implementation of the OEYCFC system in Ottawa. Recommendations were grouped into three categories and are as follows;

System-Wide Considerations

- Utilize intake forms for program registration. The City and service providers would be able to collect key demographic information that can be tracked over time, allowing the City to continuously adapt to meet the needs of service users.
- Collect service satisfaction and evaluation data from service users on an ongoing basis, in the form of surveys, and speak to frontline service providers to monitor the needs of service users in Ottawa.
- Assist with cultural sensitivity training and professional development opportunities for service providers, particularly training for families with unique needs such as New Canadians, children with special needs and same sex parents.
- Ensure clear communication with service users throughout the implementation and transition process to minimize confusion and service disruptions for service users;
- Ensure clear communication with service providers throughout the implementation and transition process to minimize any confusion.
- Integrate services and encourage partnerships, collaboration and resource sharing between organizations/agencies whenever feasible.

- Have impact, access and a smooth implementation be the top priorities for OEYCFC integration, while recommended diversity and Schools First provincial policies are also factored.
- Utilize a model (as recommended in the report by Nanos Research) to prioritize discussions as to how the system can best create access to programs and services for children six. The recommended model in the report creates the greatest access comparatively to vulnerable children 0-6 and all children 0-6 years.
- Map out the Best Start neighbourhoods according to decision matrix scores (as presented in the report) to examine areas that may have a higher proportion of vulnerable children and children in general as a priority area for examining access to services.
- Examine each Best Start neighbourhood and overlay each with the existing services in each neighbourhood to determine gaps or a lack of existing programs and services.
- Due to the small size of some Best Start neighbourhoods, consider looking at the geography and regrouping adjacent areas while making decisions and applying the model.

Enhancing Access for Children and Families

- Promote service offerings to potential and current service users in a variety of ways.
- Create a single web-based tool where service users can access information about all OEYCFC programs and services, as well as an email sign-up to receive information about programs and services.
- Offer service users the ability to register in advance for programs and services, in particular playgroups, in order to avoid being turned away from a program/service upon arrival.
- Promote service offerings to parents as early as possible, in order to ensure that parents are aware of and able to access and benefit from programs and services.
- As playgroups and drop-ins were identified by service users as the most used child and family program and service; consider using playgroups and drop-ins as an entry point to introduce other service offerings to parents and caregivers.
- Address the gap between the importance of playgroups to service users and their offering by service providers.

- Address the barriers that lead to a gap in access, including the varying mandates of agencies/organizations who offer services, hours of operation, and smaller facilities leading to a lower capacity for playgroups.
- Where possible, have child and family programs and services be accessible within a 15-minute walk for vulnerable service users.
- Offer child and family programs and services in varying locations depending on the needs of the community.
- Consider expanding hours of operation on weekdays to accommodate those who wish to access programs and services later in the evenings (6-9pm).

Addressing the Unique Needs of Service Users

- Address the gaps in Francophone services, establish where the demand for service is and assess the need to redistribute Francophone services.
- Address the unique linguistic and cultural needs of Francophone service users, including having culturally sensitive programs and Francophone services delivered by Francophone agencies.
- Ensure the provision of a welcoming and safe environment for all service users.
- Consider offering more mobile programming to allow for easier access to programs and services for rural service users.
- Ensure all facilities are physically accessible to all service users. This includes physical accessibility to access the facility, as well as having large rooms, space for stroller parking, space for equipment for children with special needs, and accessible washrooms.
- Where possible, provide translation services or have multicultural and multilingual staff to assist with language barriers faced by New Canadians.
- Ensure all programming and materials are culturally sensitive, and where possible, available in multiple languages.
- Assist with basic needs of service users where possible, including provision of healthy snacks and beverages or connecting service users to other services in their community.

Indigenous Children and Families

Nanos Research could not make any recommendations with regards to Indigenous populations as engagement with Indigenous families and service providers was being done through the Journey Together process. Integrating results from these two

processes will be very important in ensuring that the needs of Indigenous populations are met and considered in the OEYCFC planning process.

Indigenous service partners have been leading the process of determining local needs, by conducting needs assessments with their constituency groups, including with parents, family members, caregivers, elders, program staff, partner organizations and other Indigenous organizations in the community.

Section 4: Initial Plan

As Consolidated Municipal Service Manager, the City of Ottawa has an obligation to ensure that OEYCFC core services are operational as of January 1, 2018 and that the requirements as set out in the Guidelines are met. Moreover, the City is committed to plan a new OEYCFC system that optimally meets the needs of the community in terms of access and satisfaction with programs and services, while causing minimal disruption to service providers and service users during transition. The Initial Plan, as presented in this section, includes a one-year transition period during which planning for a fully integrated OEYCFC system will continue, with the new OEYCFC system fully operational on January 1, 2019.

Transition Plan - 2018

The City of Ottawa opted to adopt a one-year transition plan (2018) for the delivery of the OEYCFC programs and services. This will ensure that OEYCFC core services are on the ground starting on January 1, 2018. The decision was made for the following reasons:

- The relatively short planning timeframe and the fact that the 2018 funding allocation for Ottawa and associated funding guidelines were released received late in the planning process (June and July 2017 respectively).
- The operational realities faced by community organizations that risk being disrupted by the implementation of a new system (e.g. staffing, funding) and the required amount of time to plan and implement any changes.
- The estimated amount of time required by the City of Ottawa to manage an application process and enter into contracts for the delivery of new OEYCFC programs and services.

This approach is supported by the Ministry in a memo dated July 14 2017, which reads: *The Ministry recognizes that 2018 will be a year of transition as CMSMs/DSSABs work towards program transformation while minimizing disruptions to service.* The one-year transition plan/period was also endorsed by the OEYCFC Planning Advisory Group at its June 26, 2017 meeting.

The Transition Plan is based on the following principles:

- 1) Meet mandated OEYCFC guidelines requirements as of Jan 1, 2018;

- 2) Collaborate with existing agencies throughout process; and
- 3) Minimize disruption for service partners and families.

In 2018, child and family programs and services (to be called OEYCFCs) will continue to be delivered at the same locations and at current service/funding levels, while ensuring requirements as set out in the Guidelines are met. The City of Ottawa will maintain the 2017 funding allocations with agencies/school boards currently receiving Provincial and/or Municipal funding through one-year contribution agreements.¹⁰

The City of Ottawa will ensure that OEYCFC requirements as outlined in the Guidelines (and in the terms of conditions of the 2018-2019 OEYCFC Service Agreement with Province) are met through stipulations in the one-year contribution agreements and by updating the City of Ottawa [Child Care Provider User Guide 2016-2020](#). As such, local service providers will be required to:

- Use *How Does Learning Happen* to guide the development and delivery of local programs.
- Deliver the full suite of core services related to: 1) Engaging Parents and Caregivers, 2) Supporting early learning and development, and 3) making connections to other family services.
- Provide core services at no fee to program participants.
- Provide all core services in community-based locations and not within individual homes.
- Offer centre-based core services year round and at least five days a week, including either Saturday or Sunday.
- Provide French playgroups and workshops (for the agencies already offering French programming).
- Ensure that Registered Early Childhood Educators (RECEs) deliver mandatory core services related to Supporting Early Learning and Development, unless an exemption has been granted by the City of Ottawa.¹¹

¹⁰ Existing contribution agreements between the Ministry or the City of Ottawa and organizations will remain in place until December 31, 2017. All local organizations holding existing contribution agreements with the City of Ottawa were notified in the summer 2017 of the change to their contribution agreements (effective December 31, 2017).

¹¹ As outlined in the OEYCFC *Planning Guidelines for Service System Managers* (July 2016) and the *2018 Ontario Early Years Child and Family Centres: Business Practices and Funding Guidelines* (July 2017).

- Have in place appropriate policies and procedures to ensure that OEYCFCs are delivered in a way that promotes the health, safety and well-being of children and families being served.¹²
- Promote their programs and services under the OEYCFC umbrella and use the Province branding materials with service users.

First Nation, Métis and Inuit peoples, organizations and communities are best positioned to provide culturally based programming, services and care to Indigenous children and families. The City of Ottawa will work with Indigenous service providers to explore funding and service provision based on the results of the Journey Together needs assessments. As identified through The Journey Together – Ontario Early Years Initiative, Wabano Centre for Aboriginal Health will lead a process to develop a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with mainstream early years services providers. It is envisioned that the MOU would include a joint commitment to Reconciliation as well as commitments to refer Indigenous children and their families to Indigenous serving organizations.

The 2018 Provincial OEYCFC funding allocation for Ottawa is \$9.6 million. This represents an increase of \$2.9 million from 2017, reflecting the scope of the new system transfer. With maintaining the 100% municipal investment of approximately \$1.0 million, the total local 2018 OEYCFC funding envelope is \$10.7 million.

One-time funding will be allocated in 2018, based on identified system and service needs and in consultation with service partners, to assist with the transition plan implementation and build system capacity. Considerations for spending may include, enhancements to technology to support service management and data collection, enhanced pedagogical capacity across the system, and one time capital enhancements.

In preparation for a January 1, 2018 implementation of the transition plan, the City of Ottawa will focus on several key activities in the Fall 2017, many in collaboration with the OEYCFC Advisory Group. These include:

1. Formalize one-year contribution agreements with agencies and school boards currently receiving provincial and/or municipal funding for the provision of OEYCFC core services.

¹² As per the list of policies and procedures outlined in the *2018 Ontario Early Years Child and Family Centres: Business Practices and Funding Guidelines* (July 2017).

2. Develop Registered Early Childhood Educator (RECE) exemption criteria and a process to grant such exemptions. Starting in January 2018, the City will monitor exemptions to identify challenges and develop strategies to support service providers in meeting the requirement;
3. Develop a serious incident reporting process. Starting in January 2018, the City of Ottawa will monitor serious incidents and report relevant incidents to the Province.
4. Develop and implement a communications plan aimed at increasing public and stakeholder awareness of the new OEYCFC brand, which will align with the provincial branding strategy.¹³ See Table 6 for potential communications methods.

Table 6. Potential Communications Tactics - 2018

Audience	Tactics
Service providers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information sessions • Communications package (Memo, Q&A) • Email to community partners • Ottawa.ca
Service users	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotion by local OEYCFC service providers, using new branding and visual identify • Ottawa.ca • Social media channels and blogs • Media
City Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internal communications channels
Public at large	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ottawa.ca • City facilities • Other advertising tactics

¹³ Information about the Provincial branding strategy and visual identify project is expected in Fall 2017.

System Planning for 2019 and Beyond

Between Fall 2017 and December 31, 2018, the City of Ottawa will continue transitioning to full implementation of the new integrated OEYCFC system.

During this period, the City of Ottawa will continue engaging with the OEYCFC Advisory Group to the end of December 2017. The City of Ottawa is also creating a Child Care and Early Years Planning Advisory Group which will provide input and guidance into the ongoing planning of child and family programs and services in Ottawa, beginning in the fall 2017. The Child Care and Early Years Planning Advisory Group will meet on a monthly basis and will include representation from the child care sector, school boards, OEYCFCs, parents, and others key community agencies. This Advisory Group will also include representation from francophone and Indigenous service providers.

Over the coming months, the City of Ottawa will continue to develop a new integrated OEYCFC system plan that is informed by demographic data, the characteristics of individual neighborhoods, existing programs and services and their locations, findings of the stakeholder engagement, and the Journey Together needs assessment findings. Further and more detailed analysis of all collected data (demographic data, service data, financial data, space review data) and stakeholder engagement findings will continue in order to identify system strengths, gaps and opportunities.

This planning and transition work will be informed by a set of decision-making and implementation guiding principles that were developed based on the stakeholder engagement findings and discussions with the OEYCFC Advisory Group. The guiding principles will be applied to decisions on where OEYCFCs should be located and how the services can be best implemented to maximize resources and optimize service delivery. See Appendix C for a list of the OEYCFC guiding principles.

The following next steps/deliverables are planned as part of the City of Ottawa Initial Plan (other activities may be added as planning progresses):

- **Review neighborhood boundaries and establish OEYCFC service areas.**
The City of Ottawa is in the process of reviewing the existing Best Start neighborhood boundaries and establishing larger OEYCFC service areas. The Best Start neighborhood geography (approximately 50 neighborhoods) needs to

be updated as the city of Ottawa has experienced large demographic shifts over the last few years and there are wide discrepancies in the size and make-up of the existing Best Start neighborhoods.¹⁴

Once the smaller neighborhood boundaries are finalized, the City of Ottawa will establish OEYCFC services areas (by grouping the smaller revised neighborhoods into larger geographic planning/service areas). The OEYCFC Advisory Group will be providing feedback on the establishment of the OEYCFC service areas.

The OEYCFC service areas will allow for a more defined and detailed analysis of the demographic portrait of the community and suitability of existing child and family sites and locations.

- **Adopt a decision-making matrix and develop funding formula.** The City of Ottawa will formally adopt a decision-making matrix that will be used to rationally and systematically identify the relative service needs of neighborhoods and guide decisions related to OEYCFC investments in a manner that is transparent and evidence-based. The decision-making matrix will produce scores for each neighborhood (according to population counts and a measure of vulnerability), with higher scores pointing to higher service needs.¹⁵ Aggregate scores for service areas will guide investment decisions and inform the development of a funding formula.
- **Develop an application/allocation process.** The City of Ottawa will not directly operate OEYCFCs but will enter into contribution agreements with eligible service providers. The City intends to develop an application process for the delivery of OEYCFC programs and services in each service area. Eligible organizations will be invited to formally apply. Contribution agreements with successful proponents will take effect January 1, 2019.
- **Develop a service delivery model for francophone programs and services.** One of the OEYCFC goals is for Francophone children and families to have access to French language programs and gain enhanced knowledge about

¹⁴ The OEYCFC Data Booklet will be updated to reflect the revised neighborhoods.

¹⁵ The definition of vulnerability is still to be determined. Options to measure neighborhood vulnerability will be presented to the Advisory Group for their feedback in Fall 2017.

language and identity acquisition. The City of Ottawa will continue to engage with francophone service partners, through the francophone Best Start Table, in order to design and adopt an early years service delivery model (with associated investments) that responds to the unique needs of Francophone children, their families, and the communities where they live. The Aménagement Linguistique Framework for the Early Years in Ontario (currently in development by the Province) will be considered in the development of the francophone service delivery model and programs and services.

- **Develop a service delivery model based on reconciliation with Indigenous children and families.** One of the OEYCFC goals is for Indigenous children and families to have access to culturally responsive programming. The City of Ottawa will work with Indigenous partners and service partners to understand and meet the needs of the local Indigenous community, as outlined in the local needs assessments being conducted through the Journey Together process. OEYCFC service delivery or system capacity-building for the Indigenous community will aim to enhance existing Indigenous-led early years programs and services and reflect local Indigenous cultures.
- **Develop an outcomes and evaluation framework.** It is the City's understanding that the Ministry is developing a comprehensive OEYCFC Outcome Framework to support the implementation of OEYCFCs and assess collective progress. Once the framework has been released, the City of Ottawa will engage Data Analysis Services (Parent Resource Centre) to develop a local outcomes and evaluation framework that is aligned with Provincial direction.
- **Review provincial priorities.** Several recent provincial priorities (e.g. Special Needs Strategy, Community Hubs, etc) could have an impact on the successful implementation of OEYCFCs and on existing partnerships. The City of Ottawa will work with the stakeholder advisory groups to identify the most salient priorities and determine how to link these with the new OEYCFC system.

Once the above mentioned activities are completed, the City of Ottawa will prepare an integrated OEYCFC system plan as part of the City of Ottawa Children's Services Service Plan, which will be shared with Council in 2018. As per Provincial requirements, the City of Ottawa will also submit a mid-year report in June 2018 to provide an update to the province on the implementation of the OEYCFCs in Ottawa.

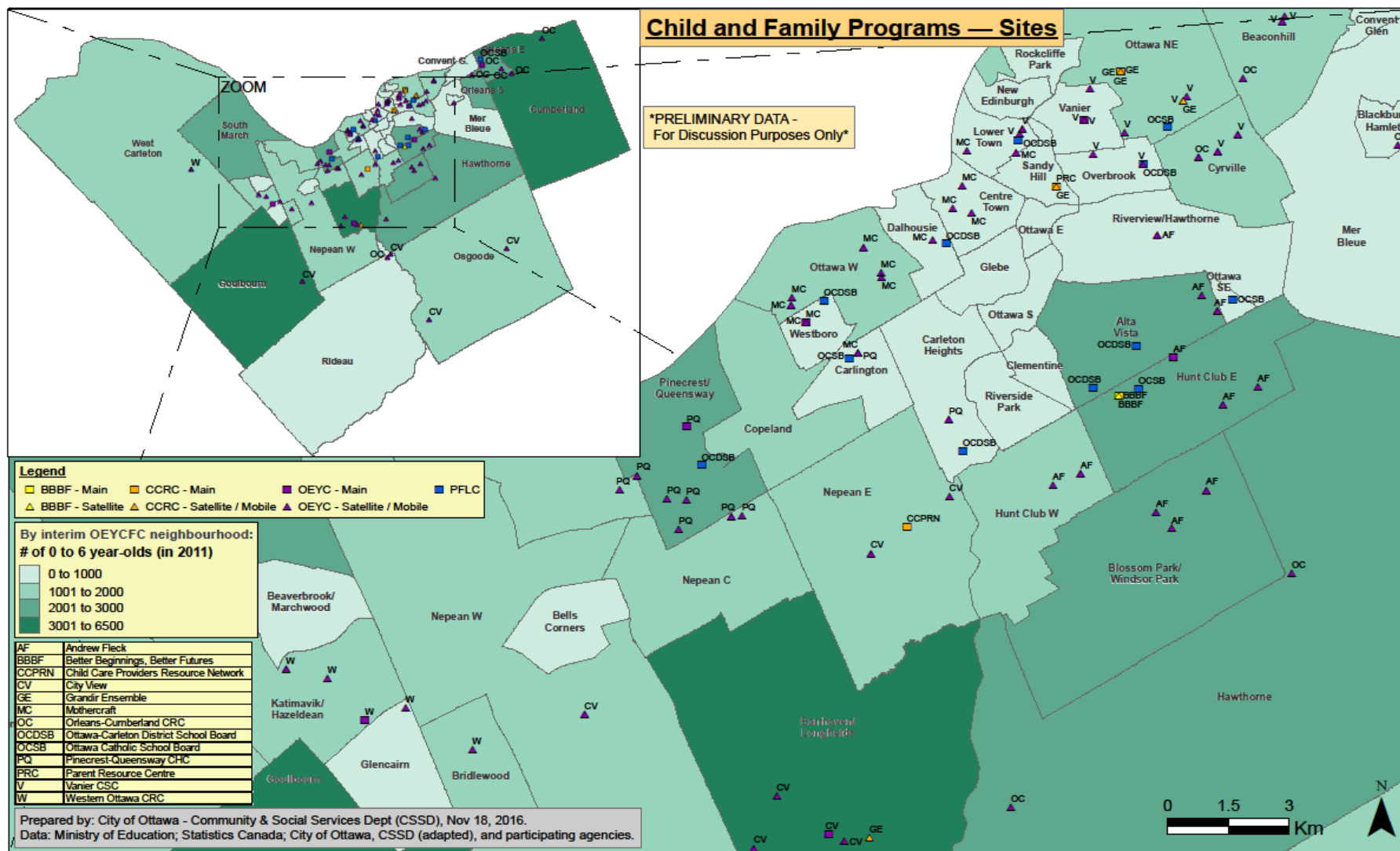


Work plan & Timelines

Refer to Appendix D for a summary of the City of Ottawa OEYCFC work plan (with timelines).

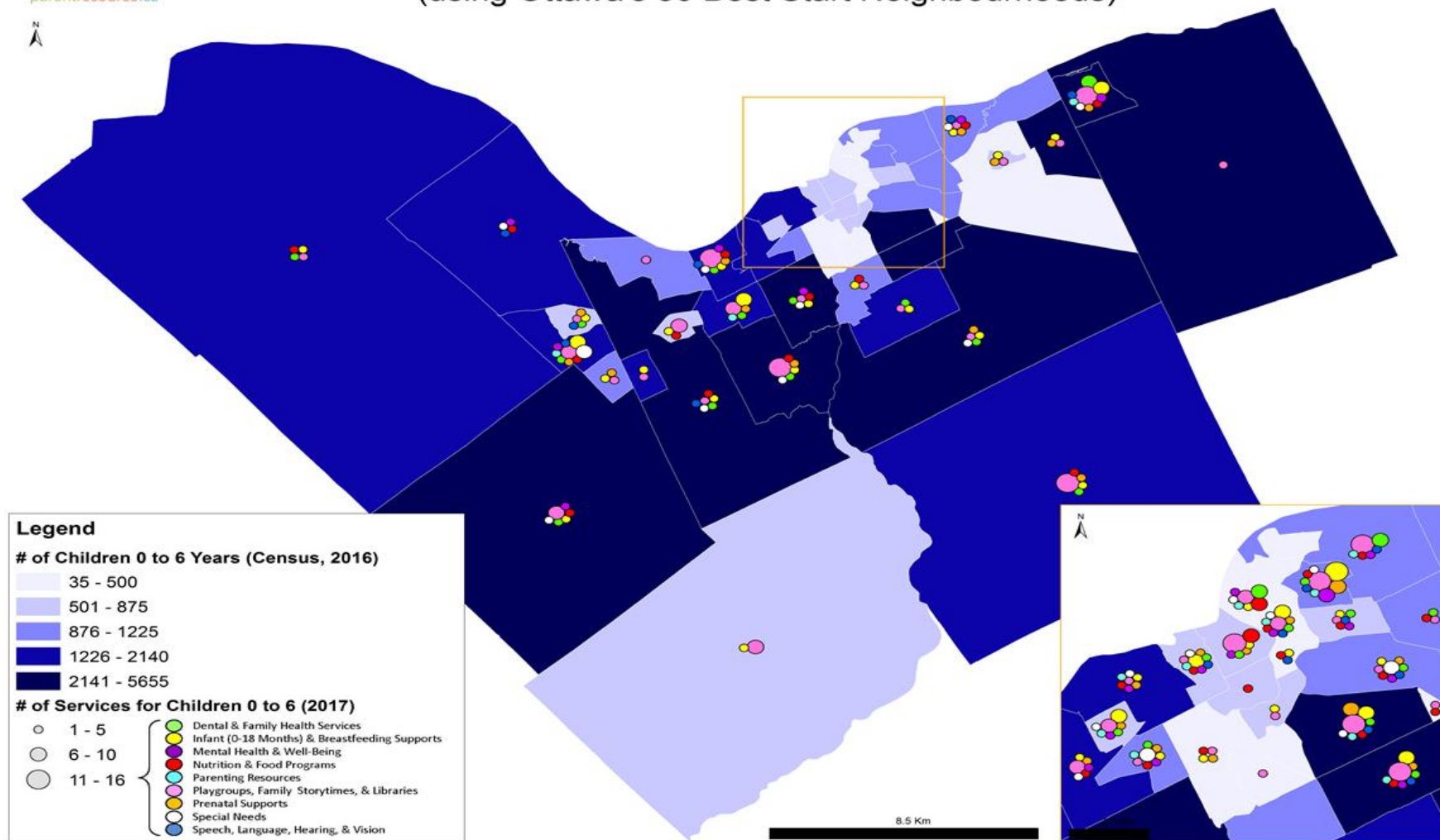


APPENDIX A – Map of Ministry-funded child and family programs in Ottawa



APPENDIX B – Map of child and family programs and services in Ottawa

Services for Children 0-6 and their Families in Ottawa (using Ottawa's 50 Best Start Neighbourhoods)



APPENDIX C – OEYCFC Guiding Principles

Decision-making guiding principles

1. French Language and Culture - Ensure that French Language Programs meet or exceed provincial guidelines.
2. Indigenous Peoples – Ensure that programs for Indigenous Peoples meet or exceed provincial guidelines and have a commitment to reconciliation.
3. Impact on the Most Vulnerable Families and Children – Give priority to supporting decisions with a positive impact on families that are the most vulnerable. This will include the application of an equity and inclusion lens.
4. Impact on the Greatest Number of Families and Children – Give priority to supporting decisions with a positive impact on the greatest number of families/children.
5. No Overlap and Gap Identification – Give priority to addressing gaps in services and minimizing duplication.
6. Calibrate services to best meet the needs of service users – Calibrate services rated as important to users with the delivery of services.

Implementation Guiding Principles

7. Aligning the different ways service users access services to optimize access to services – Align locations and services to be optimally accessible to the greatest number of service users both in person, by mobile, virtually and by telephone based on where service users are. This would include proximity to public transit stops, walkability, the capacity of programs/location, the size of the location, and the hours of operation.
8. Optimize integration of services – Prioritize integration and co-location when possible to maximize resources and enhance the choice and access users have to the services they need. Programs should collaborate with existing community programs and form or maintain partnerships with relevant community organizations.
9. Assess how the needs of diverse communities are met – Assess the delivery of services through the intersectionality of equity, inclusion and diversity (ex. LGBTQ, newcomers, rural families).
10. Adopt a Schools First approach – Examine decisions on the alignment and co-location of services in a manner consistent with the suggestion from the Ministry that decisions be

made which support schools as community hubs where this makes sense in terms of the access of families/children to services and the integration of services.

11. Ensure a smooth implementation –Transition in a manner that minimizes disruption to partners, employees, and volunteers.
12. Build for the future – Consider not just current but future needs.

APPENDIX D – Workplan and Timelines

