



# Best Start Plan

Toronto Vision for Children

integrating

building

enhancing

strengthening

January 2006

Toronto *Best Start* Network





January 2006

Toronto *Best Start* Network

January 31, 2006

Dear Community Partner:

The Toronto Best Start Network is pleased to submit the attached Best Start Plan: Toronto Vision for Children. This plan should be read as an accompanying document to the 2005-2009 Child Care Service Plan (May 2005), and The Best Start Service and Transition Infrastructure Plan (November 2005).

The Best Start Plan: Toronto Vision for Children responds to the Implementation Planning Guidelines for Best Start Networks (June 2005). Toronto's Vision is designed to build upon the existing service structure and integrated early childhood strategies in Toronto. The Best Start Plan lays out the vision for future planning and service integration, and provides a framework for community/neighbourhood planning and implementation.

Preliminary consultation with a cross-section of parents, service providers and networks within Toronto provided initial direction. The Best Start Plan lays the foundation for the establishment of a broad stakeholder consultation process that will ensure the Toronto Vision for Children is implemented in a way that meets the needs of Toronto's diverse community.

Our collective task now is to build on the strengths of our communities and consolidate our commitment to building communities where children and their families are supported and have access to the services they need and deserve. We are confident that the Best Start Plan: Toronto Vision for Children will provide the direction and vision to accomplish that mission.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "B. Patterson".

Brenda Patterson  
General Manager  
Toronto Children's Services  
Chair, Toronto Best Start Network

attachment





## Preamble

The Toronto Vision for Children builds on the Best Start strategy that focuses on early learning and care, primarily on meeting children’s and family’s needs by strengthening, enhancing, building on and integrating existing programs and services.

The Vision set in this document will be driven by the community. Given the unique characteristics of the different populations including Aboriginal and Francophone, the unique needs of children and families will be addressed through the planning and implementation process and may look different in various communities. The Vision provides a framework for how to best organize and integrate services with the goal of improved outcomes for children.

*Basic to a good society is that children are welcome, are given a good environment during childhood and are the concern of the whole society. Children have a right to secure living conditions that enhance their development. Preschool has an important function in children’s lives. It offers a comprehensive programme and is a source of stimulation in the children’s development. It gives them a chance to meet other children and adults and to be part of an experience of fellowship and friendship. It is a complement to the upbringing a child gets at home – Family Aid Commission, Sweden, 1981, cited in Moss and Penn, 1996, p.1.*



# Best Start Plan: Toronto Vision for Children

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# Best Start Plan: Toronto Vision for Children

## 1. Introduction

The document covers the following areas:

1. The Toronto Vision for Children
2. Building a system and community capacity for Best Start
3. Getting Started.

This document responds to Ontario's Best Start Strategy which provides a total of \$1.1 billion in funding, with Toronto receiving \$125 million, over the next three years to:

- Expand regulated early learning and child care spaces and subsidies. The first priority for expansion will be for children in junior and senior kindergarten for non-school hours with the gradual expansion of early learning and child care spaces and subsidies for younger children
- Plan for community/neighbourhood hub delivery system (predominantly in Ontario's publicly-funded schools) to bring together screening, assessment and treatment, child care and parenting programs, with direct links to other children's services, such as mental health services and speech and language resources to be implemented by 2016.

Responding to the above priorities, this report lays out the vision and framework for the planning and delivery of child and family services in the City of Toronto, and provides the platform for future advocacy for a comprehensive and equitable system of integrated, inclusive and high quality services for children aged 0 – 12. It is a companion document to the Best Start Service and Transition Infrastructure Plan (November 2005) and the City of Toronto 2005 – 2009 Child Care Service Plan (May 2005).

The Best Generation Yet (June 2005) provides the framework for the expansion and integration of Toronto's services for children 0 – 12, and for the implementation of the Toronto Best Start Plan (0 – 6). It provides the framework for City plans for children, and ties this together with the initiatives from other orders of government.



## 2. The Toronto Vision for Children

“Regardless of the socio-economic status of his/her family and community, every child has the right to childhood experiences, which promote the chances of developing into a healthy, well-adjusted and productive adult.”<sup>1</sup>

Toronto shall be a City where:<sup>2</sup>

- Children are recognized as unique human beings with differing needs for nurturing and support from their families, communities and society
- All children have adequate income, health, housing, food and nutrition, care and education, safety and security, recreation, leisure and cultural experiences. The supports necessary to achieve this will be available at all stages of childhood: pre-conception, pre-natal, post-partum, pre-school and school age. They will ensure the healthy physical, intellectual and social development of children “in the here and now” as well as build the foundation for their development into competent adults
- Families with young children have timely access to a range of universal, high-quality, developmental and affordable programs which support them, throughout the family-life cycle, in their roles as parents, workers and urban citizens
- Communities welcome children and are fully engaged in the creation and operation of neighbourhood-based service “hubs” that provide expanded, comprehensive, culturally-appropriate, high-quality environments and programs built on the best available knowledge of child development and provision of services for children
- Clean air and water and a sustainable environment are understood by everyone as integral to a healthy childhood
- All governments, authorities and organizations involved in programs for young children and families work together to plan, develop, administer, fund, regulate, deliver and are accountable for a new service system built on goals and targets for quality, expansion, accessibility and effective use of resources. Their task will be to turn separate services into a coherent system of services.

<sup>1</sup> Adopted by Toronto City Council, November, 1999

<sup>2</sup> Adopted by the Mayor’s Roundtable on Children, Youth and Education (January, 2005)



## 2.1 Best Start goals

By 2016 Toronto Best Start will put the Toronto Vision into action for young children and their families. It aims to:

- Create a comprehensive system of services that supports children and their families with specific plans to address the needs of Francophone and Aboriginal populations and children with special needs from birth to age 12
- Establish access for all children and families to community/neighbourhood hubs that are located in, or linked to, elementary schools wherever possible
- Increase access to a continuum of early identification and intervention services
- Support parents to participate in their child's early learning and development as they pursue work, study, family, and community responsibilities
- Measure outcomes for children using the Early Development Instrument and other measurement tools to identify patterns, needs and future directions in programs and services for young children
- Identify policy, resource and systems issues and gaps.

The Best Start plan will be consistent with Toronto's Vision for children and Best Start goals, and will support the development of services that are:

- Based on knowledge of the importance of the early years and early child development
- Publicly resourced for long-term sustainability
- Flexible and coordinated to maximize resources and facilitate access
- Delivered by qualified, professional staff supported by pre- and post-employment training and development, and paid at a level that reflects the value of their work
- Responsive to neighbourhood needs, with additional supports for children in special circumstances due to socio-economic status, family structure, race and ethnicity, ability or other such grounds.



## 3. Building the vision

### Building the Toronto Best Start Plan

Information and consultation sessions were carried out in Toronto from October to December 2005. Sessions were designed to update the community on Best Start activities taking place at both provincial and municipal levels, and to solicit initial recommendations from the community on general principles and implementation strategies being considered for Best Start in Toronto.

Feedback from the consultation sessions informed the development of the Toronto Best Start Plan, and will provide direction for future consultation and implementation strategies. A working group of the Toronto Best Start Network was charged with formulating surveys and focus group questions, and to develop the Toronto Best Start Plan, with further input from the broader Best Start Network.

While timelines restricted the extent of this preliminary consultation stage, every effort was made to meet with a cross-section of parents, service providers and networks within Toronto. Sessions were held in various locations across the city, with a number of stakeholders.

### Parents

Representation	Location	Date
Ontario Early Years Centre (O.E.Y.C.)	North York	November 23
Parent Advocacy Group	Downtown – west	November 17
Community centre	Downtown – east	December 3
Child care board of directors	Scarborough	December 5

Focus group questions and responses (Appendix B)



### Service provider community – quadrant-wide sessions

Representation at these sessions was cross-sectoral, including but not limited to: child care, children’s mental health, special needs, O.E.Y.C.

Representation	Location	Date
Cross-sectoral	North York	October 28
Cross-sectoral	Etobicoke	October 19
Cross-sectoral	Downtown	October 17
Cross-sectoral	Scarborough	October 26

### Coalitions/networks

Representation	Location	Date
Action for Children Today and Tomorrow (A.C.T.T.)	Downtown – East	October 24
Scarborough 0 – 6 Committee	Scarborough	October 31
York South-Weston riding table	York South-Weston	November 16
Black Creek Community Partners	North/West Toronto	December 7
North Toronto 0 – 6 Coalition	North/Central Downtown	December 6
Children’s Network of Toronto	Toronto	November 24

A series of questions were posed to networks/coalitions:

- What recommendation did they have regarding local planning and implementation?
- How would this structure ensure broad community/neighbourhood input?



## Aboriginal and Francophone communities

The Best Start Network has been working with representatives in the Francophone and Aboriginal communities to begin outlining a meaningful process for consultation and implementation of the community/neighbourhood hub delivery system within their communities. A Francophone working group and an Aboriginal advisory group have been formed to facilitate this process.

# 4. Building a system and community capacity for Best Start

Service integration is essential to developing a high-quality early learning and care system for Toronto.

- The Toronto Best Start vision promotes service integration for all families through the development of the neighbourhood hub delivery system — child care, kindergarten and family support programs will be at their core
- The neighbourhood hub delivery system will promote and strengthen collaborative efforts amongst service providers.

## 4.1 Toronto Best Start Network – systems level

Successful implementation of the community/neighbourhood hub delivery system will require strong leadership, willingness to collaborate, community focus, school involvement, adequate resources and information, and effective communications. To achieve this it is important to:

- Have at a systems level, an organizational structure that supports integration — one that creates a foundation and linkages; identifies opportunities, barriers and successes, and that informs and facilitates strategic planning across the system.

The Toronto Best Start Network provides a structure to support the vision of service integration to best meet the needs of families in the community.

The Best Start Network will:

- Inform the development of an integrated, comprehensive system of services that supports families and their children from conception through the transition into school (0 – 6 years) including provisions for children with special needs, Francophone and Aboriginal populations
- Identify and monitor service, policy, resource and systems issues
- Build cross-sectoral linkages and agreements to increase service integration



- Involve key service providers in the community
- Integrate plans to enhance early identification and intervention programs
- Support the identification of existing and development of new service protocols to support service integration
- Support the engagement of parents in the planning and implementation of the community/neighbourhood hub delivery system
- Build on existing Regional and local coordinating networks, addressing Francophone/Aboriginal realities.

### **Shared accountability and declaration of commitment**

It is important to ensure that there is accountability in decision-making processes and monitoring of the impact that planning outcomes may have on the children's service system.

This will be achieved through:

- A shared Memorandum of Understanding between the core service providers — Toronto Children's Services, the four school boards and Toronto Public Health — describing partner roles and responsibilities and their commitments to service integration.

Key components of the Memorandum of Understanding will include:

- Partnership description
- Declaration of commitment
- Description of roles and responsibilities in the service delivery process in building and maintaining a comprehensive multi-year focus on service integration
- Endorsement from the Best Start Network members.

### **Monitoring and accountability**

Achieving the vision will require shared political commitment, public and institutional support and accountability mechanisms to measure our progress. In order to track progress from co-existence to collaboration and consolidation of early learning and child care programs, it is proposed that a management tool be implemented as an integral component for monitoring and accountability. The Indicators of Change, a management tool developed by Toronto First Duty, is used to track progress along the continuum.



## 5. The community/neighbourhood hub delivery system

Strategies to implement the community/neighbourhood hub delivery system will happen across the children's service system and are not solely tied to the expansion of child care or any specific funding allocation. Implementation strategies will build on what exists, and move forward based on opportunities and community need. The community/neighbourhood hub delivery system is predicated on adequate and stable funding; however, the initial stages of moving forward will be built on existing resources.

In addition, there is a recognition that the system of services to the Aboriginal and Francophone community may be different, in keeping with the unique characteristics and needs of those communities. The community/neighbourhood hub delivery system must be responsive to the challenges and obstacles of these communities, given their provincial responsibility and socio-demographic make-up.

Central to the community/neighbourhood hub delivery system is the collaboration/integration of the three core early childhood services — child care, kindergarten and family supports. From this service platform, families can be linked to more specialized services as required. Lessons learned from projects such as Toronto First Duty will inform the development of service integration.

Through the development of community/neighbourhood hubs, communities may benefit from the following outcomes:

- Improved outcomes for children
- Greater awareness of child development
- Increased participation of children in the enjoyment of quality early childhood learning, care and support services
- Improved access by families to a comprehensive range of services
- Enhanced parent participation in their children's early learning
- Enhanced links and coordination between education, child care and family support services
- Innovative practice in the provision of services which are responsive to the needs of families and children
- Cross-government commitment to the provision of services.



Families with children with special needs will benefit from:

- Greater awareness of the services available to support inclusion of children with special needs
- Enhanced coordination between community service providers to ensure services are responsive to the needs of children with special needs
- Simplified access to services that support children with special needs.

## 5.1 Community/neighbourhood hub core elements

“Hub-like” activity exists presently in Toronto. In many communities, organizations integrate and/or coordinate services for families and children. Although the core elements (kindergarten, child care and family support) form the platform for integrated service delivery, local need and resources will determine how programs work together and what additional services are available. There are currently over 300 sites where services are collocated and could serve as natural building blocks for integration (Appendix E).

The core elements of community/neighbourhood hub service delivery include:

- A community/neighbourhood **partnership agreement** reflecting the vision and goals of Toronto Best Start
- A **high-quality learning and care environment** that combines learning expectations, activities and routines from existing kindergarten, child care and family support programs
- An **early years staff team** including teachers, early childhood educators, educational assistants and family support staff and others who work together toward common goals
- **Inclusive access**, meeting the needs of all children and families
- A **governance structure** to support community/neighbourhood planning, service integration and local decision making
- A **continuum of supports and services** responding to the changing needs of all families and children, and making the most efficient use of resources
- **Parent participation** in their children’s early learning and development through direct involvement in programs, planning and decision-making, and an opportunity for participation at the governance structure.



## Community/neighbourhood hub service locations

Wherever possible, community/neighbourhood hubs will be located in schools. The hubs will include the core early childhood services: child care, kindergarten and family support programs, and will incorporate the community/neighbourhood hub service delivery framework to achieve service integration.

- Services may take place under one roof or through multiple locations, and may be provided by one organization or several working in collaboration. This approach is consistent with Ministry priorities and builds on the considerable work already done by the municipality and school boards and recognizes the ongoing efforts among service providers to co-ordinate service delivery for families
- Parents may choose to use services in their home neighbourhood or their work community, and can expect the same high-quality service regardless of location.

The activities of the community/neighbourhood hub include:

- Licensed child care for children from birth to four years
- An integrated licensed child care/kindergarten program with option to attend a half day, a full day or an extended day for four- and five-year-olds
- A variety of wide-ranging, high-quality, developmentally and culturally appropriate before- and after-school programs, such as licensed child care, social-recreational programs, sports, arts, music and library services that could be offered as part of the hub site or in the community as appropriate
- Family support providing a range of parenting resources, links to other community services, as well as early learning and school readiness programs
- Links to public health programs, such as Healthy Babies Healthy Children, Preschool Speech and Language, Healthiest Babies Possible, Parent Education, Early Identification and Dental Care
- Nutrition programs such as breakfast, lunch, healthy snacks, Peer Nutrition
- The ability to facilitate access for families to other services
- Links to public libraries such as Baby Time, Toddler Time, Preschool Story Time, Leading To Reading and parenting programs, as well as the collections and services of the public library.



It is recognized that in some locations it may not be viable to offer the full spectrum of early learning and care programs, and flexible approaches to service delivery must be considered in the planning and delivery of services. (Appendix D – Map of child care programs for four- and five-year-olds located in elementary schools and Appendix E – Map of services for children which are collocated).

## 6. Getting started

### February through June 2006

The Toronto Best Start Network will move forward in developing strategies to support the planning and implementation of the Toronto Vision for Children once the plan is formally endorsed. Strategies will include establishing the community/neighbourhood planning process.

### Establish an implementation coordinating group

The Toronto Best Start Network will establish an implementation group responsible for guiding implementation of the Toronto Vision for Children and resolving key issues, barriers and obstacles to developing a community/neighbourhood hub delivery system. This group will be a subcommittee of the Network. To develop the group, the network will re-constitute the original signatory group which includes: four school boards, Public Health, Ministry of Children and Youth Services, Consolidated Municipal Service Manager and the Ministry of Education. Additional members will be identified building on existing partnerships and planning structures. The First Duty Project Steering Committee could provide some leadership in this area.

### 6.1 The Toronto Best Start planning process

A planning process will be established to guide the development of a community/neighbourhood hub delivery system; ensure equitable distribution of services throughout Toronto; and ensure equity and access for all families with children aged 0 – 6. The planning process will:

- Include and facilitate consultation with existing stakeholders, service providers and their networks
- Include and facilitate consultation with all members of the community concerned with children and families, particularly parents and caregivers
- Be open and transparent.



## Community consultation/planning

Community consultation will include parents and caregivers, community members and sectors involved in planning and delivery of services for families and children.

Parents	Service providers	Other
Working parents	Licensed child care/home child care	Business representatives
Stay-at-home parents	Education	Community & faith groups
Users of child care	Recreation	Individuals
Users of parenting/family resources	Specialized services (including but not limited to: children's mental health, PSL, IHP, special needs resources)	Local children/family service planning networks and coalitions
Families with children with special needs	Family resource/parenting/O.E.Y.C.	Elected officials
Users of recreation programs	Health	
Aboriginal and Francophone parents		

## 6.2 Parent engagement strategy

Ongoing parental engagement is an important component of Best Start and the Toronto Vision for Children. A comprehensive parent engagement strategy will be developed to inform parents and the community on the Vision for Children. Caregivers and the community will need to be informed of the importance of early learning and child care and the benefits of a community/neighbourhood hub delivery system. Parent participation in the planning and implementation of Best Start is essential.

The parent engagement strategy will aim to:

- Inform parents about the importance of early childhood development
- Inform parents about the Toronto Vision for Children



- Seek input on the vision and identify how the community/neighbourhood hub service delivery system can support them
- Increase parent's participation in Best Start programs and services
- Increase parent's participation in the planning and governance of the community/neighbourhood hub delivery system.

## 6.3 Challenges to implementing Toronto's Vision for Children

### Funding barriers:

- Lack of funding to implement the community/neighbourhood hub delivery system
- Availability of space in schools and occupancy costs
- Unfunded community agencies — agencies required to assume management and administrative costs
- Operating costs to accommodate coordination and facilitation activities
- Increased demand on existing programs without increased funding.

### Policy barriers:

- Fractured funding structure and liability issues in integrated settings
- Combining universal and targeted programs for children 0 – 6 is a primary barrier to integrating services;
  - Kindergarten is available with no fee to parents for all children, ages four and five
  - Parenting/family support and other programs such as the Ontario Early Years Centres have no or very low fees. Where they are available, programs are open to all pre-schoolers attending with their parents
  - Families who cannot afford full fee child care and are ineligible for fee assistance currently face affordability barriers
- Some provisions of Ontario's *Day Nurseries Act* limit program flexibility including sole recognition of the Early Childhood Educator credential in ratios and restrictions of age groupings
- Inconsistent pedagogy of early learning and child care



- Convergence of multiple plans and visions: Child Care Service Plan, Ontario Early Years Centres, City of Toronto Best Generation Yet and community agencies
- Lack of integrated management information systems to support planning and monitoring
- Harmonizing of existing policies and operations.

Institutional barriers:

- Coordination among different service providers demands the harmonizing of existing policies and operations
- Convergence of different service providers from numerous mandates
- Opposing perceptions of imposed values and beliefs about early childhood development.

Other:

- Engagement of community
- Public education and training
- Incentives for people and organizations to act in a new way.

## 6.4 Key deliverables

### Critical Path (Appendix C)

#### **Year 1 to 5 (2006 – 2011) (not stated in order of priority)**

Consultation & planning:

- Develop and implement a consultation strategy
- Identify implementation planning mechanisms at the system and neighbourhood level
- Develop implementation action plan
- Develop a plan to monitor progress on the development of the community/neighbourhood hub delivery system
- Set targets and timelines
- Identify community development strategy
- Identify training needs.



Data collection/mapping:

- Develop benchmarks and service levels
- Create community profiles
- Identify community demographics
- Map clusters of services
- Establish an integrated data management system to support planning.

Neighbourhood level:

- Develop community/neighbourhood action plans
- Establish community development process to support planning.



## Appendix A – Research indicates that service integration is supported by:

- An understanding that all children benefit from quality early learning experiences
- A paradigm shift in service provision from separate silos to collaborative partnering in all sectors
- Service providers and their system leaders understanding the reasons for integration, and believing in it
- Sufficient time for inter-disciplinary staff teams to develop trusting, respectful relationships by providing opportunities for professional development, and to enable joint planning and programming
- The harmonization of staff qualifications and remuneration across sectors
- The creation of a formal process/structure for surfacing and addressing barriers and issues
- The leadership of school principals, family support workers and child care supervisors. They, along with other community champions, provide the top-down support and leadership
- Engaging key community stakeholders (families, service providers, advocates and elected representatives) early on in the groundwork phase, to ensure community understanding of early learning and care
- The professional development of staff, and the development of teaching materials that reflect research-based understandings of children’s learning and the development of public policies that support the provision of quality preschool experiences are key components to realizing the full potential of young children
- The presence of well-trained staff as the most important predictor of quality in both child care and kindergarten
- Skills and expertise in facilitation and coordination to support community development.



## Appendix B – Focus group questions and responses

Four parent information/consultation sessions were held in late November/December 2005 to provide a snapshot of parent input. Parents involved in this preliminary consultation represent the following groups:

- 1 group O.E.Y.C. parents
- 1 childcare board
- 1 parent advocacy group
- 1 community parent meeting.

What do you consider are the most important services for families with children 0 – 12 years?

- Free programs for infants and toddlers for two hours
- Free or low cost to family
- Early learning and care/child development programs
- Early identification of special needs, e.g., Autism, prevention, health
- More spaces for registered parks and recreation programs
- Part-time/flexible spaces
- Subsidy
- Quality childcare
- Having after school programs and out of school learning, e.g., Kumon math/Sylvan
- Early years centres
- Integration of services: childcare and schools working together
- School age program with activities, sports, excursions, clubs atmosphere
- Child care should be available in (every child's) home-school
- Community use of school outside school hours
- Health screening/early identification
- In-service [training for staff] provided by Public Health
- Parent drop-in/parenting centre available in all schools



- Integration with existing services, so parents can easily be linked from one program to another
- Improve quality of Parks and Recreation.

What issues affect accessibility for families to programs/services in Toronto, and what suggestions do you have to make this easier?

- Location and distance
- Cost and [childcare] subsidy inflexibility
- Times/schedules (Satellite O.E.Y.C. programs need more hours)
- Proximity to school (for school-age children)
- Unaware of what services exist — don't know where to access information
- Language barriers — ESL can make it difficult to access services
- Those without status in Canada – can't access services (e.g., schools)
- Many newcomers are not used to the cold so traveling during the winter isn't an option
- Currently programs aren't connected so difficult to transition from one to another
- Competition between programs in the past has meant services don't refer as much as needed
- Getting around Scarborough is difficult if you don't have a car. Schools are the ideal infrastructure as they're in every community and walkable.

Suggestions:

- Outreach in various languages
- TTC accessible
- Must be in the neighbourhood. Needs to be in walking distance [from home]
- Send information out through citizenship/immigration (would get to all new immigrants)
- Information available through doctors' offices
- Need short-term, part-time, overnight and weekend child care
- Reduce cost of child care
- Staff and programs should be representative of the community



- Programs that parents/children can relate to
- More options — history, music (not just choir or classical music)
- More inclusive, multi-cultural
- Flexibility, diversity
- Hours of childcare and lack of availability of part-time care
- Outreach needs to be done on a human scale — one-to-one communication. Too much on the internet.

Where in your community would be the best place for families to go for programs/services?

- The school — every neighbourhood has a school
- Not every neighbourhood has a child care or a community centre
- Community centre — different services currently available, close to home
- Home child care can be more flexible
- Bring services to the family (home visitors, or specialists to child care, etc.).

As the funding available through Best Start is aimed at children 0 – 6 years, what suggestions do you have for us in how we should address the issue of caring for children 6 – 12 years?

- After-school programs and place to do homework (otherwise children left home – alone)
- Workshops for parents
- Workshops for children
- Quality programs
- Summer and school holiday programs
- Spend money on prevention — keeping kids out of trouble (gang/gun issue)
- Children need options (chess club, sports, music, drama, etc.)
- Free or low cost to family
- Homework club



- ESL for new and recent immigrant children and youth (cutbacks in elementary and ESL programs affect academics)
- Neighbours helping.

#### Flexible hours:

- Recreational/physical activity programs
- Programs to develop social skills, arts, and athletic skills, e.g., dance, music, art
- Open up school gym, computer lab. Use existing space, don't create more space
- Doesn't make sense to have parallel infrastructure, e.g., recreation facility next to school
- Structured activity after school
- Staff qualifications, not 16 – 18 year olds left alone with children at Parks and Recreation
- Mentoring opportunities, and encouraging/promoting youth leadership, e.g., Boys and Girls Club (Leaders in Training).

#### Other comments/suggestions:

- More resource educators/teaching assistants for children with specific needs
- More male staff
- Schools currently cutting costs. How will this affect them?
- Need to change existing structures/relationships (schools in particular) — school currently focused on 8 – 4 p.m. Need to have a holistic approach to programming, not just create more spaces
- Not every school is good to expand, need to work with the community
- How will this affect existing programs?
- What if my child isn't Catholic? They won't have access to the school/childcare in our neighbourhood
- Too many hurdles to get info for parents
- Need funding for 6 – 12-year-olds
- Use leftover capital funding for 6 – 12-year-olds

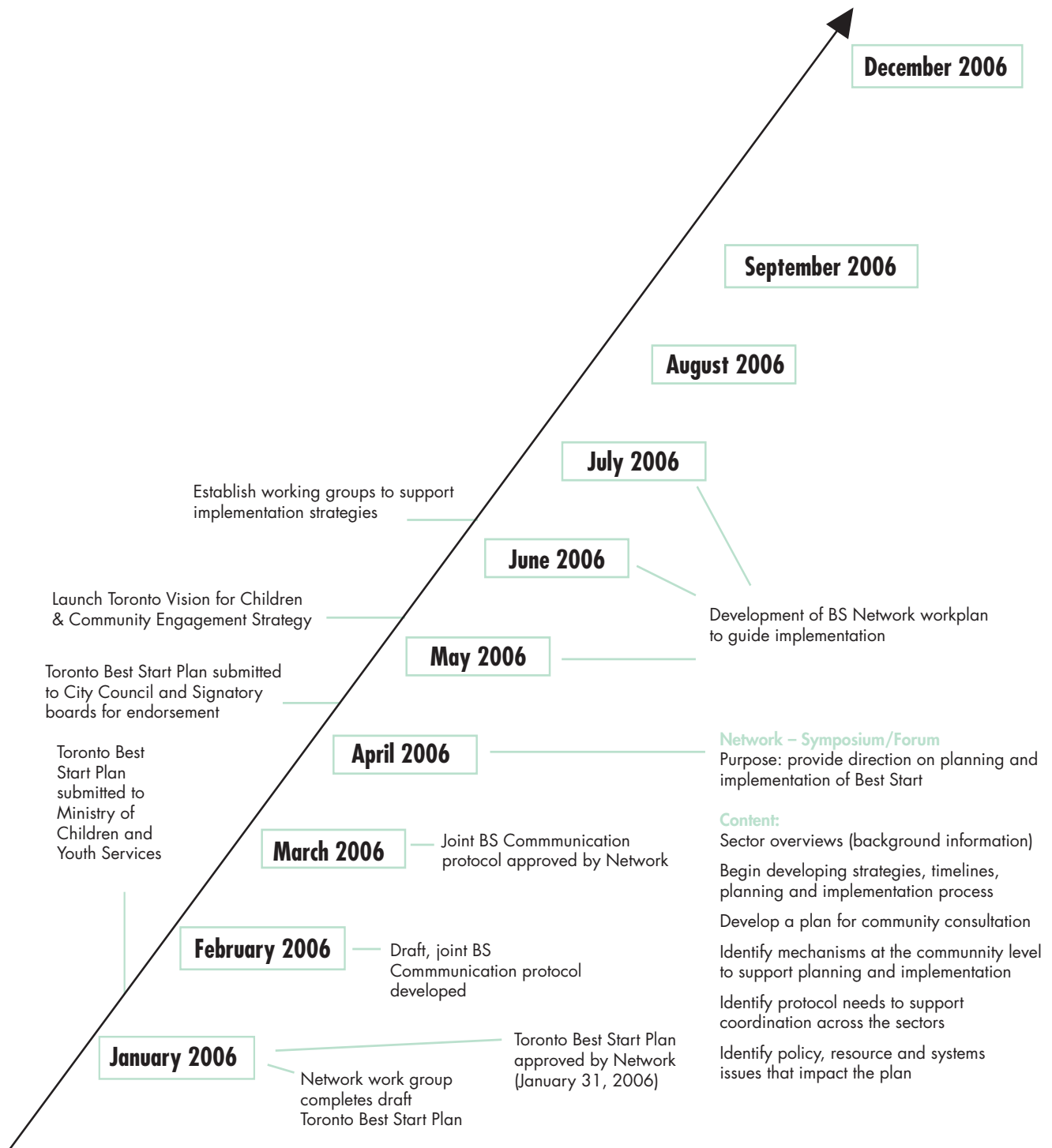


- Policy challenge — leadership role
- Engage the business community — including service clubs
- Less territorialism and competition between services
- Review/revise subsidy eligibility, otherwise we'll have empty childcare centres
- Problematic to look only at areas with high child poverty areas. Parents are often willing/able to pay, but have little access to care.



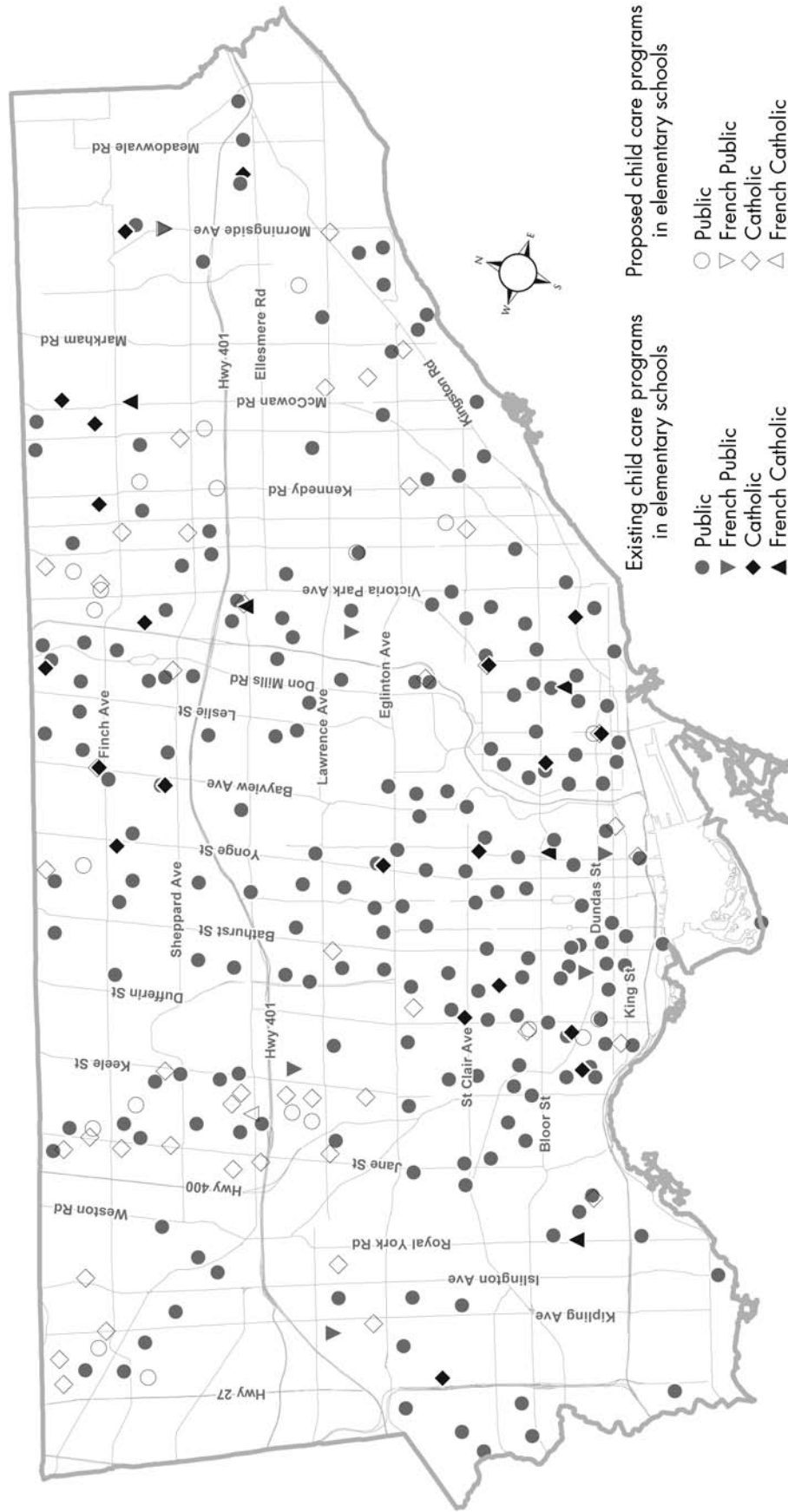
## Appendix C – Critical Path

Toronto Best Start Network – Critical Path  
2006





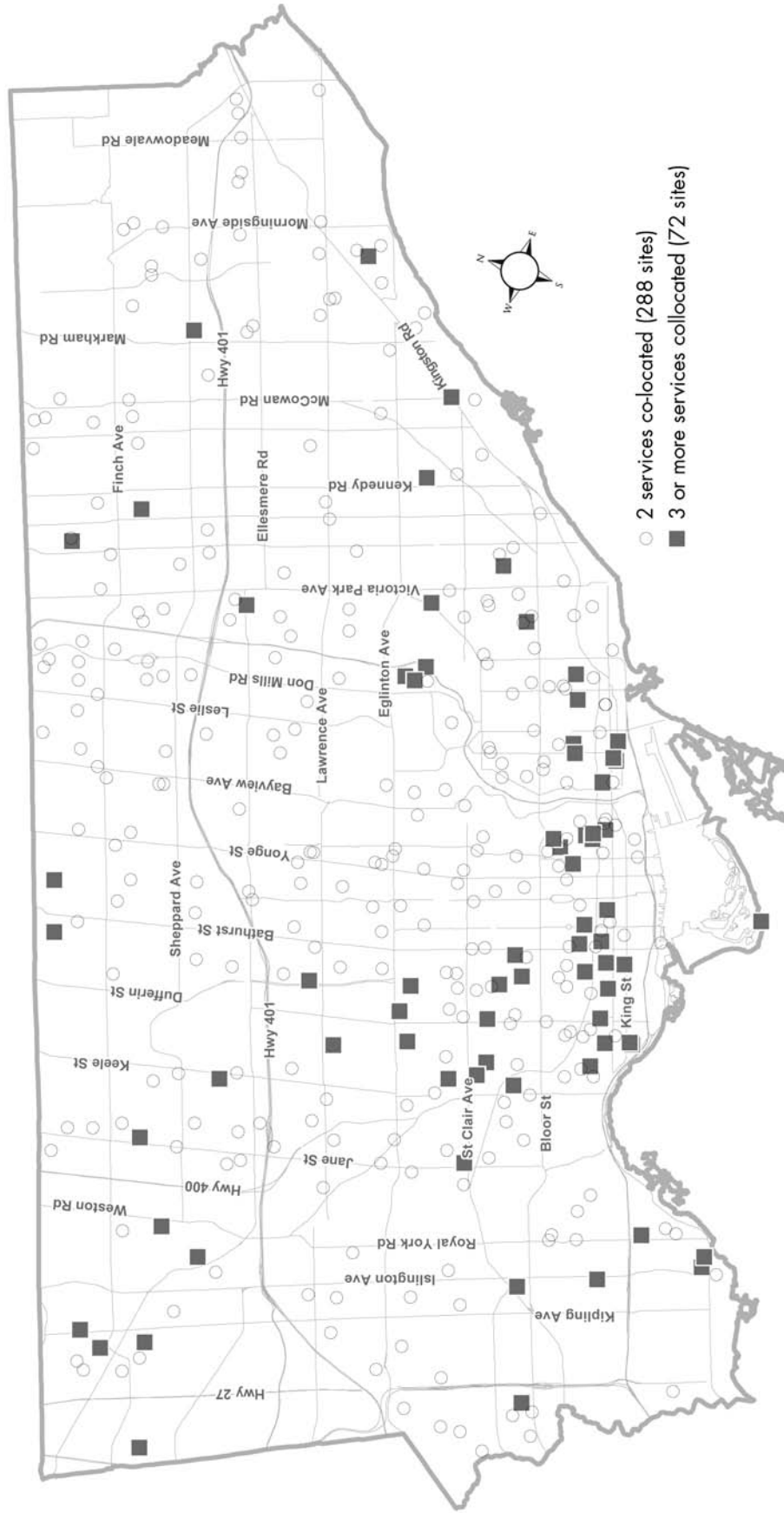
# Appendix D – Child care programs for 4- and 5-year-olds located in elementary schools



This map illustrates the current system capacity to move towards integration between child care, kindergarten and family supports



## Appendix E – Services for children which are collocated



This map illustrates the current level of service collocation. Service clusters include any combination of: child care, school, community centre, library, family resource program, Ontario Early Years Centre or program and TDSB Parenting & Family Literacy program.



## Glossary of terms

**Child care/early childhood education** – Child care centres, home child care, nursery schools, school readiness programs, and preschool programs, special needs resourcing, and preschool early intervention group programs. Children may attend without a parent or guardian.

**Kindergarten** – Junior and senior kindergarten offered to all children 3.8 to 6 years by school boards.

**Family support programs** – Parenting centres, family resource programs, Ontario Early Years Centres, prenatal/postnatal groups, family literacy, parenting groups, home visiting, community kitchens, and family health and nutrition programs. The focus is on parents and children. Parents may attend alone. Children are usually accompanied by a parent or caregiver.

**Family support practitioner** – is the designation used for professionals working in family support programs.

**Partner programs** – Community-based child care and family support agencies, school boards, municipal children service managers, public health, recreation, public libraries, etc., participating in a cross-sector partnership to form a community/neighbourhood hub delivery system.

**Integrated learning environment** – Combines the functions and elements of child care, kindergarten, and family support programs. Elements include combining space, pedagogical approach, daily routines and schedules, assessing children’s development and progress, and establishing and monitoring program quality.

**Specialized services providers** – Resource teachers for children with special needs, public health nurses, children’s mental health, and other intervention professionals.

**Frontline staff** – Staff who provide direct service or programming to children and families, including Public Health nurses, children’s mental health, and other intervention professionals.

**Early learning team** – Staff who provide the daily program, including early childhood educators, early childhood assistants, kindergarten teachers, educational assistants, family support practitioners, and may include special needs service professionals if they are part of the daily program delivery.

**Early identification and intervention services** include specialized services for children 0 – 6 and their families offered by child welfare agencies, child treatment centres, infant hearing, infant development, children’s mental health centres, developmental services, preschool speech and language and Healthy Babies, Healthy Children.



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