



OEYCFCs in Toronto

- INITIAL PLAN -

From Transfer to Transformation

Ontario Early Years Child and Family Centres (OEYCFCs)
Submitted to the Ministry of Education

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1 Introduction

With the release of the *Ontario Early Years Policy Framework (2013)* and the *Ontario's Renewed Early Years and Child Care Policy Framework (2017)*, the Ontario Ministry of Education laid the ground work for the transfer of responsibility for the local planning, development and management of Ontario Early Years Child and Family Centres (OEYCFCs), hereafter referred to as CFCs, to Consolidated Municipal Service Managers (CMSMs). Toronto Children's Services (TCS), as the CMSM for the City of Toronto, will assume responsibility for the CFC system as part of its larger portfolio of early years system management. The driving impetus for this change is to enable locally planned, cohesive and responsive services within a comprehensive CFC system for the benefit of children from birth to 6 years of age, their families and communities. Families and the CFC sector, with its extensive experience, contributions and commitment, are vital partners in this process.

In preparation for the 2018 transfer of CFCs, TCS, as the service system manager, is required to develop and submit an *Initial Plan* to the Ministry of Education. This *Initial Plan* must include a summary of a completed needs assessment, including relevant community planning and engagement processes, data sources, and demographic information on children from birth to 6 years of age. This Plan must also outline initial steps towards system transformation for Toronto's CFC programs and services, while laying a strong foundation for the TCS 2020-2024 Service Plan.

This *Initial Plan* outlines a framework for the transfer, transition and transformation of the CFC system and fulfills a requirement of the Ministry of Education in preparation for the transfer on January 1, 2018. This Plan was developed through a community planning process that included assessments of the community context, including the needs of families and of the current CFC system. The development of the plan included a systems lens that took into account the broader, relevant early years service system of which CFCs are an integral part. The *Initial Plan* lays a framework with priorities to guide the ongoing work that will be necessary in what is expected to be a multi-year endeavor of transformation of the CFC system.

Background

There are currently over 260 programs spread across four program types under the CFC umbrella in Toronto. These programs are for children birth to 6 years and their families and caregivers. The provincial document, [*OEYCFC Planning Guidelines for Service System Managers \(2016\)*](#) lays out the vision, goals and core services as defined by the Province for the CFC system. It provides a general framework to orient local planning to bring together into one system the four existing CFC program types, which are:

- **Better Beginnings, Better Futures (BBBF)** programs are designed to prevent young children in low income, high risk neighbourhoods from experiencing poor developmental outcomes. These programs are currently under contract with the Ministry of Education.
- **Child Care Resource Centres (CCRCs)**, also known as Family Support Programs, are delivered by community-based organizations that work with children, families and caregivers, and guided by principles that focus on building supportive relationships, facilitating growth, respecting diversity and furthering community development. These programs are currently under contract with the Toronto Children's Services.
- **Ontario Early Years Centres (OEYCs)** including Aboriginal and French-language centres, offer free programs to parents and caregivers and their children and provide information about child development. These programs are currently under contract with the Ministry of Education.
- **Parenting and Family Literacy Centres (PFLCs)** are delivered by, and located in three of Toronto's school boards. These provide play-based programs that are designed to support children's early learning and development and are aligned with the Kindergarten program. These programs are currently under contract with the Ministry of Education.

Provincial Vision and Objectives

The provincial vision positions CFCs as a critical element of a comprehensive provincial Early Years system where Ontario's children and families are well supported by responsive, high-quality, accessible and free, and increasingly integrated early years programs, and services that contribute to healthy child development. This vision is supported by the following principles for CFCs:

- *Child and Family Centred:* Programs and services are designed and delivered to meet the unique needs of parents, caregivers and young children to support their developmental health and general well-being.
- *Welcoming:* CFCs provide a warm and welcoming environment based on the foundational conditions for supporting growth and long-term success (belonging, well-being, engagement and expression).
- *High Quality:* Programs and services are designed to foster positive outcomes and support nurturing relationships for children, parents and caregivers based on the latest evidence and research.
- *Inclusive:* Programs and services are accessible and responsive to children, parents and caregivers with varying abilities and cultural, language, socio-economic, sexual orientation and religious backgrounds.
- *Integrated:* Programs and services are developed, coordinated and delivered in a cohesive manner in collaboration with broader community services, school boards, early years partners, primary care providers, parents and caregivers.

- *Community Led:* Communities, educators, parents and caregivers are engaged in designing CFC programs and services that embrace and build on their strengths, address identified gaps and meet their unique needs.

Provincial Core Services

The Ministry has identified a suite of mandatory core services for all CFCs. Realizing an integrated and consistent CFC system across the City of Toronto will require ongoing collaboration among the four unique program types and a common quality assurance framework that ensures all programs are consistently meeting the core service objectives presented below. The Ministry's priority is to establish the delivery of consistent and high-quality core services across the system as shown below. Once achieved, there is a provision to provide customized community connections to further address local needs.

The core services are designed to:

- Ensure that all programs are welcoming and beneficial, and that there is consistent awareness across the Province around what parents and caregivers can expect from CFC programs;
- Reinforce the use of evidence-based practices that have demonstrated positive impacts for children and families; and,
- Advance coherence across the early years as it relates to the use of *How Does Learning Happen? Ontario's Pedagogy for the Early Years (2014) (HDLH)*..

Mandatory Core Services

1. ***Engaging parents and caregivers***

- a. Discussions and information sharing about child development, parenting, nutrition, play and inquiry-based learning, and other topics that support their role
- b. Pre- and post-natal support programs to enhance parent and caregiver well-being and to support them in their role
- c. Targeted outreach activities directed at parents and caregivers that could benefit from CFC programs but are not currently accessing them

2. ***Supporting early learning and development***

- a. Drop-in programs and other programs and services that build responsive adult-child relationships and encourage children's exploration, play and inquiry, supported by *How does Learning Happen? Ontario's Pedagogy for the Early Years*

3. ***Making connections for families***

- a. Responding to parent and caregiver concerns about their child's development through conversations and observation/ in some cases this may result in supporting parents and caregivers to seek additional support from primary care or other regulated health professionals
- b. Information sharing about and facilitating connections with specialized community services, coordinated service planning, public health, education, child care, and child welfare as appropriate
- c. Information sharing about programs and services available for the whole family beyond the early years

2 Focus on the Toronto Planning Context

In line with the broader vision of a cohesive, early years system, the *Initial Plan* for CFCs in Toronto needs to be aligned with the local context and planning frameworks. In Toronto, the CFC transformation will emphasize both process and product. Through transformation, Toronto Children's Services (TCS) recognizes the child within the context of family, community and city, and that a focus on optimal child and family outcomes must be a primary system orientation.

A Process of Transfer to Transformation



System transformation is complex and requires resources, and time for strategic planning and implementation. TCS will take a phased-in approach to transformation over the coming years. This approach to plan and manage change will require thoughtful and collaborative processes, minimize service disruption for families and empower and excite stakeholders around opportunities for ongoing system improvement. Ongoing communication with the sector, including service providers and other stakeholders, and families/caregivers will continue to be a priority throughout this process.

The Child and Family in Context

Toronto Children's Services acknowledges Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory (1979) as a general foundation in the design of its service system planning approach. This theory holds that the child is embedded within the family, community and broader socio-political systems, and that these systems are interactive and hierarchical in contributing to child well-being. This ecological systems perspective also points to the importance of understanding and valuing the other levels of the system – that is, families within communities, and communities within a broader system of early years programs.

An ecological framework allows a comprehensive understanding of the child and family relationships to the service environment and therefore is assumed to enable effective service planning. TCS' service planning practices will apply this ecological systems lens to understand and involve the different elements of a child's life to:

- Understand the context for service planning
- Identify service needs
- Engage, consult and involve stakeholders

- Consider options for system change
- Manage and implement change, and
- Develop and monitor service system child and family outcomes

Focus on Shared Outcomes for Children and Families

In the [Toronto Children's Services 2015-2019 Service Plan](#), TCS placed a strategic priority on identifying and monitoring key child and family outcomes to support evidence-informed decision making in local planning processes, and to mobilize the broader early years sector to contribute to shared outcomes for children and families. This has led to [Raising the Village](#), a project of the [Toronto Child and Family Network](#). Through this project, TCS has articulated, with its sector partners, an outcomes framework (see Figure 1). It identifies levels of the system and associated roles in contributing to shared outcomes at the population level (see Table 1).

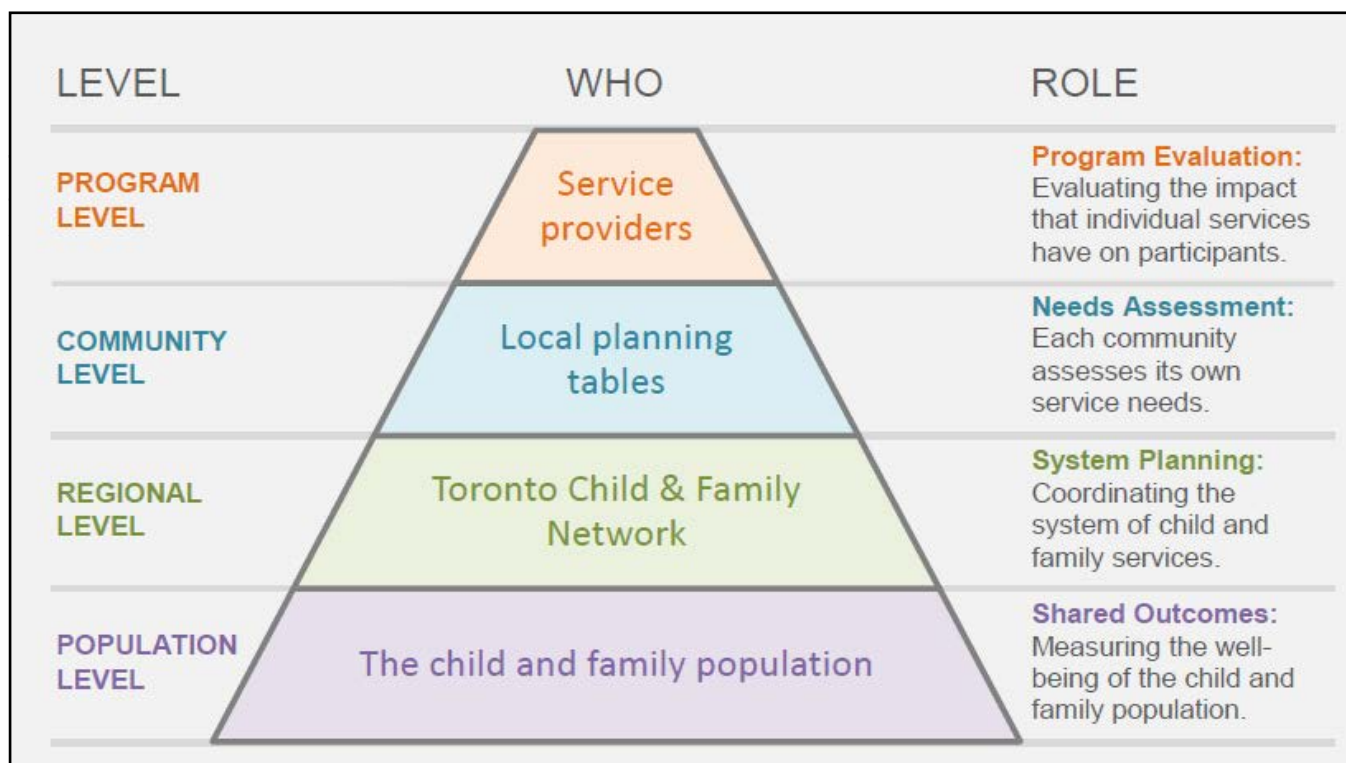


Figure 1: Toronto Child and Family Network Shared Outcomes Framework

Child and Family Well-Being: Population Outcomes

Child	Family
<p>Physical Health & Development: Children are born healthy, and reach their optimal physical health and development.</p> <p>Mental Health & Social Development: Children have the social, emotional, mental and spiritual well-being to reach their potential.</p> <p>Learning & Education: Children are engaged and curious learners, gain knowledge and skills, and have educational success.</p> <p>Rights & Opportunities: Children's rights are fulfilled: they have opportunities for personal development and participate in decisions about their lives.</p> <p>Nurture & Care: Children have safe, nurturing and positive environments that encourage learning and development</p>	<p>Family Health: Families experience optimal individual physical and mental health, and contribute to the growth and development of each family member.</p> <p>Resilience & Support: Families are able to cope with challenges, and have consistent support through social networks and appropriate services.</p> <p>Lifelong Learning: Families have equitable access to learning and training, and are active in their children's education.</p> <p>Financial Security: Families have material well-being and an equitable standard of living.</p> <p>Community & Culture: Families belong to communities, and have the freedom to express, and opportunities to foster, their culture and identity.</p>

Table 1: Child and family well-being - Population outcomes Raising the Village; Measuring the Well-being of Children and Families in Toronto; Part1: Developing Shared Outcomes; Toronto Child & Family Network, 2013. Child and Family Well-Being – Population Outcomes

3 Planning and Engagement Process

The planning and engagement process for this *Initial Plan* was comprehensive and involved a broad range of stakeholders including families, CFC management and staff, child and family program funders, all four school boards, and a number of City Divisions. The planning supported priority setting for system transformation. Importantly, the planning process established the foundation for ongoing opportunities for relationship building, dialogue and engagement with service providers, families/caregivers, school boards, and community partners. This will be a key asset in implementation of this *Initial Plan* and in ongoing planning efforts.

The key mechanisms used to engage stakeholders and to define the planning process involved the:

- Assembling of an internal TCS staff team;
- Convening of a forum in June 2016 to gather input from the CFC community called the "Road Ahead Conversations". This series of stakeholder engagement and planning roundtables included representatives from all agencies currently operating child and family programs in the City of Toronto. These sessions provided a structure for ongoing consultation and communication to discuss provincial announcements, identify challenges and opportunities for the Toronto service system, and begin planning a collective approach to transformation;
- Establishment of the Toronto CFC Advisory Committee in October 2016 consisting of representatives from service provider agencies, School Boards, four City Divisions, and community partners and funders. The purpose of the Advisory Committee was to guide the community needs assessment process and inform the development of the Initial Plan for Toronto (see Appendix 2 for membership);
- Contracting with an external consultant group, SN Management, funded through the Ministry of Education. SN Management conducted research, through broad engagement with families, CFC stakeholders, and experts. Research focused on the child and family population in Toronto, CFC services across the city, and the needs and perspectives of both family/caregivers and CFC providers. The full research report by SN Management on its assessment which includes extensive detail on the engagement, methodology and analyses conducted, will be available on the TCS website;
- Use of a neighbourhood lens to ensure comprehensive engagement and analysis. The City of Toronto is comprised of 140 neighbourhoods. The neighbourhood map and full list of neighbourhood names are listed in Appendix 1.

4 Children and Families in Toronto

The CFC sector engages families/caregivers, supports early learning and development and makes connections to information and community resources to support the well-being of children from birth to 6 years of age and their families/caregivers. Understanding the local context of families – their geographical distribution, demographic characteristics, and experiences with and ideas for Toronto's CFC system – were all key requirements in identifying priorities to support the CFC transformation.

Developing a Profile of Toronto's Families

SN Management conducted research to support the development of the *Initial Plan* with guidance from key informants from the sector, TCS staff team, the Advisory Committee, as well as Ministry Guidelines. The research and engagement processes were intentionally designed to:

- **Create a profile of families:** The profile of families provides a description of where families and children are living, their socio-demographic characteristics, including specific breakdowns for children and/or families with identified social and developmental vulnerabilities. This was based on various sources of demographic information at the neighbourhood level. Analysis also includes specific profiles of French language and Indigenous families (see Appendix 3).
- **Understand the needs and perspectives of families:** This assessment describes the needs of children and families, barriers to and gaps in current services, and the desired future state in terms of service access, service coordination and system navigation. This process engaged a broad representation of families and caregivers, including equity-seeking communities and those families not currently accessing CFC programs and services. This research used a multi-method approach to collect primary data directly from families through online and field surveys, focus groups, and targeted strategies to reach out to French language, newcomer, Indigenous, special needs, and LGBTQ2S communities. Tailored strategies such as using "Parent Animators" from target communities and interpretation services supported engagement of specific populations (see Appendix 5). This strategy was successful in engaging over 4,000 families across Toronto. Figure 2 shows the broad representation and reach of families and caregivers who participated in the online survey.

Parent Animators (PAs) are specially trained facilitators who bring experience in field research and peer engagement. All of the PAs working on this project spoke two or more languages, and had lived-experiences of being immigrants, and belonging to ethnically and racially diverse communities in Toronto.

At the time of consultation, the 2016 Census data was not available. Reliance on the 2011 Census data for the demographic analysis limited the understanding of the current context of families as population distribution may have changed in recent years. Lack of a mandatory long-form survey meant that some of the neighbourhood level data was only available for 2006 and that data on immigrant families was not available at the neighbourhood level. As 2016 Census data becomes available, TCS will update this analysis.

Survey Respondents by Postal Code and Population of Children 0 -5 years (2011 Census)

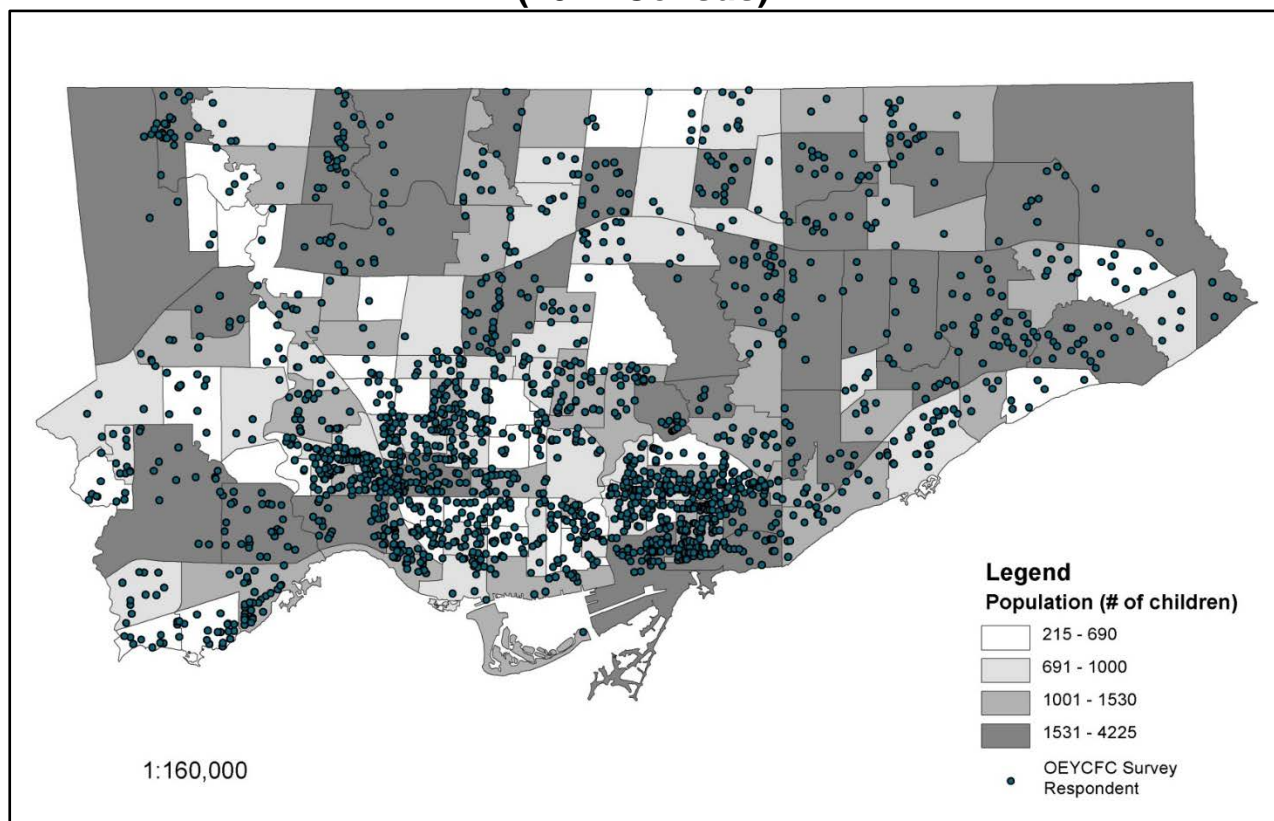


Figure 2: Survey Respondents by Postal Code and Population of Children 0-5 years

Family Profile

According to 2011 Census data, there were 167,115 children between the ages of 0-5 years living in Toronto, representing approximately 6.5 per cent of the total population. Of these children, 112,945 are between 0-3 years, and 54,170 are children ages 4 or 5 years. These children are generally concentrated in a small number of the City of Toronto's 140 neighbourhoods. Thirty seven neighbourhoods are densely populated with children from birth to 5 years of age as shown in the map below in Figure 3.

Age	Population
0-3 years	112,945
4 and 5 years	54,170
Total	167,115

Table 2: Children 0-5 years, living in Toronto (Census 2011)

Composite indicators of social and developmental vulnerabilities were applied to identify neighbourhoods experiencing inequities. These indicators were used as a proxy measure for social and developmental vulnerability and included Toronto's Child and Family Inequity Score and the Early Development Instrument (EDI) with vulnerability in two or more domains, as depicted in the maps below in Figures 4 and 5. For more information on these measures, as well as the rationale and relevance for planning purposes, please see Appendix 4.

Population of Children 0-5 Years

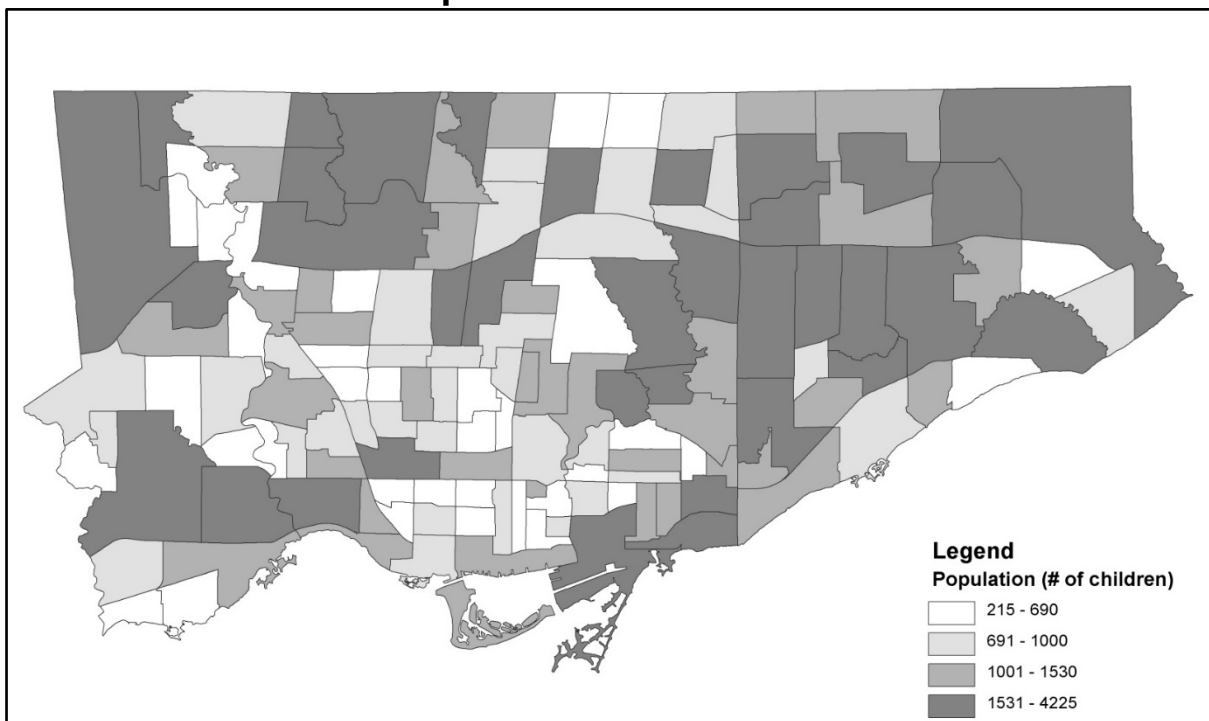


Figure 3: Population of Children 0-5 Years (2011 Census)

While child and family programs should be available to all families, there will be a need to review the particular needs of neighbourhoods where families are experiencing significant vulnerabilities and barriers. This equity informed analysis can be used to inform future resource allocation and can serve as a model for the analysis of 2016 Census data when it becomes available.

Child and Family Inequities Score

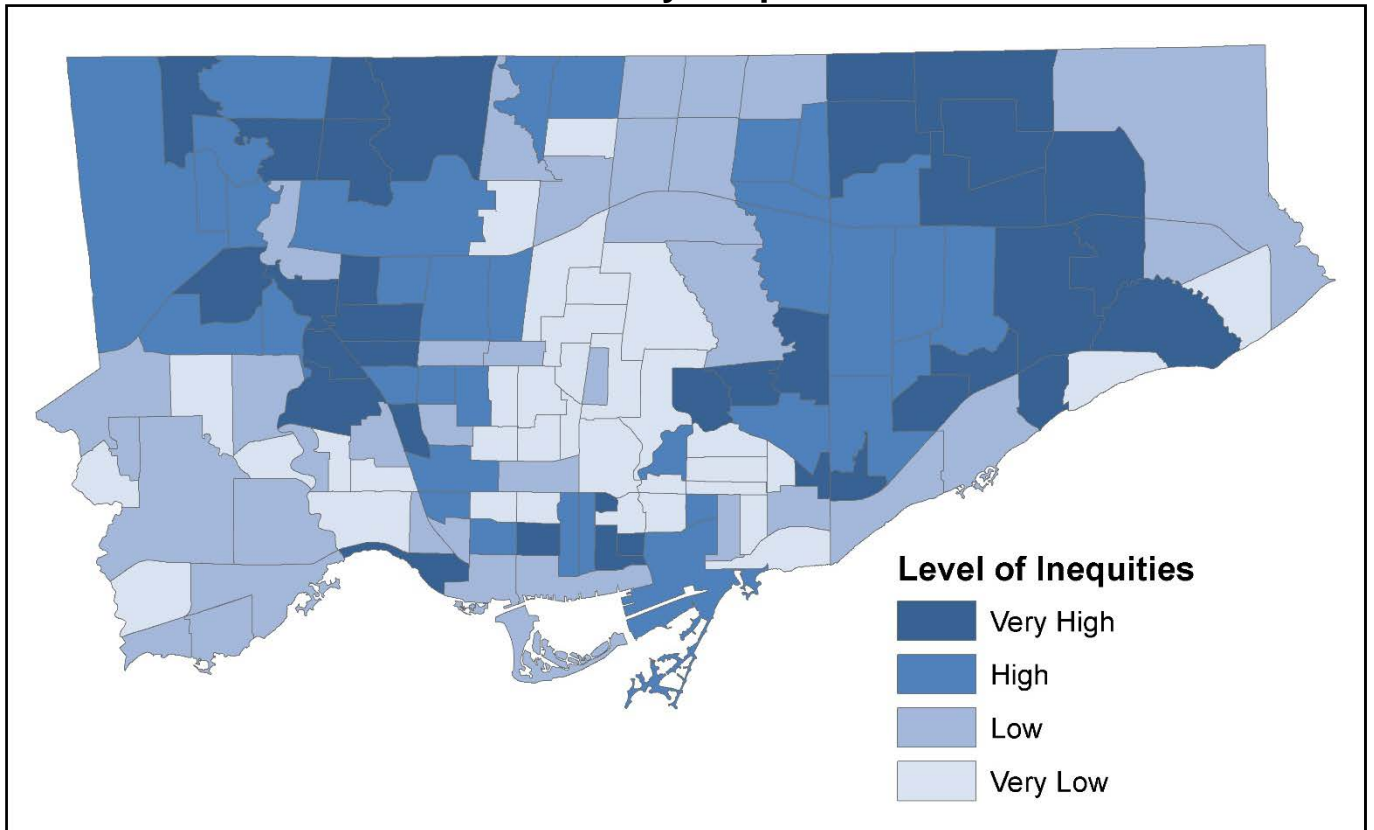


Figure 4: Child and Family Inequities Score by Neighbourhood, Toronto

For more information visit: [Child & Family Inequity Score-Community Determinants-Raising the Village](#)

Early Development Instrument (EDI) Vulnerability on 2 or more Domains (children 5 years of age) 2014/15

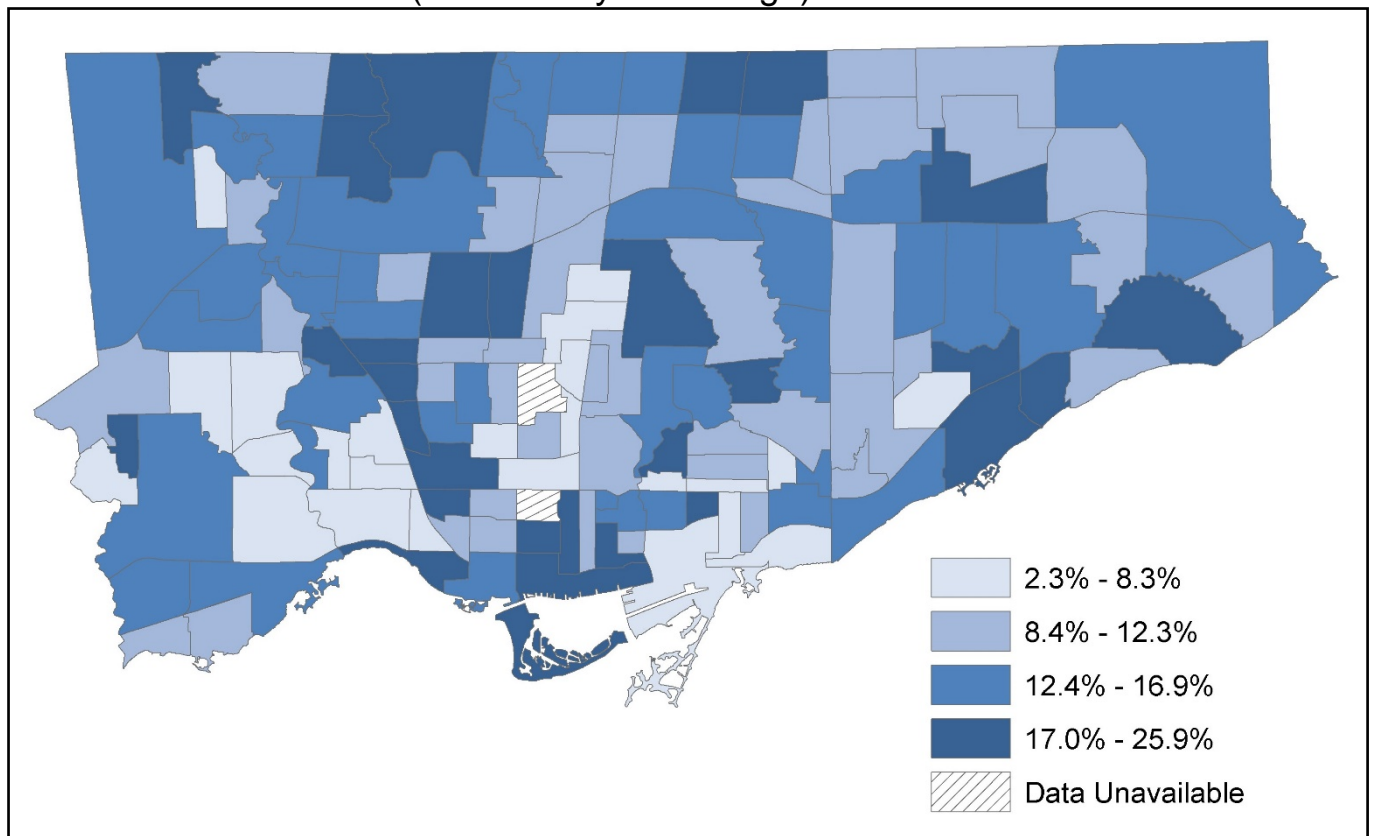


Figure 5: Percent of children who were vulnerable on two or more domains by neighbourhood, Kindergarten students, Toronto, 2014/15.

For more information visit: [Early Development Instrument-Community Determinants-Raising the Village](#)

French Language Families

There are 21 neighbourhoods in Toronto where French is one of the top three languages identified as the primary home language (Table 3). For the most part, these neighbourhoods are concentrated in the central part of the City, however, program level data reported by service providers indicated that Scarborough is seeing a growing number of French language families. These neighbourhoods are listed below.

Table 3: Neighbourhoods Where French is Among the Top 3 Languages Spoken at Home

- | | | |
|-----------------------|--------------------------------------|---|
| • Annex | • Cabbagetown-South
St. Jamestown | • Regent Park |
| • Rosedale-Moore Park | • Moss Park | • Parkwoods-Donaalda |
| • Mount Pleasant East | • Lawrence Park South | • Waterfront
Communities-The
Island |
| • Yonge-Eglinton | • Church Yonge
Corridor | • Lawrence Park North |
| • University | • Forest Hill South | • Runnymede Bloor
West Village |
| • Leaside Bennington | • Kingsway South | • Yonge-St. Clair |
| • The Beaches | • Casa Loma | |
| • Woodbine Corridor | | |

Neighbourhoods Where French is among the Top 3 Languages Spoken at Home (2011 Census)

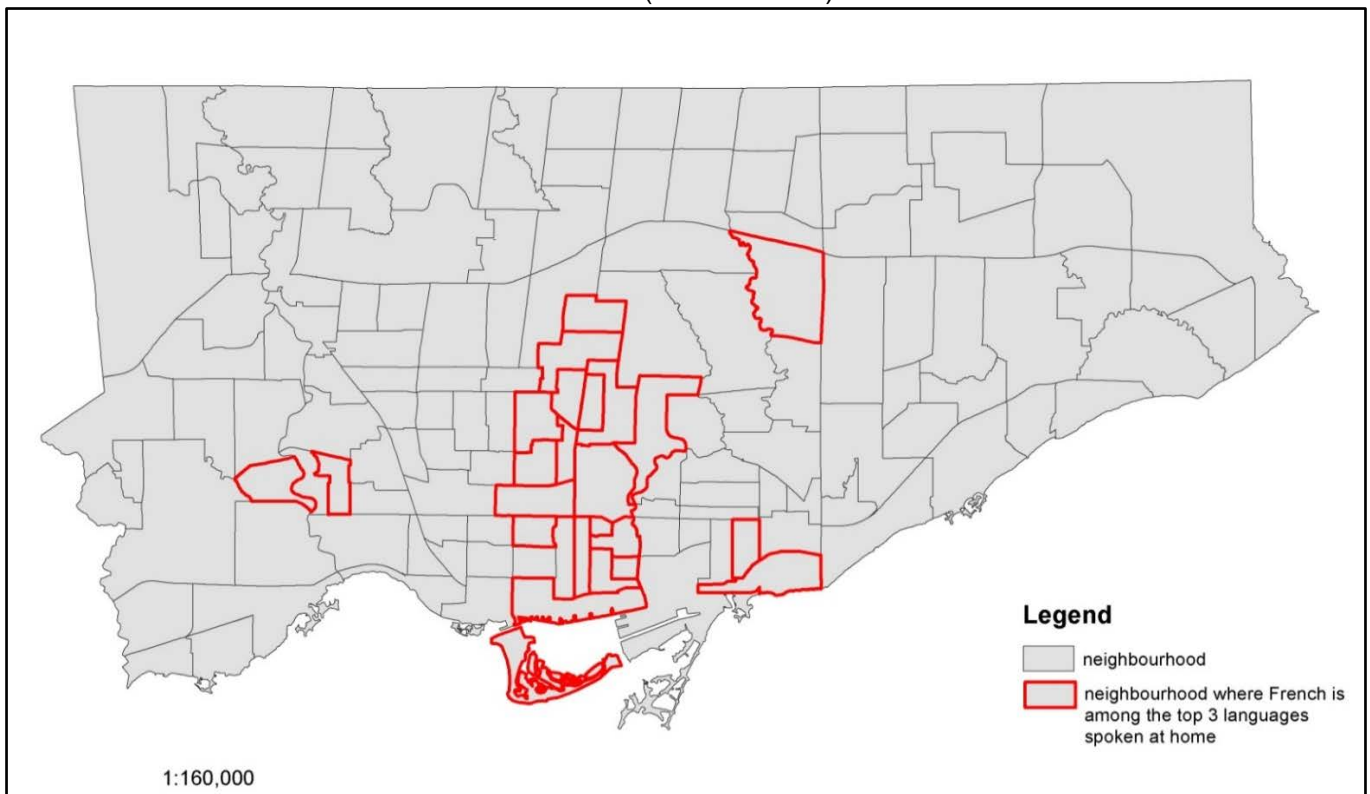


Figure 6: Neighborhoods Where French is Among the Top 3 Languages Spoken at Home

Indigenous Families

Statistics Canada information about Toronto's Indigenous population is only available at the city level, however, feedback from service providers suggests that the community is dispersed across the city and that there may be pockets of concentration. At the city wide level, data is available from Statistics Canada's National Household Survey (NHS, 2011). However, the "Our Health Counts Toronto" Study (Seventh Generation Midwives/Well Living House, 2016) has documented high rates of non-participation by Indigenous communities in the NHS. This study estimates that the NHS represents a socioeconomically privileged minority subpopulation of the total Indigenous population of Toronto. According to the NHS, there were 19,265 Indigenous people in Toronto; Our Health Counts estimates that there are between 34,000 to 69,000 Indigenous people in Toronto. According to the NHS, 26 per cent of the Indigenous population was low income; Our Health Counts estimates this to be 90 per cent. According to the NHS, the Indigenous population is younger than Toronto on average (32 years versus 39 years); 84 per cent of Indigenous lone parents are women and 25 per cent of the Indigenous population does not have a high school certificate or diploma.

Children's Services has partnered with Well Living House, an action research centre for Indigenous infants, children, and their families' health and well-being. Their focus is on gathering, sharing, and protecting knowledge on the well-being of Indigenous families in

Toronto. This partnership will bring new knowledge to the area of Indigenous well-being outcomes through the Raising the Village strategic initiative and will continue to guide the work of TCS going forward. In addition, TCS will continue to strengthen their relationships with Indigenous community partners and Indigenous communities in Toronto to support policy and decision making.

Family Needs and Perspectives

Family and caregiver perspectives on CFCs were analyzed based on information reported through surveys and focus groups. These perspectives are summarized by theme below, and include community specific perspectives of French-language and Indigenous families.

Key Themes

CFCs are Critical Resources for Families and Communities

- Child and family programs are an important resource for families; they are welcoming, they foster parent engagement, build community and provide a sense of belonging. Families access programs because they want their children to interact with other children and develop skills, and because they themselves want to interact, socialize and share stories with other families.
- Most respondents attend programs two to three times a week, with some families reporting they attend 4 or more times a week. Indigenous and newcomer families reported attending programs most often per week.

Expanded Access to Programming

- Families want to see more programming available through increased hours, including afternoons, summer hours, weekends and evenings, and in more community-based locations. A number of families reported barriers to participation due to inconvenient locations and times, or over-subscribed programs. Additional barriers are expanded on below. Some families reported they are seeking programs that offer activities for children of different ages - that is, infants and children over six years of age - although it is important to note that CFCs are mandated to service children from birth to 6 years of age only.
- Families want a balance of drop-in and more structured programming such as workshops and information sessions to address specific learning needs.

Opportunities for Program Improvement

- Families currently experience variability in program offerings and quality across CFCs. As such, families want to see improved service and program quality wherein program environments foster inclusion with more opportunities for children to explore, learn and play. Below are the top five reported opportunities for program improvement:

1. More programming hours on more days/different hours

2. Bigger/better space (for example, cleaner, updated, with room for strollers)
3. More/better trained staff
4. More games/activities
5. More/better locations

Schools are the Preferred Location for CFCs

- Schools followed by libraries and community centres were reported as the preferred location for CFCs. Families also identified libraries and community centres as preferred locations: “hubs” enable connections to other supports and services, and are typically readily accessible in local neighbourhoods.

Inconsistent Program Awareness and Promotion

- Word of mouth is by far the most common way families find out about programs, with online information being the second most common. Notwithstanding, online information about specific program hours, activities or locations is inconsistent, difficult to find, and may not be up-to-date.
- Families who experience isolation or marginalization may not access online searches or cannot rely upon word of mouth in the same way as other populations. These populations appear to rely on professionals for program-related information.

More Responsive Programming

- French language, Indigenous, and LGBTQ2S respondents indicated that being able to interact with other parents and/or with their communities is especially important.
- Newcomers, families with children with special needs and French-language families are particularly invested in the capacity of child and family programs to provide a gateway to other supports and services.
- Linguistically or culturally appropriate programs are not always available. There is little French-language programming and Indigenous families have very limited program choice where they feel culturally safe and where culturally specific programs are available. Due to the lack of culturally responsive programming, some respondents reported feeling alienated, judged, not well understood and had experiences of racism or other forms of discrimination when attending CFC programs. As such many families, most frequently Indigenous, those with children with special needs, LGBTQ2S and French language families, are travelling between programs to access the types of services and programs they want or need.

Some Families Experience Barriers to Access

- Most respondents reported highly welcoming program experiences, however, the following barriers were identified by a number of respondents:
 - Programs are sometimes full and thus turn people away
 - Program spaces can be small and cramped
 - Parents are not able to easily find information online about program locations, times or activities
 - Programs are not always available at convenient times (for example, children are napping during program times) or on evenings and weekends
 - Program locations are too hard to get to - both in terms of transportation to get there and the actual location having physical barriers such as stairs that make it difficult to handle strollers
 - Language /community specific or culturally appropriate programs are not always available
 - French language parents and caregivers have difficulty accessing programming in French
 - Indigenous families have very limited choice in terms of access to programs that are culturally safe and rooted in Indigenous tradition and teachings

Respondents also reported some may experience societal oppression, and barriers to programs including feeling alienated, judged, not feeling understood and experiencing racism or other discrimination. This may indicate the need to explore more and ongoing anti-oppression and cultural competency capacity building with staff/service providers.

French Language Families' Needs and Perspectives

Information was collected from a total of 239 French-speaking families, most of whom were parents or guardians who participated in the online survey. The French language field survey was completed by 19 participants and two participants attended a focus group discussion. Many of the findings were similar to the non-French language participants. The findings that were distinct to the French community are presented below.

- The most important reason families reported for attending programs was the opportunity to be part of a Francophone community.
- Families cited attending more than one location to access French programming.
- Families expressed they encounter significant difficulties finding and accessing programs in French.

- French language families requested more locations/more French programs as a way to improve service with the top three preferred locations being schools, libraries, and community centres.

Indigenous Community Needs and Perspectives

The information pertaining to the Indigenous community was collected from 157 Indigenous families, including 56 respondents to the online surveys, 23 respondents to the field survey and 78 focus group participants. While many of the perspectives mirror the overall results for families, this section highlights those that were distinct.

- Indigenous families expressed that there is a significant lack of culturally safe and accessible programming in mainstream CFCs
- Indigenous families reported schools, community centres, libraries and Indigenous specific spaces as preferred locations for child and family programming.
- A greater proportion of Indigenous families identified as two-spirit or part of LGBTQ2S communities in contrast with the overall population of families who were surveyed. This is also true for the number of Indigenous families who reported having a child who has special needs. This highlights the need for services to be accessible, inclusive and utilize an intersectional approach to delivering programming and supports for families.

5 CFC Service Providers in Toronto

The Toronto CFC system serves a diversity of families with unique needs, and operates within a complex service system. A critical step towards an informed and robust planning process required an understanding of the entire child and family program landscape.

Developing a Profile of CFCs in Toronto

SN Management conducted research to construct a CFC system profile to support the development of the *Initial Plan* by drawing on key informants from the sector, TCS staff team, and the Advisory Committee, as well as Ministry Guidelines. This approach resulted in two data sources for analysis:

- **CFC system profile:** A survey of CFC providers by "organization" and by "location" provided organizational information on site locations, hours of operation, financial/resource allocations, service offerings and the populations they serve as well as information on partnerships within the broader service system in which they operate (see Appendix 3).
- **CFC service provider needs and perspectives:** Through surveys and focus groups with CFC providers, the assessment process engaged both sector leaders and front-line staff to collect their perspectives on the challenges and opportunities for improvement as transformation unfolds (see Appendix 5).

While there was a high level of participation in the survey of CFC agencies and satellite locations, there were limitations to the CFC profile. A key limitation is that the information was collected only at one point in time when the sector was experiencing great uncertainty. In addition, some information may have changed since the survey was administered and information was gathered due to the dynamic nature of service delivery, and the life-cycles and adaptation of programs.

CFC System Profile

The CFC System in the City of Toronto is made up of four unique programs. Table 4 below provides a breakdown of the number of sites and funding allocations by program type.

Breakdown of CFC Programs in Toronto

Program Name	Number of Sites	Financial Allocation, 2016-2017
Better Beginnings, Better Futures	2	\$1,302,105
Family Support Programs	44	\$4,035,000
Ontario Early Years Centres	24 main sites, 118+ satellites	approx. \$12,652,089
Parenting and Family Literacy Centres	98	\$5,723,160
Totals	290+	approx.\$23,712,354

Table 4: Breakdown of CFC Programs in Toronto

The CFC service system in Toronto is large and complex. Through initial analysis, it has become clear that service providers are maximizing limited resources in order to serve the community, often through a variety of subcontracting arrangements and service agreements. Despite the patchwork that has emerged, the system in Toronto has been able to serve 76,168 children and 63,775 families/caregivers in 2016 through 208,000 hours of programming. In addition, more than 50,000 referrals a year have been reported. This level of service delivery has been made possible through an extensive range of formal and informal partnerships that CFC staff and service organizations have established, as well as the dedication of staff in supporting children and their families.

As shown in Table 4, Ontario Early Years Centres currently make up the largest service and financial proportion of CFCs in Toronto with at least 142 sites, while BBBFs are the smallest CFC type. Some of these centres operate as main sites, and most OEYC's engage in a variety of satellite offerings – either by operating satellites directly outside of their main program location, or by subcontracting to other agencies to operate satellites. It is important to note that several sites deliver more than one CFC program – for example, an agency may operate as a Family Support Program funded by the city but also receive funding from an OEYC to offer a satellite program in order to meet demands within a community.

Site and Programming Hours: Geographical Distribution

While there are a large number of sites in Toronto, they are not evenly distributed across neighbourhoods. The CFC profile has shown that while 109 (78 per cent) of the City's 140 neighbourhoods have at least one site, there are 31 neighbourhoods (22 per cent) in Toronto

that do not have any CFC sites. These gaps are illustrated in Figure 7 by the highlighted green neighbourhoods.

Toronto CFC Program Locations and Neighbourhood Gaps

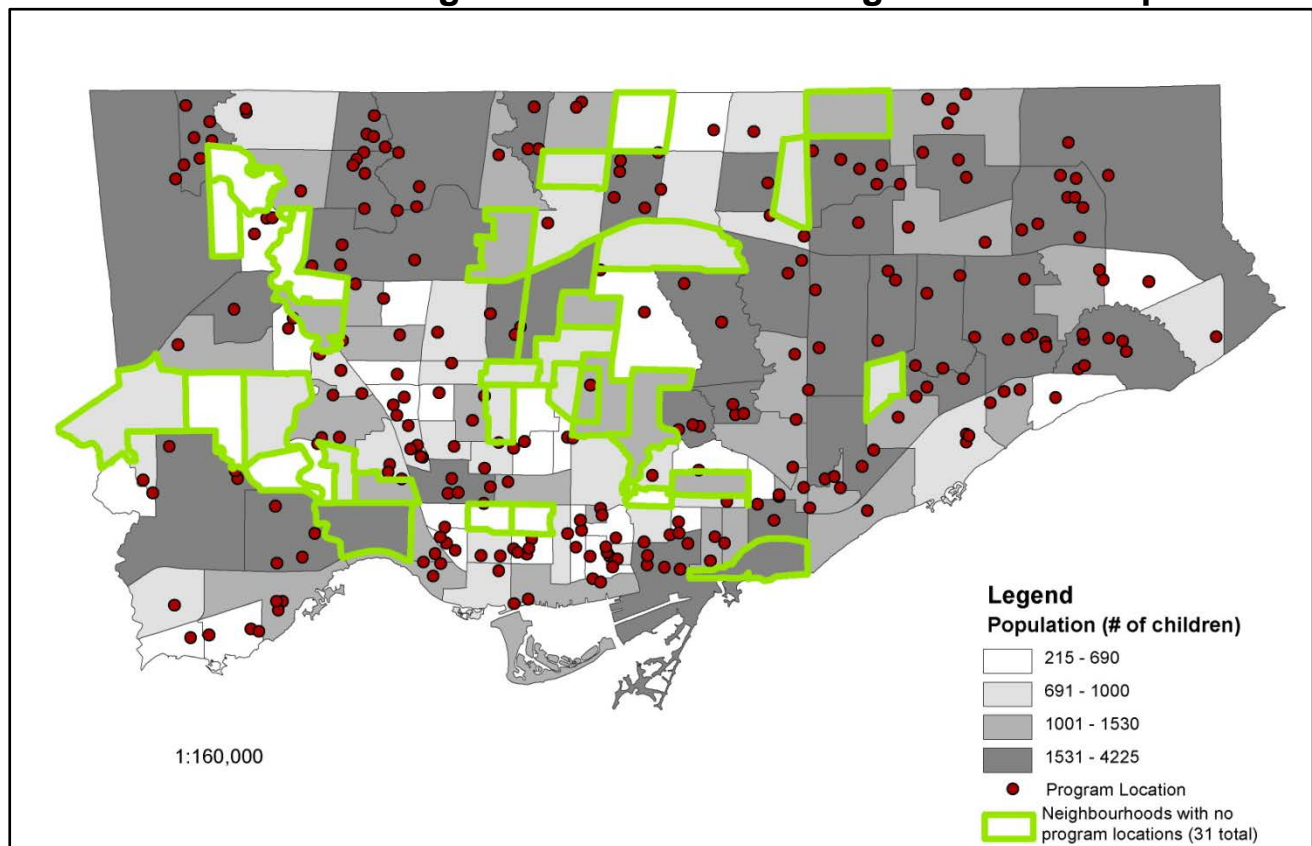


Figure 7: Toronto CFC Program Locations and Neighbourhoods Gap

As with the distribution of CFC sites across the city, there is also considerable variation in the number of reported hours of programming from site to site and across neighbourhoods, as seen in Figure 8. For example, one neighbourhood may have less than four hours of service each week, while another has a CFC site that operates full days almost every day of the week. There are 24 neighbourhoods (17 per cent) that have only one site and less than 20 hours of weekly programming. On the other hand, there are 14 neighbourhoods (10 per cent) that have five or more CFC locations and/or more than 100 hours per week of programming. There is notably less programming along the midtown portion of the Yonge St. corridor, as well as in east Scarborough and west Etobicoke.

Reported CFC Weekly Program Hours

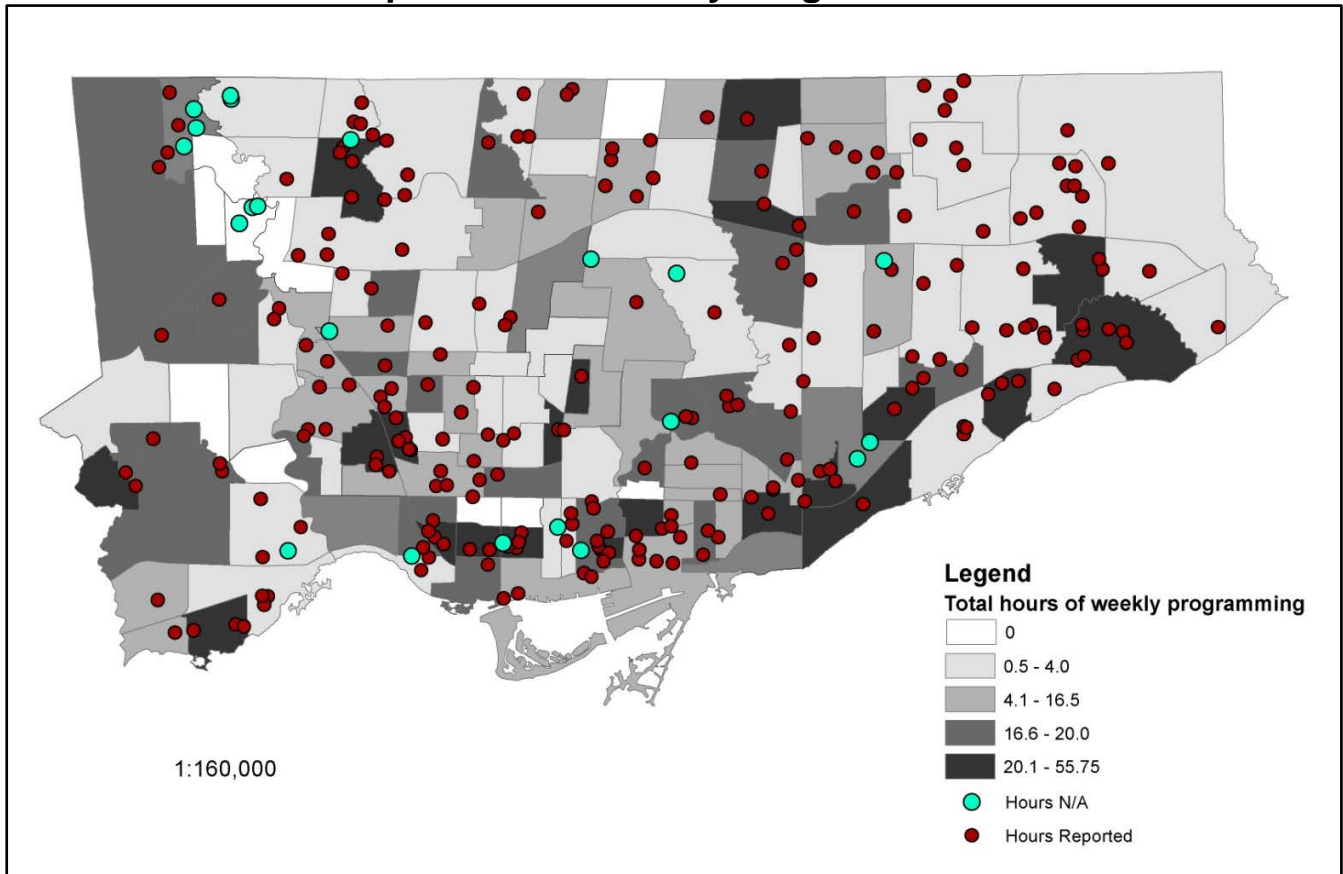


Figure 8: Reported CFC Program Hours per Week

Programming Hours: Temporal Distribution

On average, programming in CFCs is available 17 hours per week, but this average does not illustrate the significant variation in the number of hours each site operates. Individual locations offer between one hour of service a week, to 55 hours per week. The variability in program availability is characterized largely by the prevalence of satellite based programming. Whereas main OEYC, BBBF, and FSP sites tend to offer more 'full-time' service, satellite locations run with greater variation – some operate only two hours a week.

Many neighbourhoods (34 per cent) have CFC sites offering only morning programming. This is not surprising given that 98 PFLCs comprise 37 per cent of the total CFC system. Afternoon programming is available in 56 neighbourhoods (40 per cent), however, it ranges from one day per week in some neighbourhoods to 5 days per week in others. Evening programming is available in only 16 neighbourhoods (15 per cent) and represents a clear opportunity for improvement in service availability. With respect to weekend programming, the profile revealed that this was available in only 34 (11 per cent) of Toronto's neighbourhoods, and of that, only 7 (5 per cent) had full day Saturday programs. Given the provincial direction to expand weekend program availability, this is an area for improvement for Toronto's CFC system.

Program Site Facilities

CFC programs operate in a diverse range of facilities. By far, schools are “home” to almost half of the sites (126), while community agencies house 56 program locations. Seventy seven programs are offered in a range of other facilities. Twenty per cent of programs are able to operate through in-kind donation of space.

A number of sites report that families are not able to access programs due to space limitations. Table 5, shows that those CFCs located in community agencies, libraries, schools and churches most often have spaces that limit program access while those in community centres, apartment buildings and PFLCs do not experience this as often.

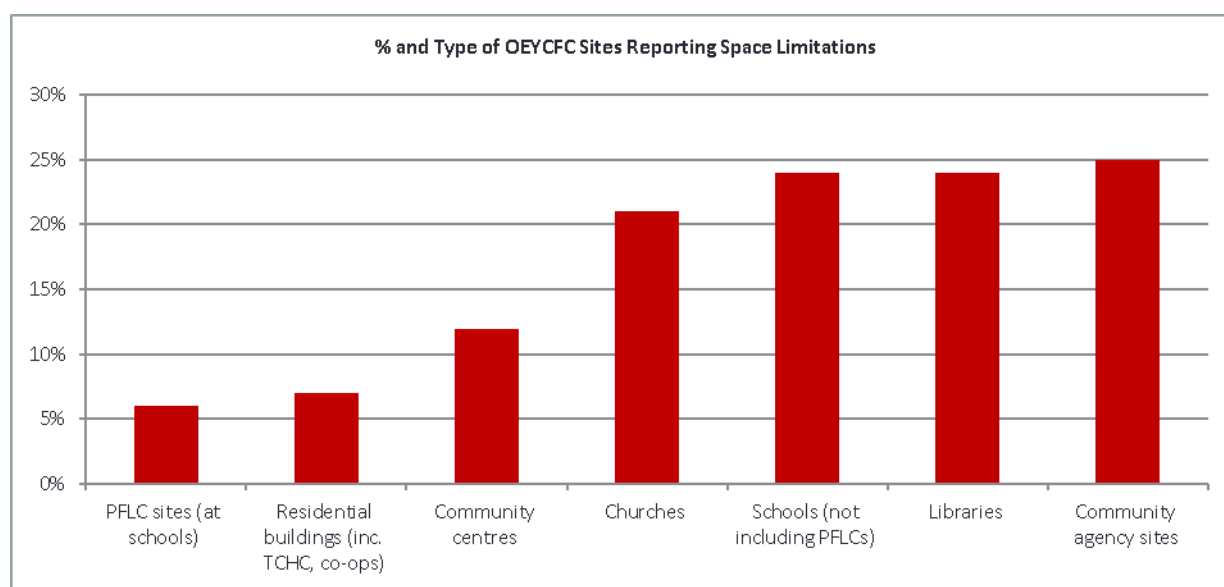


Table 5: per cent and Type of CFC Sites Reporting Space Limitations (SN Management Final Report)

Populations Served

Based on data submitted by 233 sites, the Snapshot shows that the CFC system serves a diverse population of children and families. This is unsurprising given the diversity of Toronto's family population. The remainder of this section focuses on some key populations that present opportunities for improvement in the CFC system.

While there are two primary delivery agencies for French-language programs in Toronto (Conseil scolaire Viamonde and Centre Francophone de Toronto), the assessment highlighted 32 other sites also serving French-speaking populations. This indicates that there is a generalized capacity across some parts of the system to serve Francophone families outside of French-language CFCs, however, the need persists to build capacity across the system.

CFC service providers identified serving Indigenous families less frequently. With only Native Child and Family Services providing Indigenous-specific CFC programming, the research

indicates a need to explore expansion of Indigenous-led child and family programs. In addition to Native Child and Family Services of Toronto, only 14 CFC sites reported that Indigenous families access their child and family programs. This highlights the need to build capacity across mainstream CFC organizations in order to better support Indigenous children and families.

The vast majority of organizations identified serving newcomers and families living on low incomes. This serves to bolster the identity of CFCs as vital resources for families with higher needs who may require more support and referrals to specialized services (for example, settlement services). The assessment also revealed a very high proportion of agencies serving families with children with special needs. Table 6 summarizes self-reported populations served by CFC organizations.

Populations Served Across CFC sites

	# of Sites	Percent of Sites
Families involved in the child welfare system	94 sites	40%
Families with children with special needs	158 sites	68%
Families living on low income	183 sites	79%
French speaking families	32 sites	14%
Indigenous families	14 sites	6%
LGBTQ2S families	46 sites	20%
Newcomer families	188 sites	81%
Young parents (under 24 yrs. old)	64 sites	27%

Table 6: Populations served by CFC sites (based on 233 of 262 location surveys)

Three emerging populations, not seen in this table, but identified by CFC providers through qualitative feedback, are caregivers, men/fathers, and grandparents, and caregivers. TCS will ensure these populations are further considered when engaging providers in discussions about planning and transformation.

Barriers to Service

When asked what the barriers were to serving families, organizations identified and rated the following six key barriers:

- Lack of parent/guardian knowledge or understanding of the program
- Program hours
- Cost of transportation
- Distance to program
- Service language
- Cultural appropriateness

In addition, the most frequently mentioned “other” barrier, identified by 52 per cent of respondents, is insufficient funding to provide the services that the community needs.

Service Delivery Network

While the CFC service system is comprised of four programs, these programs are part of a much larger network of school and community-based services. This network of organizations enables CFC programs to deliver the services and provide families with the referrals described above. Overall, the CFC service system at this time is highly dependent upon this network for:

- Access to free or almost free space (that is, time limited itinerant services delivered at the local library)
- Shared space and administration (that is, permanent co-location in a community hub)
- Subsidized program management and staff supervision (that is, the contract holder does not bill for the cost of administering the program)
- Access to free on and off-site services (that is, through formal and informal partnerships with Toronto Public Health, community health centres, etc.)

CFC providers reported partnerships with many other programs, especially those located in the same neighbourhood, and with organizations that have specialized expertise that can provide programs and workshops, assessments and consultations or services and supports that the CFC does not/cannot provide. These services and supports included parenting workshops, literacy programs, speech and language assessments and services, healthy child screening programs (vision, hearing, dental, developmental), special needs consultations, information and referrals, and many others.

Toronto Public Health (TPH) emerged as a key partner for many of the CFC service providers. Along with other contracted agencies, TPH provides Early Abilities screening, delivers or co-facilitates many of its “branded” parenting programs like Nobody’s Perfect, and provides health information to parents/guardians. In many instances, TPH nurses are assigned to visit OEYC sites, including some PFLCs, for a set number of hours each month.

The CFC profile has provided extensive qualitative and quantitative data on the state of CFC system in the City of Toronto. The discussion above is only a snapshot of the extensive information now available to the Division as service system manager, information that will be drawn upon and updated over the process of transformation.

CFC Service Provider Needs and Perspectives

Service providers recognized that service system transformation requires thoughtful and collaborative planning processes. This requires an incremental approach to enhance system sustainability and integration so as not to disrupt services for families. Service providers reported the following strengths, opportunities, and gaps to address through service system transformation:

Program strengths should be maintained and leveraged

- Service providers report that flexibility and responsiveness are key strengths of child and family programs, enabling them to adapt to changing community needs. Another strength described by service providers is that child and family programs provide friendly and welcoming spaces where people feel respected and where they can raise concerns about the issues that are impacting their parenting and their lives.
- Service providers reported that the structured and unstructured format of child and family programs is important. Drop-in activities provide opportunities for children to develop self-help and social skills and to become prepared for school. Workshops and seminars help parents learn new skills, access parenting resources, connect with other parents (often across a diversity of cultures and backgrounds), reduce isolation, and provide opportunities for parents to actively participate in and contribute to programs. For example, for newcomers, programs can provide an opportunity to learn about Canadian culture, foods and parenting styles. Programs offer newcomers opportunities to interact and learn from other parents and families, and help facilitate a sense of belonging in a new place.
- Service providers reported that child and family programs serve as a gateway wherein parents are supported in accessing other services/resources they need, and receive support with system navigation. This is especially important for those who have children with unidentified special needs or who are struggling in terms of social determinants of health (for example, income, mental health, and housing). For many, CFCs serve as a hub wherein families access a range of other services/supports - that is, screening clinics, dental hygienists, and nutritionists.

CFCs should be available in local neighbourhoods

- Service providers reported that families are seeking more neighbourhood based services. The distance to program locations can be challenging, especially for families that need to walk, use TTC, who are attending with a stroller, and in particular for families with parents or children with disabilities. For French-language and Indigenous families, the distances travelled to the existing culturally specific programs can be vast.

CFC program and services need to be expanded

- Some programs are full due to capacity restrictions and as a result some families are turned away. This is problematic for families who have travelled a long distance to get to the program. This also limits the ability of service providers to conduct outreach or raise awareness about their programs in the community.

Programs Should Engage all Children

- Many families/caregivers have children of different ages who attend programs together. Due to the mandate and/or funding restrictions, programs are not able to provide programming for older children. Some providers expressed they have limited capacity to provide environments that engage children of various ages even within their mandate of birth to 6. Service providers expressed they would like to be able to offer more age-specific programming.

Improved support and access for children with special needs

- Service providers repeatedly discussed the needs of families with children with special needs. They reported seeing more and more children in programs who have been diagnosed with autism, as well as more children being recognized as having extra support needs. Service providers indicated parents often struggle with accepting the diagnosis. As well, accessing the necessary resources can be very difficult as system navigation can be complex, wait times for services can be long, and it is often not clear where to go in the meantime. Service providers also indicated that there is an ongoing need for their own professional development to provide support to families with children with special needs.

Tailored programming for certain families

- Similarly not all program staff felt that they have the capacity or resources to provide welcoming and inclusive or safe spaces for a diverse range of parents. For example, dates and times of programs may not reflect the daily schedules, cultural norms and religious needs of some families (that is, need to worship at certain times and in certain places during the day). Further, ethnic and/or religious differences across families within programs can impact feelings of inclusion, and thus attendance.

CFCs should engage and learn from families

- Programs do not consistently provide families with the opportunity to provide feedback on programs. Thus, there is an opportunity to better engage and learn from families to support ongoing program improvement within and across the system.

6 Initial Plan

Child and family centres in Toronto are vital community-based resources that have served and grown with Toronto's families for over 30 years. These centres provide spaces of intentional learning for parents/caregivers as they navigate their new role as their children's first teacher, and for children as they grow and learn. They are also community hubs – places for people to meet, learn from one another, and develop supportive relationships – and community gateways – places for people to learn about the broader family and social supports system, and to receive the navigational support they need to access these services.

The strengths of child and family programs emerged again and again throughout the research and engagement that has led to this *Initial Plan*. Parents and caregivers rely heavily on these programs, and through this engagement have made clear how valuable these programs are for them and their children. The development and implementation of this *Initial Plan* provides an opportunity to build on and learn from these strengths, reflect on areas for improvement, and work towards the Provincial vision.

Through the research there were a number of key areas where there was agreement in the findings by both families and service providers. These included; the need to increase system capacity in existing programs; improved accessibility through changes to hours of service and more proximal service locations; and programming that is more responsive to local communities, and to families with children with special needs.

Analysis of the profiles of the family and CFC system, in conjunction with provincial guidelines, led to the identification of a number of critical priorities reflected in this *Initial Plan*. This plan is necessarily ambitious given the magnitude of opportunities identified through initial research and engagement, while also reflective of the strengths that exist and can be built upon in the years ahead. It is important to stress that this is an *Initial Plan* – the first to consider the sector as a whole. While the work required to implement this plan will begin in 2017/18, planning and engagement, and refinement of priorities will be an ongoing collective effort.

System transformation provides an exciting opportunity to identify how TCS, as the service system manager and sector partners can better serve Toronto's children and families by supporting improved child and family outcomes, through a cohesive, integrated and high-quality CFC system. Through initial analysis and engagement, it has become clear that in order to meet its transformation goals, TCS must consider access and equity as overarching priorities for the CFC system.

Access and Equity

CFCs are envisioned by the Province to support all children, parents and caregivers in learning, growing, and connecting – together. All families with children, from birth to 6 years, should have equitable access to these centres, and benefit from the programs they provide. A key principle to consider is that equitable access may look different in different neighbourhoods – not all children and families have the same needs, and CFCs need to be planned so they are responsive to the unique needs of their local neighbourhood.

Toronto Children's Services recognizes that the integration and transformation of this system presents an opportunity to review and allocate resources based on demonstrated need. Initial work has demonstrated that there are a number of underserved neighbourhoods with higher numbers of families who experience inequity and socio-economic vulnerability. Reviewing existing investments in CFC services across the city, and how appropriately they meet the level of need in a neighbourhood will be an important exercise as TCS identifies service gaps, and determines opportunities to scale up services for families based on need. To ensure this process is evidence-based, transparent, and equitable, TCS will prioritize the creation of an Equity Framework to guide decisions about investments in service – be they expansions, relocations, or changes in programs.

This framework will support decision-making by considering a number of variables relevant to inequities and poor outcomes for children and families, and will align with the broader equity-focused work of the Toronto Child and Family Network. Initially, the following have been identified as preliminary indicators of need:

- Current Neighbourhood Improvement Areas (NIAs)
- Neighbourhoods with lowest after-tax median incomes
- Highest numbers of recent immigrants (2006 – 2011)
- Top visible minority groups (that is, racialized families)
- Number of births to mothers not born in Canada
- EDI scores (per cent of children vulnerable in two domains)
- Overall child and family inequity score/level of inequities

The above list of indicators has been used on a preliminary basis in initial planning. Over 2017 and 2018, a robust and intersectional equity lens will be developed that will consider the needs, barriers, and impacts on equity-seeking groups across the city's neighbourhoods (for example, newcomers, refugees, Indigenous families, French language families, those living on low-incomes, racialized communities, LGBTQ2S families, and children with special needs).

In addition to variables related to child and family inequities, TCS will develop a Service Intensity Index that can accurately reflect the level of service available in a particular neighbourhood, to support universal system planning.

- Number of OEYCFC program locations
- Hours of programming available
- Availability of evening, weekend, and summer service
- Number of FTEs employed to provide services, including those with RECE qualifications
- CFC Program demand/use - that is, programs consistently over-subscribed

Through the application of a framework that considers the child and family inequities in a neighbourhood alongside the current intensity of service in that neighbourhood, TCS will be able to make evidence-based decisions about resource allocations for the entire CFC system. Given the opportunities presented by the increased investments in the sector announced through the Canada-Ontario Bilateral Agreement, developing and applying this equity framework will be a critical priority for TCS, to ensure investments can be made quickly and with the greatest positive impact on child and family outcomes.

While 2018 marks a transition year for TCS and the CFC sector, a priority will be updating existing data sources as new data is released, starting with 2016 Census data, identifying other sources of data to inform planning, and finalizing an evidence-based Equity Framework that includes both demographic/socio-economic inequity as well as service inequity - that is, program hours/days - to guide system planning, as outlined above. TCS will also further analyze program demand/use particularly in areas where programs are consistently over-subscribed, where families are being turned away due to capacity issues.

Initial Site Distribution and Rationale

During the 2018 transfer year, Children's Services has committed to maintaining current (2017) service levels, within provincial guidelines. However, through initial analysis of service and demographic information, several gaps have been identified in the system including:

- There are currently 31 neighbourhoods without CFC programs,
- Supply of service not meeting demand in a number of neighbourhoods with CFC programs that are oversubscribed given the child population,
- A need for more accessibility in terms of hours of service,
- Opportunities to increase access to French Language and Indigenous programs, as well as other equity seeking communities.

These gaps provide a foundation from which to plan initial service expansion, and opportunities for capital development – that is, new program locations. Decision-making about specific initial investments will be data-driven considering socio-demographic, geographic and service equity.

In the longer term, this initial data-driven process will be reviewed to ensure alignment with the planned Equity Framework.

Priorities

The ten priorities discussed below comprise the initial steps TCS will take, in partnership with service providers and the broader community, to begin CFC system transformation. These priorities have been identified based on research and analysis, Ministry of Education Guidelines, *Ontario's Renewed Early Years and Child Care Policy Framework*, as well as the TCS 2015-2019 Service Plan. While the work required to plan and implement these priorities will begin in 2017/18, it will continue for a number of years given the size and complexity of the CFC system in Toronto.

Successful planning and implementation of these priorities requires ongoing and strategic stakeholder engagement to effectively drive system transformation. While TCS is in the process of developing a comprehensive stakeholder engagement and communications plan, much of this work will begin in 2018. The priorities outlined below will require intensive engagement with service providers through work/advisory groups. While stakeholder and parent/caregiver engagement is a distinct priority, opportunities for strategic engagement are embedded within the relevant priorities discussed below.

A comprehensive communications strategy will be important in ensuring families, caregivers, service providers, program staff, community partners, and local elected officials are kept apprised of system plans and changes throughout the CFC transfer and transformation process over the next few years. A communication strategy will require resources, including the development of a CFC website, wherein engagement opportunities and important information about programs, services and transformational progress can be shared.

1. TCS-CFC Team

To plan and execute the successful transfer and transformation of the CFC system, TCS will develop a dedicated staff team. As of January 1, 2018, TCS will be responsible for system planning and supporting Toronto's CFC system of 50 agencies operating at over 262 sites with a total expenditure of over \$27 million in public funds. Establishing a CFC team is a recommended priority identified by SN Management following their extensive stakeholder engagement, analyses of the research, and development of the transformation goals.

Action – Immediate establishment of a CFC team, starting with the necessary positions to ensure the following initial transfer requirements are developed and in place;

- Developing budget and reporting guidelines and business practices for agencies in alignment with the Provincial Guidelines;
- Complete contract management requirements with 50 agencies (eight new), including, financial and administrative accountability, analysis and approval of budgets, and collection and monitoring of financial and service levels data;
- Ensuring qualified staff teams are employed and delivering core services at each program location (that is, an RECE must be employed to provide the core service of supporting early learning and development at each program location);

- Approving, tracking, and resolving temporary exemptions to the RECE requirements for those agencies currently unable to employ an RECE for the delivery of programs;
- Ensuring appropriate policies and procedures are in place to protect the health and safety of children, parents/caregivers, and staff (including vulnerable sector screens, first aid and emergency plans, sanitation and maintenance, health & safety policies, and complaints and resolutions processes);
- Receiving, tracking, and responding to serious occurrence incident reports;
- Developing communications materials, including web-based platforms, for parents/caregivers to learn about the suite of programs available, and for communication with operators.

2. Toronto Vision for CFCs

Through various stakeholder engagement opportunities over the past year (for example, Advisory Committee meetings, Road Ahead Conversations, etc.), it has become clear that a vision for the Toronto CFC system is necessary to effectively guide the transformation process. Building on the Ministry of Education's Vision, as articulated in the *OEYCFC Planning Guidelines*, CFC stakeholders in Toronto have expressed that this Vision is key to building a cohesive system amongst CFC service providers. Throughout this transformation process, the City of Toronto endeavours to bring the four existing program types together to establish one cohesive, integrated system of CFC services and supports for children from birth to 6 years and their families that will complement and align with other child and family focused services.

Ministry of Education Vision for OEYCFCs (Guidelines)

OEYCFCs are intended to support all children, parents and caregivers in learning, growing and connecting – together. This supports the realization of Ontario's vision for the early years, where Ontario's children and families are well supported by a system of responsive, high quality, accessible and increasingly integrated early years programs and services that contribute to healthy child development today and a stronger future tomorrow.

Action - In early 2018, TCS will work with key stakeholders, including service providers and early years services partners, in the development of a Toronto Vision for the CFC system. This will involve broad engagement with the 50 agencies who have a Service Agreement to deliver CFC programs and services.

3. IT System Modernization

As the transformation process unfolds for Toronto's CFCs, the existing IT infrastructure must also be modernized. This modernization is a priority as the system currently relies on paper-based documentation and practices, distributed manually. As current CFC responsibilities expand over the coming years, existing paper-based practices will become increasingly cumbersome for agencies, and inefficient for TCS staff. Thus, beginning in 2018, TCS will begin designing and building an updated IT platform to support Ministry and TCS reporting requirements (for example, service data, Serious Occurrences, RECE exemptions, etc.), contracting and budgeting, and overall system planning and management through

comprehensive data collection and analysis practices. In addition to IT requirements for service system management, TCS will also begin exploring opportunities for innovative ways to use technology in CFC programs to better communicate as a system, outreach to families not accessing programs/services, and monitor system usage. This modernization would replace existing paper-based practices currently used in programs to track program participants and other program-level information.

Action – TCS will conceptualize, scope, and plan the necessary phases of CFC IT modernization. In addition, TCS will engage service providers and families to identify web-based opportunities to modernize current in-program practices for data collection.

4. Defining Core Programs and Services

Initial research and analysis highlighted the diversity of programs and services currently offered by the four programs across the city, and CFCs. Given the unique mandates of each of these programs, this is not surprising, however. As the service system manager, TCS is required to consolidate these programs into one cohesive system of CFCs, starting with a suite of universally accessible core services. The mandatory Core Services outlined in the Ministry's OEYCFC Planning Guidelines include: Engaging Parents and Caregivers; Supporting Early Learning and Development; and, Making Connections for Families. While most programs report their current programs and services offer some, if not most, of the Core Services, system planning and work is required to ensure the end-users – Toronto's children and families – experience access to the suite of core services wherever programs are available. It should be noted that the most significant change will be in the provision of respite care which is no longer a recognized funded program under the CFC core service description. Currently, there are approximately 20 agencies providing respite care to families. Working towards a more predictable and universal system will take time and requires analyzing existing program data/offerings across the approximate 262 CFC sites. This will also require the development of policies to guide the service system management and transformation work required to move towards a universal CFC system. Given BBBFs, FSPs, OEYCs, and PFLCs have historically had different mandates, scope of service and program development practices/philosophies, there is much work to be done to build the shared Vision (as outlined above) and integrate as one system.

Action- Review and analyze CFC program/service data collected through the study by SN Management to identify similarities and discrepancies in program offerings. This will serve as a baseline to begin planning for system consistency. This work will be guided by a work group comprised of service providers and will be grounded in the shared Vision for Toronto's CFCs.

Action- During 2018, respite services will be transitioned to be discontinued. TCS will work with agencies that provide this service to support families in meeting this need.

5. Quality and Standards

Quality is both a priority and impetus for system transformation. Service providers identified the need for quality standards applied across programs to ensure CFCs consistently provide the best programming and services possible, based on current evidence from the field - that is, best practices, and research literature. "High Quality" is a guiding principle outlined in the Ministry of Education's OEYCFC Guidelines, however, a shared understanding of what constitutes a high quality CFC has not yet been articulated in the sector. *Ontario's Renewed Early Years and Child Care Policy Framework* outlines the Province's commitment to determining a provincial definition of quality in the early years in both child care and CFCs. Given stakeholder feedback, and the unique sector in Toronto, wherein four different program types are being integrated, it is important to build on the provincial definition of quality, and develop and implement standards specifically for Toronto's CFC programs.

Action – Develop program standards, in collaboration with service providers and other key stakeholders that support program quality and consistency across CFCs. These standards will be evidence-based (for example, drawing from the research literature) and will include supporting materials/resources, over time. This process will draw on the forthcoming foundational work of the province.

6. Staff Capacity Building and Development

Given the wide differences across the four program types with respect to program design and offerings, there are understandable differences across the system in the training and capacity of program staff. A key priority for the CFC system is moving towards more harmonization in the capacity of program staff, particularly ensuring there is widespread competency in the principles of the provincial pedagogical framework, *How Does Learning Happen?* (HDLH). Ensuring staff at all centres have access to professional development and educational opportunities to keep them informed of the latest research on child development and pedagogy has been identified as a priority through the recommendations emerging from the research and analysis.

Further, some families indicated they did not always feel connected to CFC programs. Lone-parent families, LGBTQ2S families, Indigenous families, and newcomer families experienced barriers when accessing programs sometimes feeling "less welcome". In addition, some staff members identified they do not feel they have the necessary competencies or training to deliver culturally sensitive programming to the diversity of children and families in Toronto. Building cultural competency training into the professional development of program staff will be a key priority in ensuring all programs are accessible and responsive to all children and families.

Action – Development of a comprehensive Professional Development strategy drawing from the Needs Assessment findings, and in collaboration with service providers. Initial priorities for this plan will include opportunities to develop the capacity to support Indigenous families and LGBTQ2S families, as well as learning opportunities to explore anti-oppression/anti-racism practices, and HDLH.

Action – In early 2018, TCS will host a sector-wide 'professional development day' at which all program staff will be invited to participate in a variety of sessions and workshops orienting them to the new CFC system and creating opportunities to build connections across the sector.

Early Literacy Specialists provide early literacy services and supports to OEYCs. In 2016, \$268,000 in funding was used to provide 993 hours of service to all OEYC sites through four staff

Action – During the transition year, the Early Literacy Specialists, will continue to support CFC staff. This transition year will enable TCS to review professional development needs of the sector and determine the structure and resources needed to address the system of over 262 programs.

7. Special Needs

The CFC sector in Toronto has been advocating for enhanced coordination and resources to better support children and families with special, or extra support needs. This was also echoed throughout the consultations wherein both parents and educators (program staff) identified a system and capacity gap. Many of the families who access CFCs have complex needs. While most families with children with special needs expressed they felt supported through resources and referrals by their local CFC, staff reported feeling there is an ongoing need for their own professional development and capacity to provide this support to families. Further, while families with children with special needs feel that they are supported through resources and referrals from staff, they may also need support after the referral is made to navigate the system. Thus, given there isn't yet a comprehensive core service of "making connections for families" per Ministry OEYCFC Guidelines across the system, this has emerged as a priority for TCS, and the broader community.

The proportion of Indigenous and LGBTQ2S families with children with special needs is important to note as not only is there a need to respond to children with special needs, but to do so in ways that respect cultural tradition and family/community identity. French language families reported having difficulty accessing services for children with special needs in French and many families seek English language providers because of lack of access to French-speaking professionals.

Action- In collaboration with key services providers, Toronto Public Health (TPH), Every Child Belongs (Special Needs Resourcing Program in Toronto), and other stakeholders, identify where local and system opportunities exist to strengthen referral pathways within and between child and family services. Identify opportunities to enhance partnerships with TPH and other community organizations that support Indigenous and LGBTQ2S families in a way that respects their intersectional identities, and begin work to establish formal agreements with TPH and other community agencies. In alignment with Priority #7 above, enhance the capacity of CFC programs to address the diverse needs of families with children with special needs, and the service system as a whole to address the needs of vulnerable families that have complex health and social needs.

8. French Programs

There are two French CFC programs in Toronto – one operated by Centre francophone de Toronto, the other by Conseil scolaire Viamonde. French families engaged through the Needs Assessment identified the need for expanded hours of CFC service, as well as expanded program locations (currently programs are only available in the downtown area). Service providers also identified the need to expand service to the French community. In addition, service providers recommended that together TCS and the sector leverage and coordinate the Francophone and French-language networks, stakeholder groups, and program staff expertise, and promote CFC program information to French-language families.

Through their research and analysis, SN Management identified a number of neighbourhoods where French is among the top three languages spoken at home. This information will help TCS identify priority areas of investment for French CFC expansion, given the current service offering is insufficient in meeting demand.

Action – Conduct further analysis on priority areas of the City to expand French CFCs in collaboration with French-language service providers, school boards, the French Advisory of the Toronto Child and Family Network, and the French language community, including families.

Action - Identify the professional development needs of French-language program staff, and develop a strategy to strengthen system navigation support for families seeking French-language services. Begin working towards having all resources and information relating to CFCs available in French, including online resources and TCS communications.

9. Indigenous Programs

Currently, there are only two locations operated by one Indigenous-led agency offering Indigenous CFC programs in Toronto. Through the research and analysis, as well as key informant interviews, it was identified that this level of service is significantly inadequate, and that programs are not available where or when needed. It was also reported that Indigenous families experience additional barriers to accessing programs, including feelings of judgement and discrimination. The first key priority for Indigenous program access involves eliminating barriers to program access through cultural competency training provided to CFC staff, to ensure that programs run by mainstream CFC organizations are more welcoming and responsive to Indigenous families. Secondly, there is a need for increased availability of programs and services run by Indigenous-led organizations for Indigenous families.

At this time, Toronto Aboriginal Support Services Council is providing a leadership role in the regarding child and family planning through partnerships with TCS and funding from the Ministry of Education's [Journey Together initiative](#). The expansion of Indigenous-led early years programs and services through the Journey Together initiative will increase access to culturally relevant childcare and child and family supports, leading to enhanced well-being for Indigenous

children and families in Toronto. Ensuring that future planning for CFC locations and service growth aligns with larger initiatives (for example, Journey Together), and are led by Indigenous communities in Toronto is a critical, ongoing priority.

Action – TCS will focus on planning and coordinating Indigenous early years programs and services, and will engage with Indigenous communities in Toronto to develop Indigenous-specific child and family and early years programs.

Action - TCS will also work with the broader CFC service provider community in order to increase the capacity of the CFC system as a whole to serve Indigenous families.

10. Evaluation and Monitoring

Monitoring and evaluation will be key components of building an outcomes-driven system of CFCs. Monitoring will ensure programs are positioned for continuous quality improvement and build on best practice, and enable TCS to track short, medium and long-term outcomes at the population, community, family and individual child levels.

A general framework for monitoring and reporting includes planning and reviewing standards, identifying measures, collecting, analyzing and reporting using an information management system, and using these findings to guide system improvement. The CFC evaluation framework will strive to:

- Align with provincial goals and reporting requirements based on the mandatory core services
- Align with local system objectives and needs as to be identified in Children's Services 2020-2024 Service Plan
- Be guided by a theory of change that provides an overall summary of assumptions and provide an explanation of the impacts of CFCs on children and families
- Integrate current research and evidence
- Track feasible, measurable indicators and outcomes that both align with the emerging Provincial OEYCFC Outcomes Framework, as well as the Raising the Village population level outcomes
- Use a data information management strategy and system to ensure data is mobilized to improve practices and information is accessible to all stakeholders
- Define the City's role in collecting, analyzing and reporting on CFCs at a system level

A Toronto-specific CFC monitoring and evaluation framework will be developed and refined as information about provincial monitoring and evaluation requirements are released. Capacity building to support program level evaluation in an effort to meet individual program needs, and to move towards a culture of evaluation, will be a priority.

Action – Following the development of a Toronto CFC Vision and a clear definition of the core services, convene an Evaluation Working Group to spearhead the development of a Toronto-made CFC evaluation framework. In the interim, conduct a current state analysis of evaluation practices currently employed across the CFC sector to ensure the framework builds from current system strengths.

7 Conclusion

Both the extensive participation from families and caregivers, and the dedicated commitment of time and energy from service providers, illustrate how important child and family programs are to the residents of Toronto. Child and family programs provide an accessible, critical support service to parents and caregivers as they navigate the beginnings of their relationships with the children in their care. These programs are first and foremost sites of intentional learning that enable parents/caregivers to fulfill their role as their child's first teacher, and through evidence-based programming are designed to support healthy child development. It cannot be overstated how valued and well used these programs are in the City of Toronto, and how committed the sector is to building on their strengths.

A planned and transparent transformation process for the CFC system is the next important and exciting step in building a more comprehensive early years system in Toronto. Recognizing that the learnings and priorities outlined in this plan mark TCS' initial steps in this transformational process is important, particularly given the non-linear path of transformation. While significant stakeholder and community engagement was carried out in the development of this initial plan, the need for ongoing and strategic engagement will continue throughout the transfer and transformational phases of this plan. Reflecting on the process and consultation participation, there are notable opportunities for improved engagement, particularly with specific communities (for example, children, LGBTQ2S families, Indigenous families, families with children with special needs, etc.). Many sources of both quantitative and qualitative data were collected and analyzed to inform this plan. Given TCS' commitment to evidence-based decision-making, there remains the need to ensure data sources are current and comprehensive, to inform planning at various levels of the system (for example, local and city-wide).

With the 2020-2024 TCS Service Plan on the horizon, and the priorities identified in this Initial Plan, the Division in partnership with families and service providers is well positioned to drive integrated early years system planning in the years ahead.

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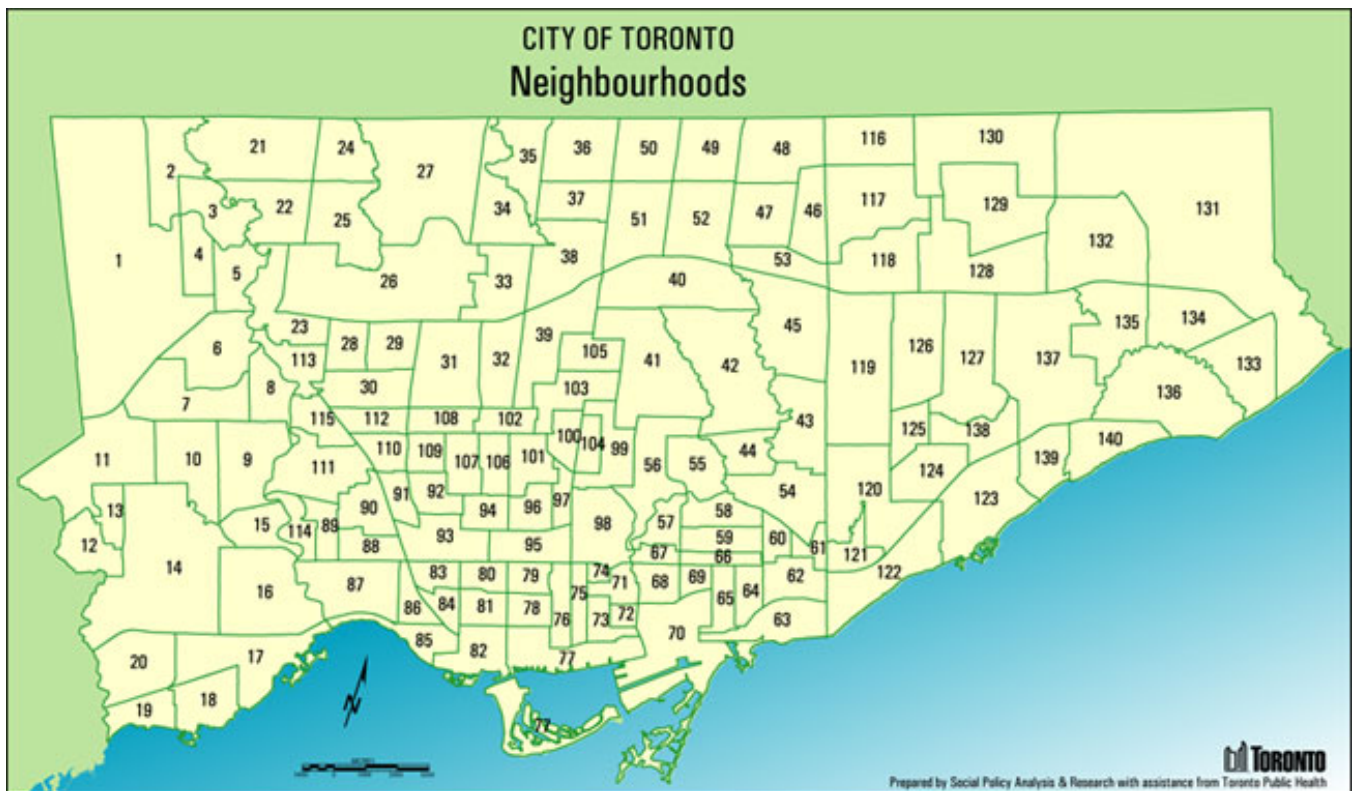
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Appendix

Appendix 1: City of Toronto Neighbourhoods



#	Neighbourhood Name	#	Neighbourhood Name	#	Neighbourhood Name
1	West Humber-Clairville	49	Bayview Woods-Steeles	100	Yonge-Eglinton
2	Mount Olive-Silverstone-Jamestown	50	Newtonbrook East	96	Casa Loma
3	Thistletown-Beaumont Heights	51	Willowdale East	97	Yonge-St.Clair
4	Rexdale-Kipling	52	Bayview Village	98	Rosedale-Moore Park
5	Elms-Old Rexdale	53	Henry Farm	99	Mount Pleasant East
6	Kingsview Village-The Westway	54	O'Connor-Parkview	100	Yonge-Eglinton
7	Willowridge-Martingrove-Richview	55	Thornccliffe Park	101	Forest Hill South
8	Humber Heights-Westmount	56	Leaside Bennington	102	Forest Hill North
9	Edenbridge-Humber Valley	57	Broadview North	103	Lawrence Park South
10	Princess-Rosethorn	58	Old East York	104	Mount Pleasant West
11	Eringate-Centennial-West Deane	59	Danforth - East York	105	Lawrence Park North
12	Markland Wood	60	Woodbine-Lumsden	106	Humewood-Cedarvale
13	Etobicoke West Mall	61	Taylor-Massey	107	Oakwood Village
14	Islington-City Centre West	62	East End-Danforth	108	Briar Hill-Belgravia
15	Kingsway South	63	The Beaches	109	Caledonia-Fairbank
16	Stonegate-Queensway	64	Woodbine Corridor	110	Keelesdale-Eglinton West
17	Mimico (includes Humber Bay Shores)	65	Greenwood-Coxwell	111	Rockcliffe-Smythe
18	New Toronto	66	Danforth	112	Beechborough-Greenbrook
19	Long Branch	67	Playter Estates-Danforth	113	Weston

20	Alderwood	68	North Riverdale	114	Lambton Baby Point
22	Humbermede	69	Blake-Jones	115	Mount Dennis
23	Pelmo Park-Humberlea	70	South Riverdale	116	Steeles
24	Black Creek	71	Cabbagetown-South St. James Town	117	L'Amoreaux
25	Glenfield-Jane Heights	72	Regent Park	118	Tam O'Shanter-Sullivan
26	Downsview-Roding-CFB	73	Moss Park	119	Wexford-Maryvale
27	York University Heights	74	North St. James Town	120	Clairlea-Birchmount
28	Rustic	75	Church-Yonge Corridor	121	Oakridge
29	Maple Leaf	76	Bay Street Corridor	122	Birchcliffe-Cliffside
30	Brookhaven-Amesbury	77	Waterfront Communities-The Island	123	Cliffcrest
31	Yorkdale-Glen Park	78	Kensington-Chinatown	124	Kennedy Park
32	Englemount-Lawrence	79	University	125	Ionview
33	Clanton Park	80	Palmerston-Little Italy	126	Dorset Park
34	Bathurst Manor	81	Trinity-Bellwoods	127	Bendale
35	Westminster-Branson	82	Niagara	128	Agincourt South-Malvern West
36	Newtonbrook West	83	Dufferin Grove	129	Agincourt North
37	Willowdale West	84	Little Portugal	130	Milliken
38	Lansing-Westgate	85	South Parkdale	131	Rouge
39	Bedford Park-Nortown	86	Roncesvalles	132	Malvern

40	St. Andrew-Windfields	87	High Park-Swansea	133	Centennial Scarborough
41	Bridle Path-Sunnybrook-York Mills	88	High Park North	134	Highland Creek
42	Banbury-Don Mills	89	Runnymede-Bloor West Village	135	Morningside
43	Victoria Village	90	Junction Area	136	West Hill
44	Flemingdon Park	91	Weston-Pelham Park	137	Woburn
45	Parkwoods Donalda	92	Corso Italia-Davenport	138	Eglinton East
46	Pleasant View	93	Dovercourt-Wallace Emerson-Junction	139	Scarborough Village
47	Don Valley Village	94	Wychwood	140	Guildwood
48	Hillcrest Village	95	Annex		

Appendix 2: Advisory Committee

Toronto CFC Advisory Committee Members

Name	Representation
Sharon Filger	Provider perspective-West
Nury Rugeles	Provider perspective -South
Michelle Dagnino	Provider perspective -North
Ahmed Hussein	Newcomer/Settlement
Keith McCrady	Aboriginal- East
Lise-Marie Baudry	Francophone- All
Catherine Moher	Provider Perspective-South
Tricia Verreault	Conseil scolaire Viamonde
Kevin MacIom	Toronto Catholic District School Board
Sheryl Robinson Petrazzini	Toronto District School Board
Lyne Proulx	Conseil scolaire de district catholique Centre-Sud
Kathryn Underwood	Special Needs
Zaheeda Daya	Toronto Public Health
Dolores Cascone	Ministry of Education
Marilyn Tate	Community Action program for Children (CAPC) and The Canada Prenatal Nutrition Program (CPNP)
Ruth Crammond	United Way
Lorraine McLeod	Toronto Children's Services
Cynthia Grundmann	Toronto Children's Services
Joe Manion	Toronto Employment and Social Services
John Smith	Toronto Social Development , Finance and Administration

Appendix 3: Data Sources for Development of Family Profile

Data Sources for assessing families with children aged birth to 6 in Toronto:

Primary Data

- Field and online surveys of over 4,000 families and caregivers with a child 0-6 years and key informant populations about current use and non-use of CFCs:
 - Families living on low incomes
 - Families accessing Social Assistance programs
 - Families engaged with the child welfare system
 - Key populations:
 - French language communities
 - Aboriginal communities
 - Families with children with special needs
 - Other identified key populations:
 - Newcomer communities
 - Racialized communities
 - LGBTQ2S communities
- Focus groups with parents and caregivers
 - Four focus groups with Indigenous community members (one for each of youth, seniors, women, and men), hosted by the Toronto Aboriginal Support Services Council
 - One focus group with families with children with special needs

Secondary Data

- Toronto Community Health Profiles, original source data:
 - Canada Census (2011)
 - Institute for Clinical Evaluative Sciences (2012/13 – 2014/15)
 - National Household Survey (2011)
- Toronto Public Health (2016)
- Urban Heart @ Toronto Report, original source:
 - TI-Family File, Statistics Canada Income Division (2010)
 - Canadian Community Health Survey (2011)
- Toronto Employment and Social Services (January, 2017)
- Income Estimates for Census Families and Individuals (T1 Family File), Statistics Canada (2013)
- Early Development Instrument (EDI) Survey, City of Toronto, 2015
- Our Health Counts Toronto, Seventh Generation Midwives/Well Living House St. Mikes, 2016

Data Sources for assessing the CFCs in Toronto:

Primary Data

- Organization-level survey of 63 CFC agencies in Spring, 2017 regarding:
 - Locations
 - Financial resources
 - Service offerings and utilization
 - Service partnerships
 - Local planning and monitoring programs
- Location-level survey of 262 CFC program locations in Spring, 2017 regarding:
 - Locations
 - Service hours & offerings
 - FTEs/staffing
- Focus groups: A total of 145 service providers and thought leaders participated as follows:
 - 2 focus groups with OEYC/FRP/BBBF managers – 34 participants
 - 1 focus group with PFLC managers – 6 participants
 - 2 focus groups with OEYC/FRP/BBBF front line staff – 25 participants
 - 2 focus groups with PFLC front line staff – 15 participants (6 TCDSB and 9 TDSB)
 - 2 focus groups with Indigenous service providers – 22 participants
 - 1 focus group with French language service providers – 7 participants
- Interviews with thought leaders – 30 participants
- Documentation of programs, locations, structures, and funding, as provided by current funders (Ministry, School Boards, City of Toronto)

Appendix 4: Rationale for Social and Developmental Vulnerability Assessment

The Urban Health Equity Assessment and Response Tool (Urban Heart)

The Urban Health Equity Assessment and Response Tool (Urban HEART) is an evidence-based standard for measuring the wellbeing of neighbourhoods. The Urban HEART is a credible tool designed by the World Health Organization and adapted locally for use in Toronto. Based on the Urban Heart Methodology, the City of Toronto assessed inequities in Toronto's 140 neighbourhoods and has identified 31 Neighbourhood Improvement Areas (NIAs). Inequity is measured by comparing indicators in five domains.

Economic Opportunity	Healthy Lives	Social Development	Physical Surrounding	Participation in Decision Making
Low Income	Diabetes	High School Graduation	Community Places for Meeting	Municipal Voting Rates
Social Assistance	Mental Health	Marginalization	Green Space	
Unemployment	Premature Mortality	Post-Secondary Completion	Healthy Food Stores	
	Preventable Hospitalizations		Walkability	

The Child and Family Inequities Score

The Child and Family Inequities Score (Inequity Score) is a summary measure of the socio-economic challenges that children and families experience. It helps explain the variation in socio-economic barriers across the City's neighbourhoods. While other composite measures of socio-economic disadvantage in the City exist, the Inequity Score is unique because it uses indicators that are specific to families with children under the age of 12. The 5 inequity indicators were chosen because they are known social determinants of child health and wellbeing. The table below shows the definition and weighting of the five indicators.

Percent	Socio-economic Measure	Description
40%	Low Income Measure	Percent of families with an after-tax family income that falls below the Low Income Measure.
15%	Parental Unemployment	Percent of families with at least one unemployed parent.

Percent	Socio-economic Measure	Description
15%	Low Parental Education	Percent of families with at least on parent that does not have a high school diploma.
15%	No Knowledge of Official Language	Percent of families with no parents who have knowledge of either official language (English or French).
15%	Core Housing Need	Percent of families in core housing need according to the Statistics Canada definition.

Early Development Instrument

The Early Development Instrument (EDI) is a measure that provides information about children in a community and their readiness for school in the following five domains:

- Physical Development (%)
- Emotional Maturity (%)
- Social Competency (%)
- Language and Cognitive Development (%)
- Communication and General Knowledge (%)

The EDI data in this report represents senior kindergarten children from Toronto's four publicly funded school boards who participated in the EDI assessment. For the purposes of this report, we identified the percentage of children who were vulnerable (fell in the lowest 10th percentile) in 2+ domains. The EDI results help planners better understand family level inequity and needs for early intervention supports in particular neighbourhoods.

Appendix 5: Needs Assessment Data Gathering Tools

Thought Leader Interview Guide

1. What is your relationship to the OEYCFC system or service providers?
2. What is the key asset of the service system that can be leveraged through this planning exercise?
3. What is the critical challenge facing of the service system that need to be addressed through this planning exercise and what is at the heart of solving it?
4. What risks or strategic issues do we need to be aware of that might influence this service system planning exercise?
5. What is your best advice on how can we approach thinking and planning across systems during this project?
6. If there is one thing we must ensure we do at the end of the project to lay the groundwork for an accessible, equitable, sustainable system, what would it be?

Focus Group Guides

Service Providers - Front Line Staff

1. What are the assets of families that are parenting their children aged 0 – 6 years, especially those that face barriers
2. What are the current (the last 3 years) trends or challenges families face in terms of parenting children aged 0 – 6 years? How do they try to address those challenges?
Probe: What are current challenges in terms of meeting their needs beyond parenting (for example, employment, housing, etc.)
3. What do parents say they like about the services/programs they receive?
4. What do parents say are the biggest barriers they face in accessing or benefitting from services/programs?
5. What do potential service users need to be able to access and benefit from services?
6. What new or different services/programs do families want?
7. What kinds of partnership trends have you observed in the sector in the last 3 -5 years? Is there partnership momentum that can be built on, or further explored?
Probe: What are opportunities within and across sectors?
8. Given the challenges and wants of parents, what would be most helpful (that is, tools, resources, training, partnerships, etc.) in terms of providing high quality programs and services that meet families' needs? The needs of children?
9. Do you feel that you have the knowledge, understanding and resources to support parents/ caregivers in navigating the system?
Probe: What would be helpful? What are some examples of effective service navigation support?
10. What are materials, resources and approaches that non-Indigenous service providers should consider so they can provide effective welcoming services to Indigenous families?
11. What are considerations for effectively reaching and serving families that face barriers – newcomers, LGBTQ2S families, and families with special needs?

Service Providers - Management

1. What are the assets of families with children aged 0 – 6 years, especially those that face barriers?
2. What are the current (the last 3 years) challenges families face in terms of parenting children aged 0 – 6 years? How do they try to address those challenges?
Probe: What are trends in meeting broader needs?

3. What do families say they like about the services they receive or programs they attend? What's the most popular program you offer?
4. What do families who use programs and services say are the biggest barriers they face in accessing or benefiting from child and family programs?
5. What do potential service users need to be able to access services? To be able to use and benefit from services once accessed?
6. What new or different services/programs do families want?
7. Do you feel that you and your staff have the knowledge, understanding and resources to support parents/ caregivers in navigating the system?
Probes: What would be helpful? What are some examples of effective service navigation support?
8. What kind of partnership trends between service providers have you observed in the sector in the last 3 -5 years? Is there partnership momentum that can be built on, or further explored?
Probe: What are opportunities within and across sectors?
9. What are the opportunities and improvements that can be made to achieve service and geographic equity?
Probe: What are the early adoption strategies we can further explore? What are the priorities?
10. What materials, resources and approaches should non-Indigenous service providers consider so that they can provide effective welcoming services to Indigenous families?
11. Do you have other comments?

Indigenous Service Providers

1. What are the assets of Indigenous families with children aged 0 – 6 years?
2. What are the current challenges facing Indigenous families in terms of parenting children aged 0 – 6 years? How do they try to address these challenges?
3. What are the biggest barriers that Indigenous families experience in accessing or benefiting from child and family programs? (Note: if no experience with child and family programs, reference barriers to other programs)
4. What would enable Indigenous families to access child and family services and programs? To be able to use and benefit from services once accessed? (Note: if no experience with child and family programs, reference enablers for accessing/using other programs)
5. What are the most important features of child and family programs and services for Indigenous families? (Note: if no experience with child and family programs, reference other programs)
6. What services/programs do Indigenous families most need/want and which could be provided within the context of a child and family program?
7. How well are Indigenous families supported to navigate the broader child and family system to get the resources that they need? What can be done better/differently?
8. What kinds of partnership have you observed in the last 3 -5 years that are benefitting Indigenous families? What are opportunities within and across service sectors?
9. What are other the opportunities and improvements that can be made in the child and family system to achieve equity for Indigenous families? Short term and longer term?
10. Do you have other comments?

Parents/Caregivers

1. What is your age?
2. How many children do you have and what is their age (s)?
3. Were you born in Canada?
4. If no, what year did you arrive in Canada?
5. What is the first language you learned?
6. Are you an Indigenous Canadian?

7. If yes, what nation do you belong to?
8. What is your current postal code?
9. What are the things you love about being a parent?
10. What are the things that you find hardest about being a parent? How do you try to handle challenges?
11. Do you go to any parent and child programs (for example, parent and child programs such as drop in or play groups)? What are they? Please describe them.
12. How did you find out about the parent and child programs you go to?
13. What do you like about the parent and child programs you go to, if anything?
14. What could be better about the parent and child programs you go to, if anything?
15. What would make parent child programs easier for you to go to:
 - How do you find out about the program to begin with
 - Time of day
 - Location
 - The kind of information provided and the way it is provided
 - The kind of programming provided and the way it is provided
 -

Online Survey Questions

1. Which of the following best describes you (i.e parent, caregiver, grandparent, home child care providers, other)
2. How many children do you have and what is their age (s)?
3. Are you aware that there are a number of child and family programs in the City of Toronto available for free that you can attend with your young children?
4. Do you attend any child and family programs in the City of Toronto?
5. If you are aware of but do not access any child and family programs, why not?
6. Do you know what types of program you go to?
7. Specifically, what kinds of activities/programs have you attended?
8. How did you first find out about these programs?
9. Do you feel welcome when you go to these programs?
10. Are these programs available when you want them?
11. How often do you attend child and family programs?
12. How long do you typically stay at programs?
13. Do you attend programs in more than one location?
14. What is the main reason you attend child and family programs
15. Does your child have special needs? If yes, have you received any support, resources, referrals from child and family program staff?
16. Have you ever been turned away from a centre/program because it is full, or been put on a waitlist for a registered program?
17. Are there specific barriers you or your child experience when participating in child and family programs?
18. What could be better about the child and family programs you go to?
19. Assuming you are interested in attending a child and family program, when is your preferred time/day to attend?
20. What is the best location for a child and family program?
21. When it comes to child and family programs, the thing that would help me most is :
22. What is your age?
23. What is your gender identity?
24. Do you identify as part of LGBTQ2S communities?

25. What is your current postal code?
26. Were you born in Canada?
27. If no, what year did you arrive in Canada?
28. The term that best identifies my race is:
29. Are you Indigenous (First Nations, Métis, Inuit or mixed race of Indigenous ancestry)?
30. If yes, do you identify with a particular Nation or community (for example, do you identify with the Oneida Nation or the community of Six Nations of the Grand River)?
31. Is your child Indigenous (First Nation, Inuit, Métis, or mixed race of Indigenous ancestry)?

Field Survey Questions

1. What is your current postal code?
2. What is your age?
3. What is your gender?
4. How many children do you have and what is their age (s)?
5. Were you born in Canada?
6. If no, what year did you arrive in Canada?
7. The term that best identifies my race is:
8. Are you Indigenous (First Nations, Métis, Inuit or mixed race of Indigenous ancestry)?
9. If yes, do you identify with a particular Nation or community (for example, do you identify with the Oneida Nation or the community of Six Nations of the Grand River)?
10. Is your child Indigenous (First Nation, Inuit, Métis, or mixed race of Indigenous ancestry)?
11. What are the things you love about being a parent/caregiver? Name two things.
12. What are the things that you find the most difficult about being a parent/caregiver? Name 2 things. How do you try to handle each challenge?
13. Do you go to any child and family programs such as play groups or parent child drop-ins?
14. These are programs that you and your child or the child you care for attend together. Please describe them. Note: this does NOT include child care/day care, health services, or services you as a parent/caregiver access for yourself, even if a child is with you, like settlement services
15. How did you first find out about these child and family programs?
16. What do you like about the child and family programs you go to? Name up to 3 things.
17. What could be better about the child and family programs you go to? Name up to 3 things.
18. Are there any specific barriers you or your child experience when participating in child and family programs (for example, the building or program is not physically accessible to me and/or my child, feeling unwelcomed, judged, etc.)? If you do not access any child and family programs, why not? Please check all that apply
19. When is your preferred time of day to attend child and family programs?
20. What is the best location for a parent and child program (please choose the two that best applies)?
21. Please finish this sentence by selecting the 2 responses that are best for you
22. When it comes to child and family programs, the thing that would help me the most or would have the biggest impact in my life is:
23. Is there anything else you would like to tell us about child and family programs in Toronto?

