

EarlyON Newsletter



July 2019

EarlyON Staff Profile

Name, Position, Agency:
Tamara Largie RECE,
Supervisor, Health
Promotion and Early Years
Initiatives, Davenport-
Perth Neighbourhood and
Community Health Centre

Years of Service: 13 years

What you love about your job?

I love my job because everyone here shares a vision and love for young families. I also work in an environment that operates like a family team. The relationships we build in the community on behalf of young children is very powerful for me. I work with many vulnerable families (through my pre-natal work and parenting groups) but I thrive to see the best in everyone because I know that everyone has something good to offer.



Words of wisdom for other EarlyON staff in this sector when they are supporting children and families.

Not only as a worker but as a mother of a young child, I understand feeling nervous or frustrated about my parenting. I also remember feeling accepted and connected to people who cared about

my wellbeing. Families and children will always remember the way you make them feel. I've seen many families pass through over my 13 years in the early years and they remind me about how important our centre was to them when their children were young. We need to remember the tremendous impact we can make, simply in the way we open our doors and say welcome.

Operational Updates

RECE Grand-Parenting Provision

The Ministry of Education has provided some clarification on the grand-parenting provision for staff working in EarlyON Child and Family Centres with ten or more years' experience. Please see attached the revised RECE Exemption Policy with additional information including:

- To be eligible for the grand-parenting provision a staff person must have been employed for a total of 10 or more years, as of January 1, 2019.
- Staff can only be grand-parented in the centre in which they are employed or were previously employed in and are returning to.
- This provision does not apply to new hiring for positions that will oversee the delivery of mandatory core services related to supporting early learning and development or to persons that have been members of the College of Early Childhood Educators in the past.
- This exemption does not apply to those who have satisfied the educational requirements to be registered as members of the College but have not yet become members.

Please contact your Consultant if you have any further questions.

Consultant Visits

EarlyON Consultants have been conducting their second organizational visits over the past few months. Consultants will be following up on completed Site Profile Tools and any other items identified in previous visits/communications. Please send any outstanding Site Profile Tools to your Consultant as soon as possible.

The next round of organizational visits will take place in Fall 2019 and will focus on discussing the new EarlyON Program Standards, the 2020 Operating and Business Practice Guidelines and EarlyON 2020 budget preparations.

Now that TCS has collected preliminary information to inform system planning activities, we are **planning to move forward with a reduction in the number of visits for 2020**. We intend to conduct at least one organizational visit per year, and program visits will range from one to two visits per year depending on the size and frequency of the program. Additional visits can take place in response to program requests for additional Consultant support. More information to come!



June Staff Network Meetings

Anti-bias / anti-oppression workshops were delivered to 119 program staff at the EarlyON Staff Network meetings in June. Five sessions facilitated by Vital Shift Consulting were held in different locations across the City, including one French language session.

Our facilitators walked through the core concepts of privilege, oppression, discrimination, intersectionality, microaggressions and how in-groups and out-groups operate. Each session grappled with complex scenarios and staff worked together to identify how bias and assumptions were at play in each scenario. The day rounded out with a discussion of tools and strategies to help us reflect on our own bias and intervene when bias and oppression are present in the programs.



The workshop evaluations indicate that most participants feel the sessions were helpful and relevant to their work. Program staff commented that they want to continue to explore these concepts and gather tools to provide more inclusive and welcoming spaces, understand their own bias, and be able to address the myriad of complex issues that arise in programs. EarlyON Consultants and our Training and Development Coordinator, Jessica Abraham, facilitated follow-up sessions to continue the conversations and an email with additional resources and notes from the sessions have been sent out to all agencies.

EarlyON Leadership Network

Thank you for your participation in our second Leadership Network meeting on June 27, 2019. The room was buzzing with energy as we discussed key system initiatives such as the EarlyON Program Standards, analysis of the Program Snapshot and Budget Data and how to better coordinate our services with Toronto Public Health and Toronto Public Library.

Special thanks to Sharn Peters from The 519 Glitterbug Mobile Program for updates on the important work you and your team are doing to support the creation of inclusive EarlyON spaces



across the City. We know we still have a lot of work to do to ensure all EarlyON Child and Family Centres are safe and inclusive for the LGBTQ2S community, please reach out to Sharn at speters@the519.org to identify how your organization can participate in this important work.

More information will be shared in the fall pertaining to the creation of a new series of EarlyON Manager Networks to facilitate service coordination and partnerships.



Updates from the EarlyON Advisory Committee and Working Tables

The EarlyON Advisory Committee and Working Tables were established to support specific EarlyON system transformational tasks and are time-limited. These groups are made up of a wide range of EarlyON service providers, community partners and TCS staff. As we complete key activities outlined in the EarlyON Action Plan (2018-2020), this structure will slowly dissolve over the course of 2019 and into early 2020.

The Advisory Committee provides strategic advice on overarching system transformation initiatives. Items that are discussed at the Working Tables go to the Advisory for final review and strategic discussion focused on alignment with other system transformation activities. Members of the Advisory Committee will provide regular updates at the EarlyON Leadership Network meetings.

The **Planning Working Table** has officially concluded as of June 4, 2019. Our last meeting was devoted to reviewing the first full draft of the EarlyON Design Guidelines with the architects from LGA Architects. Thank you again to everyone who participated in this Working Table!

The **Professional Learning Working Table** continues to focus on supporting the development of the EarlyON Professional Learning Strategy. At the June meeting the Table provided further insight to help advance an online professional learning web presence, a site visit / mentoring program, partnership development, and the best way to facilitate more ECE placements in EarlyON Centres. The staff lead for this table is Jessica Abraham (jessica.abraham@toronto.ca).

The **Program Standards Working Table** met in June and provided feedback on changes and additions for the 2020 EarlyON Operating and Business Practice Guidelines. They also engaged in an initial discussion around the structure and content for the EarlyON Program Standards. This discussion was then brought forward to the June Leadership Network. The staff lead for this table is Maureen McDonald (maureen.mcdonald@toronto.ca).

At the June meeting of the **Inclusion Working Table**, inclusionary standards for the EarlyON sector and how they will be integrated into the Program Standards was discussed. The staff lead for this table is Maureen McDonald (maureen.mcdonald@toronto.ca).

The **Data and Evaluation Working Table** has provided valuable input to support the development of a systems' level outcome framework and the new registration/sign-in system. They have also contributed to the refinement of a workbook resource to support use of data in program planning. The staff lead for this table is Ellen Tate (ellen.tate@toronto.ca).





Key EarlyON Dates

2019 EarlyON Cross-Sector Collaboration Event

September 25

2020 Operating and Budget Guidelines Overview Sessions

October 23 at the North York Civic Centre

October 28 at Metro Hall

Staff Networks

November 14 (West), November 15 (East), November 18 (French) November 19 (South), November 20 (North)

Leadership Network

December 5

2020 Budget Submission Due

November 29

EarlyON Data Corner

The EarlyON Data Corner will be a new regular feature of the EarlyON Newsletter. The focus is on sharing updates, content and knowledge about data collection, analysis and use for service system planning for EarlyON Child and Family Centres across Toronto. In this first edition, we have included an infographic to show how providing good quality centre data enables EarlyON participants to find reliable information about EarlyON Centres on the City's EarlyON webpage.

Survey on EarlyON E-Registration/Sign-in System

Thank you to everyone who helped promote the survey on the EarlyON e-registration/sign-in system. Your participation made a huge difference and Toronto Children's Services was able to engage 640 participants from over 60 EarlyON Child and Family Centres across Toronto. Please see the attached summary of participants' responses. The responses will be used to inform the development and selection of an e-registration/sign-in system for EarlyON Child and Family Centres.



How Toronto EarlyON is Using Data to Promote Centres and Improve Access for Parents and Caregivers

We can all agree that it would be great to have a one-stop, user-friendly, up-to-date information source for parents and caregivers of children 0-6 years to find the 270 EarlyONcentre locations in Toronto and information that meets their needs. Indeed, parents and caregivers have asked for it (see the SN Management Report, 2017). The City of Toronto, Children's Services (TCS) is using EarlyONcentre data to make this a reality.

How to ensure good quality data

- Good design for data collection and transmission so that the process is easy and the user experience is considered
- Common definitions and understanding of data requirements by all those that have a stake
- Checks and balances and vigilance by all to make sure the data is up-to-date and accurate
- Technological know-how and capacity

Critical role of Staff and Operators as Data Creators:

As a first key point of contact, staff and operators play a critical role in data creation and ensuring the accuracy of information

Data provided by staff and operators support identifying locations, better programming and allow for evidence-informed planning

A good process is built on transparency and trust and gets everyone to work together toward the common goal of improving access for children, parents and caregivers.



Toronto Children's Services: Data request sent to Agency based on clear definition of elements required.

Agencies: Data is sent to TCS about locations, addresses, website and contact information in the required format.

TCS: Data is stored in a secure, central information management system and data checks are performed. Data is used to provide EarlyONlocation information through the website.

Public can access reliable information about EarlyON locations at www.toronto.ca/EarlyON



With this starting point, the goal is now to sustain and expand the information available about the EarlyONsystem to improve access for parents and caregivers, effective programming and planning.