

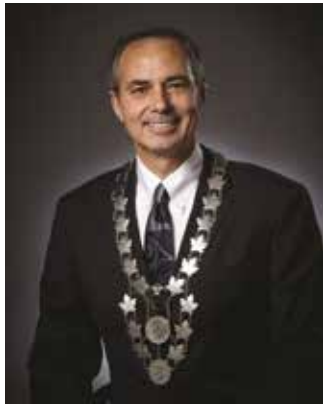


# Early Learning and Child Care Plan 2016 - 2020

# Table of Contents

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Message from the Halton Regional Chair Gary Carr .....	1
Acknowledgements.....	2
Introduction .....	3
Looking back: Achievements from 2011-2015.....	4
Current context for early learning and child care in Halton .....	4
The Story of Ontario Policy for Early Learning & Child Care .....	5
The planning process for the Early Learning and Child Care Plan (ELCCP) 2016-2020.....	12
Community participation in creating the ELCCP .....	12
Overview of Responses to Seven Consultation Questions .....	13
Service providers are connected and seamless.....	16
Programs provide the best supports for children and families.....	18
Staff contribute to the healthy development of children and families.....	22
Families are empowered, informed and key to their child's care .....	24
All children's early learning and care needs are met .....	26
Conclusion.....	30
Recommendations .....	31
Appendix A: How Does Learning Happen? .....	36
Appendix B: Profile of licensed child care spaces in Halton.....	38
Appendix C: Population count and licensed spaces by municipality .....	41
Appendix D: Calculation of projected need for fee subsidy.....	46



## Message from the Halton Regional Chair Gary Carr

On behalf of Regional Council, I am proud to introduce to you **Halton Region's Early Learning and Child Care Plan 2016-2020** (ELCCP).

Increasing the number of licensed child care spaces, including special needs spaces, and promoting the benefit of licensed child care to Halton parents was identified as a key action in the *Halton Region Strategic Action Plan 2015 – 2018* to help support the health and well-being of all Halton residents and we're committed to ensuring there's quality child care for Halton's children.

More than 3,600 community stakeholders including parents, early childhood educators, community professionals and service providers participated in surveys and public information sessions to offer their insight and experiences about the state of the environment for early learning and child care in Halton to help form this plan. We also engaged more than 70 children who provided their ideas about quality child care through visual arts.

Early learning and child care programs are valuable resources to parents, helping them in their role to support healthy child growth and development. The children of today are our future and it is important to invest in that future to ensure Halton remains a great place to live, work, raise a family and retire.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Gary Carr', written in a cursive style.

Gary Carr,  
*Halton Regional Chair*

# Acknowledgments

*Prepared by:* Children's Services, Consolidated Municipal Service Manager (CMSM) for Region of Halton.

In collaboration with Our Kids Network (OKN) – Early Years Committee (OK-EY).

In order to complete this ELCCP, OKN created an advisory committee from members of the :

OKN – Early Years Committee,

OKN – Partners Committee (children with special needs 0 – 6 years),

OKN – School Years Committee (OK-SY) and the Child Care Advisory Committee.

Much of the work was done through the support of Children's Services staff.

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Stephenie Gillingham	Sheridan College	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Post-secondary Education</li> <li>• OK-EY</li> </ul>
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# Introduction

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In Halton there is a rich history of community planning for early learning and child care programs. These plans are completed to help ensure the most effective delivery of early learning and child care services for all children and families in Halton. For the past 30 years, Halton Region's Children's Services Division (Consolidated Municipal Services Manager (CMSM) since 1999) has taken the lead in system planning for early learning and child care. While Halton Region is accountable for the Plan, it is important that it reflects the voices of the many community stakeholders that are part of the early learning and child care system. To ensure the right inputs to the Plan it was prepared in partnership with the Our Kids Network. The Our Kids Network (OKN) is a robust partnership with over 90 unique agencies in Halton.



## Looking back: Achievements from 2011-2015

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Much progress has been made in the past five years in Halton. In terms of licensed spaces, there were 15,395 licensed child care centre spaces in 2011 compared to 25,357 spaces in December 2015. This is an increase of 9,962 spaces or a 65 per cent increase in spaces in the last five years.

In total, Halton Region's ELCCP 2012-2015 included twenty-five recommendations for action. All recommendations were addressed with the following highlights:

- **Increased child care quality** - Child care programs involved in the Quality First (QF) initiative saw increases in average quality of two per cent (child care centre model) and six per cent (school-age model).
- **Stabilized child care programs** - To help stabilize the system following the implementation of Full-day Kindergarten, 100 per cent provincial funding was provided to 11 licensed child care operators to implement program changes based on community needs i.e., shift to infant/toddler care.
- **Increased outreach to front-line staff** - A database was created to promote more active and timely communication and outreach with staff working in early learning and child care programs. This allows approximately 1,400 front-line staff to register and receive direct information regarding professional learning and events to enhance their professional practice.
- **Developed an approach to implementing the Ministry of Education's (EDU) General Operating Grant (GOG)** (Report No. SS-07-15 re: "Children's Services Division Program Changes and Funding Update" and Report No. SS-08-15 re: "Revised Standard Form Agreements for Children's Services (General Operating Grant Agreements for 2016 and Wage Enhancement Grant Agreements for 2015)". All municipalities were required to convert their Wage Subsidy programs into General Operating Grant programs as of January 2016. Funding models were researched, community focus groups held and Halton implemented a point system based on operational capacity. In 2016, \$9.7 million was issued to 83 service providers supporting 1860 eligible licenced child care staff. Halton's growth in licenced child care spaces has resulted in a waitlist pressure for this grant.
- **Increased standards of practice for child care programs with a Child Care Service Management Agreement** - Agreements have been updated (Report No. SS-08-15) to coincide with the implementation of the new GOG. Child care programs with a Child Care Management Agreement are now required to be in good standing with Quality First and have a Memorandum of Understanding in order to service children with special needs.
- **Increased advocacy efforts** - Participation in provincial consultations was effective. The outcome of this advocacy is reflected in new legislation for the Child Care and Early Years Act (CCEYA) 2014 which replaced the Day Nurseries Act (DNA).



## Looking back: Achievements from 2011-2015 *continued*

- **Increased access to community level information** - In the past five years, two online tools have been introduced to improve provider planning and to help families find the programs and services they need. These two resources are the Our Kids Network's Data Portal and Halton iparent. The Data Portal houses a large array of neighbourhood-level data in an easy to use format. Halton iparent allows users to easily search for programs and services that they need.
- **Improved understanding of our system of supports for children with special needs** - A detailed research, mapping and gap analysis of the service system for children with special needs is now available and is used for planning.
- **Increased quality in supervision and leadership** - Increased supports for quality supervision and leadership within child care programs.



### Current context for early learning and child care in Halton

*Since Halton's last ELCCP, much has taken place both locally and provincially. Since 2010, the Province of Ontario has introduced large and significant changes to the early learning and child care system that have impacted the way services are delivered locally and has created new opportunities and challenges. The following represents these changes and impacts for Halton.*

# The Story of Ontario Policy for Early Learning & Child Care

Understanding the changing social policy landscape in Ontario for Ministry of Education funded programs and how it impacts Halton.



2009

## What this means for Halton

### With Our Best Future In Mind Implementing Early Learning In Ontario

The report written by Dr. Charles Pascal represented a comprehensive and transformational early learning plan for Ontario. One of the key policy changes derived from this report is the implementation of full-day kindergarten for all 4 and 5 year olds. This new policy direction has had significant impacts for local school boards and for the entire child care sector including Halton Region as the Service System Manager (CISM) for child care.

1

New focus on a "seamless day" for young children

2

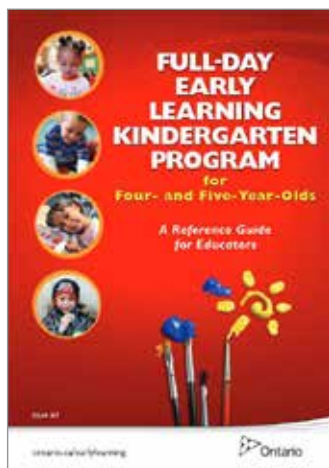
New emphasis on system navigation through Best Start Child & Family Centres

3

Increased demand for school age care

Dr. Pascal's report opened the door to community conversations related to seamless service, a seamless day, system navigation and ways to work more efficiently among community service providers. In Halton, Our Kids Network's Early Years committee met with Dr. Pascal and established a Best Start Child and Family Centre System Navigation committee. As a result of these early conversations, Halton iparent was developed. Ip parent is a virtual hub of information and provides Halton iparent access to all parenting supports in Halton. To date, 4,356 unique users have visited the site. Individual resources listed in Halton iparent have been viewed 17,720 times. There are currently 151 unique parenting programs in the iparent database and 33 unique programs for children with special needs. The Our Kids Network has also built a Data Portal which allows for more integrated planning with all service providers given access to the same data.





2010

## What this means for Halton

The impacts of FDK on the delivery of early learning and child care services in Halton have been substantial! With 4 and 5 year olds now receiving a universal early learning full day program, their needs for child care, nursery school programs, early learning programs such as Ontario Early Years, and supports for children with special needs are now to be met through the school system. Most service providers removed child care spaces for 4 and 5 year olds, and nursery schools are struggling to stay viable with large segments of their primary customers removed. Special needs services have shifted to serve only the pre-FDK ages and school age child care. One of the most significant impacts is related to the RECE in every classroom. Significantly higher wages and benefits were strong incentives for a large mass of RECEs to move from the child care sector to the FDK program. This has had devastating impacts on staffing in the non-FDK programs where competing with the FDK wages is not possible.

## Full-Day Kindergarten

In 2010, Ontario began its 5-year implementation of Full Day Kindergarten (FDK). Ontario children aged 4 and 5 years are eligible for the program. Previously, the Ontario kindergarten program was only half days or alternate day programs. FDK is an all-day, 5 days per week program. In keeping with the vision of a seamless day for children, before and after school care is a significant component to the FDK program. FDK is delivered in schools only. Another notable policy change is that Registered Early Childhood Educators (RECE) are now in every FDK classroom. Prior to FDK, kindergarten classes were lead only by a teacher. FDK classes are now lead by a education team of a teacher and RECE.

## FDK in Halton



**12,000**

4 and 5 year old children attend FDK each year



**220**

schools in Halton offer FDK



**104**

classrooms are provided with enhanced support for children with special needs to participate in school age care



**2,038**

child care spaces for 4 and 5 year olds are no longer needed



**428**

RECEs in Halton moved from working in the child care sector to FDK



Approximately

**\$700,000**

has been re-invested in fee subsidy for school age care





## Child Care Responsibility Moves to EDU from MCYS

In 2010, the province announced that the responsibility of child care for Ontario would move from the Ministry of Children and Youth Services to the Ministry of Education. In 2011, the funding officially moved over to Education and funding relationships with CMSMs are formed.

2010

## What this means for Halton

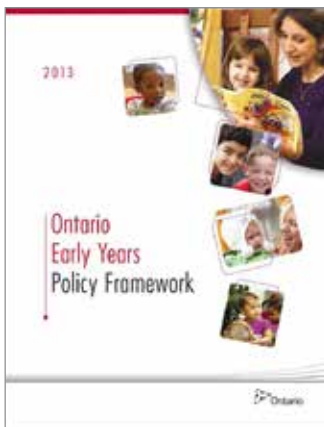
The move to Education represents a new era of relationships, new partnerships and a more inclusive early learning and care planning model. Communities are given a stronger voice and Halton is included in many of the provincial planning tables.

2012



## Modernization

The *Day Nurseries Act* was enacted in 1947 with minor updates in the 1980s. With this in mind, the Ontario government moved forward with a modernization plan for child care. All changes from this point are a result of the modernization plan. This rapid and progressive approach to modernization is historically significant. This multi-year approach encompasses FDK, updated child care legislation, a new pedagogy, Best Start Child and Family Centres and a more equitable funding framework.



2013

## What this means for Halton

In Halton, Capital Retrofit and Transformation funding provided an opportunity for service providers to reconfigure operations. Classrooms that formerly served 4 and 5 year olds have been converted to serve infant and toddler age groups. Funding was provided at 100 per cent with no cost share to the operator. Since 2013, a total of 220 spaces have been converted to toddler and infant spaces from kindergarten spaces.

## Ontario Early Years Policy Framework

The Ontario Early Years Policy Framework provides a vision for the early years to ensure children, from birth to age six, have the best possible start in life. Key priorities in the framework that have implications for Halton include the creation of Best Start Child and Family Centres and the stabilization and transformation of the child care sector. In order to do this, the Ontario government has significantly increased funding to the child care sector.



220

Kindergarten spaces have been converted using the Capital Retrofit and Transformation Funding



## Funding Formula

The objective of the new funding formula is to modernize the approach to operational funding. The new funding formula is a more transparent and equitable approach to funding that responds to demand for services, helps stabilize fees, and improves reliability of child care to better meet the needs of parents and service providers. One of the key changes is the introduction of the General Operating Grant (GOG). The GOG replaces the previous wage subsidy funding. A key focus of the GOG is to provide ongoing support and stabilization of the non-profit child care sector.

2013

## What this means for Halton

In Halton, the new funding formula has provided new funding with no new regional cost-share. Previous funding has been mixed with some 100 per cent, mostly 80-20 and 50-50 for administration. In monetary terms, this means that Halton receives \$2 million more annually from the province. Another benefit of the new formula is that it is now indexed on growth and need. As our child population grows, our funding has also grown to meet demand. Halton's GOG will be implemented in 2016. To facilitate this change, policies have been developed and approved by Council (SS-07-15 and SS-08-15).



New  
Funding



Funding Indexed  
to Growth & Need  
(Low Income Families)



2014

## What this means for Halton

Based on the Ontario Early Years Policy Framework, 2013, the release of "How Does Learning Happen?" Pedagogy for the Early Years builds on Ontario's vision for children and families, strengthening the quality of programs centered on the child and family. For the first time, communities across Ontario have been provided with a consistent approach to learning. This professional learning resource guide, learning through relationships for those working with young children and families, is intended to support pedagogy and curriculum/program development.

The release of this document solidifies the expertise of the RECE and has become the framework for all work supporting programs in Halton. The new pedagogy aligns with what we know about how children learn. It brings new depth and opportunities for educators to work with the children, families and peers in more meaningful ways. How Does Learning Happen? has transformed the way that professional learning opportunities are offered through The Halton Resource Connection (THRC). The pedagogy has now allowed for richer conversations and more meaningful practice. Key investments and capacity building are necessary to support this change of practice and program shift. One of the key investments in Halton was to provide service providers with funding to purchase appropriate materials and supplies that support a play-based environment.





2014

## Child Care and Early Years Act

The *Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014* (CCEYA) came into effect on August 31, 2015. This legislation replaced the outdated Day Nurseries Act (DNA) and established new rules governing child care in Ontario. Many of the new provisions will strengthen compliance and health and safety in child care settings, and help parents make informed choices about their options. The Regulations that accompany the Act will be passed in three phases. The first phase was passed in 2015 and the remaining two phases will be passed in 2016-17.

## What this means for Halton

New laws and licensing procedures are now in place as of August 31, 2015. Highlights of the changes include:

- Regulations regarding the number of children in licensed home child care programs have increased. Licensed home child care providers must now count their own children under the age of 6 and care for a maximum of only 2 children under the age of 2 (including their own children).
- Unlicensed providers must inform parents in writing that “this child care program is not licensed by the Government of Ontario”.
- The staffing ratios for 4-5 years olds and 9-12 year olds have changed.
- All licensed providers must have a program statement that is consistent with the How Does Learning Happen? pedagogy.
- Licensed providers must now display a government issued decal identifying them as provincially licensed.



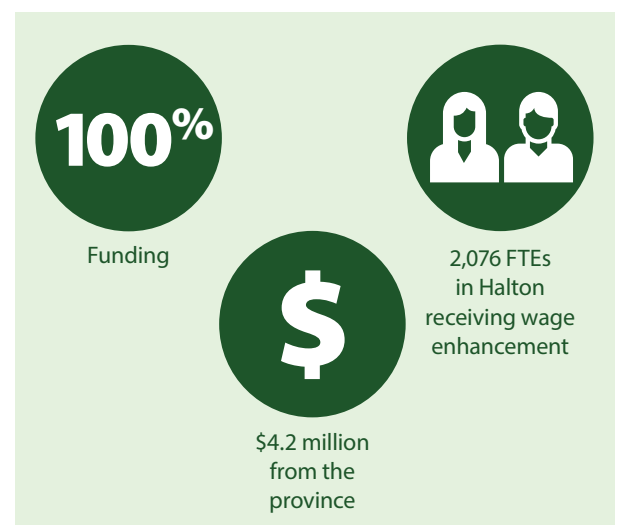
2015

## Wage Enhancement

The Ministry of Education is providing a special compensation adjustment to RECE in the licensed child care sector. Starting in 2015, Ontario funded and implemented a wage increase of \$1 per hour for eligible child care workers in the licensed child care sector. The intent of the wage enhancement funding is to help close the wage gap between RECEs in the public education system and those working for licensed service providers. It is also intended to help service providers recruit and retain highly skilled child care professionals, supporting greater access to stable, high-quality child care programs for Ontario's children.

## What this means for Halton

In Halton, about 80 per cent of the eligible providers have applied and received the wage enhancement funding for 2015. This represents about 2,076 FTEs. Halton received \$4.2 million to fund the wage enhancement which is 100 per cent funded by the province.



## General Operating Grant

All municipalities are required to begin providing General Operating Grants January, 2016.



## Wage Enhancement Grant

Effective January 1, 2016, the Ministry of Education increased the 2015 Wage Enhancement funding by an additional \$1 per hour to a total of \$2 per hour for eligible child care staff in the licenced child care sector.



## Ontario Early Years Child & Family Centres

Ontario Early Years Child and Family Centres (OEYCFC) are the Province's response to the fragmentation in the system in the delivery of early years programs. The Province has released guidelines describe the vision, guiding principles, core services, expected outcomes and the role of the province, municipalities and other key organizations.

## Federal Budget, March 2016

Proposes to invest \$500 million in 2017-18 to establish a pan-Canadian Early Learning and Child Care Framework. Development of the Framework will begin in 2016/17.

## Phase II - Child Care & Early Years Act, 2014

In May 2016, Phase II of the Child Care and Early Years Act was passed

2016

### What this means for Halton

All municipalities were required to convert their Wage Subsidy program into General Operating Grant programs as of January 2016. Funding models were researched, community focus groups held and Halton implemented a point system based on operational capacity. In 2016, \$9.7 million will be issued to 83 service providers and supports 1,860 eligible licenced child care staff. Halton's growth in licenced child care spaces has resulted in a waitlist pressure for this grant.

2016

### What this means for Halton

This provincial funding continues to help child care providers recruit and retain skilled professionals, supporting greater access to stable, high quality child care programs. In 2016, approximately \$9.8 million will be issued to the 2100 eligible licenced child care staff.

2016

### What this means for Halton

Halton becomes the funder and system manager of the OEYCFC on January 1, 2018. A Halton plan to guide this change will be presented to council and submitted to EDU by May 30, 2017.

2016

### What this means for Halton

TBD

2016

### What this means for Halton

In Phase II, the focus will be on the role of the CMSM, increasing licencing clarity related to recreation programs and strengthening health and safety regulations.

## Ontario Throne Speech

2016

On September 12, 2016, the Ontario provincial government committed to creating 100,000 new child care spaces over the next five years. The plan includes both capital and operating funding.

## What this means for Halton

Because of Halton's child population growth, Halton should be eligible for this funding.



# Under Construction

## Recreation Authority Provincial Guidelines

2017

Under the new CCEYA, most sports and recreation are not considered child care and do not require a licence. For those recreation programs that are considered child care, they will require a licence. These guidelines will help determine when a licence is required.

## What this means for Halton

Using the Provincial guidelines, Halton will be required to be the authority for determining the status of a recreation program. Provincial guidelines are expected by Winter 2017.

## Phase III Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014

2017

Special needs resourcing is to be a focus on Phase III of the regulations.

## What this means for Halton

TBD



# The planning process for the ELCCP 2016-2020

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## Understanding local strengths and challenges

A broad range of early years service providers were asked to participate in facilitated exercises in order to better understand and to get multiple perspectives on the current conditions in Halton. About 200 people representing all major service sectors participated in the exercises. The sectors represented included health, education, child care, early learning, mental health and developmental services. The top five issues highlighted during these exercises were:

1. Finding and retaining quality staff;
2. Providing quality school age care for children with special needs;
3. Implementation of the new Provincial pedagogy for child care programs called *How Does Learning Happen?*;
4. Implementation of the new *Child Care and Early Years Act (CCEYA)* and;
5. Challenges related to early identification of children.

The planning framework for the ELCCP involved seven central questions to elicit feedback through the consultation process.

1. What are the ideal conditions for Halton's early learning and child care system?
2. What would these conditions look like if we could see them?
3. How can we measure these conditions?
4. How are we doing on the most important of these measures?
5. Who are the partners that have a role to play in doing better?
6. What works to do better?
7. What do we propose to make improvements?

## Community participation in creating the Early Learning and Child Care Plan

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Previous ELCCPs in Halton benefited from a strong emphasis on stakeholder participation. This ELCCP is no exception. The goal in creating this ELCCP was not to produce an absolute consensus but to ensure that the decision making was well informed and offered all stakeholders the chance to contribute their ideas and knowledge. Through the course of creating the ELCCP over 3,613 families, professionals, and service providers contributed their ideas and knowledge. Seventy-four children represented their ideas and knowledge through visual arts. Community participation was achieved through a variety of methods including:

- A community advisory committee which included representation from many segments of the early learning and child care system;

- Facilitated exercises with service providers to help identify current strengths and challenges of the system;
- Surveys completed by families, service providers and early childhood educators to help understand how key stakeholders view the most important aspects of the early learning and child care system. More detailed survey results are available at [halton.ca/elccp2016](http://halton.ca/elccp2016);
- Focus groups with child care operators, school age service providers, municipal recreation services and families that use school age programs. A detailed report on the focus groups can be found at [halton.ca/elccp2016](http://halton.ca/elccp2016) and;
- Child care operator consultations where their insight was collected on the current context for early learning and child care.

## Overview of Responses to Seven Consultation Questions

### What are the ideal conditions for Halton's early learning and child care system?

In order to ensure that the entire system of early learning and child care supports was considered when determining the ideal conditions, the ELCCP Advisory Committee was asked to consider five different levels of the system:

- Agency
- Program
- Staff
- Family
- Child

The committee proposes the following:



### Ideal conditions for ELCC system

- 1 Service providers are connected and seamless
- 2 Programs provide the best supports for children and families
- 3 Staff contribute to the healthy development of children and families
- 4 Families are empowered, informed and key to their child's care
- 5 All children's early learning and care needs are met

## What would these conditions look like if we could see them?

The answers to this question are critical as they represent what people view as the core values of an ideal system. Again, the ELCCP Advisory Committee was given this task with significant assistance from research staff to convert their core values into measurable indicators. Indicators are simply measures of concepts. In total, 23 indicators were developed for this ELCCP. These indicators are described in Table 1 on the next page. A more detailed description of the indicators is available online at [halton.ca/elccp2016](http://halton.ca/elccp2016).

**Table 1: Indicator list**

### A. Service providers are connected and seamless

1. Degree of connectedness within the ELCC System	Service Provider Survey
2. Perceived performance of the ELCC System	Service Provider Survey
3. Provision of policies and practices for effective transitions	Service Provider Survey
4. Awareness of program supports	Service Provider Survey
5. Ease of access of program supports	Service Provider Survey
6. Frequency of use of program supports	Service Provider Survey
7. Impact of program supports	Service Provider Survey

### B. Programs provide the best supports for children and families

8. Organizational family engagement practices	Service Provider Survey
9. Support for professional development	Educator Survey
10. Satisfaction with compensation	Educator Survey
11. Job satisfaction	Educator Survey
12. Commitment to the profession	Educator Survey

### C. Staff make a contribution to the healthy development of children and families

13. Self-efficacy for supporting inclusion	Educator Survey
14. Self-efficacy for program delivery	Educator Survey
15. Self-efficacy for linking families to community programs	Educator Survey
16. Self-efficacy for How Does Learning Happen?	Educator Survey

### D. Families are empowered, informed and key to their child's care

17. Informed decision-making practices	Family Survey
18. Family empowerment	Family Survey
19. Opportunities for family input	Family Survey

### E. All children's early learning and child care needs are met

20. Perceived accessibility of programs	Family Survey
21. Perceived supply of programs	Family Survey
22. Awareness of financial supports	Family Survey
23. Need for child care	Administrative Data

## How can we measure these conditions?

Once the indicators were developed, the committee approved a research plan to collect information on each of the 23 indicators. These indicators were developed and measured in the previous ELCCP. The research conducted in the previous plan sets a baseline for measuring system performance so that on-going progress can be monitored. This plan represents the second cycle of this indicator data. For this plan, three custom surveys were developed to engage service providers, staff and families. In total, 3,357 people participated in these surveys. In the previous plan, 2,437 stakeholders participated in the surveys.

**Table 2: Survey Participants**

Survey	Brief description of participants	Number of surveys completed
Service Provider Survey	All organizations in Halton that provide services to children and families. Only one survey was completed for each organization.	41
Educator Survey	All educators registered in The Halton Resource Connection database	185
OMSSA Municipal Benchmark Poll	Random telephone survey of Halton residents	930
Family Survey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• This survey was distributed to families with children in the junior and senior kindergarten program in schools across Halton.</li><li>• All families involved with the Region's child care fee subsidy program were invited to participate.</li></ul>	2,201
	<b>Total surveys completed</b>	3,357

## How well are we doing?

This section of the report provides the research findings for all 23 of the indicators described in Table 1. In addition, further information, data and detailed research findings are available online at [halton.ca/elccp2016](http://halton.ca/elccp2016).

## How to read the charts

All charts in the ELCCP have been designed for similar interpretation. All data have been formatted to a 0 to 100 scale in which 0 is always the least favourable score and 100 is always the most favourable score. The numbers in the charts represent the average score of all the scores.

# A. Service providers are connected and seamless

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## 1. Degree of connectedness with the ELCC system

This indicator is a composite measure of fourteen items on the service provider survey. The questions range from the degree of sharing of information related to agency supports, opportunities for joint planning, fostering a big picture understanding of the system, minimizing duplication of services, ensuring timely access to information and transitioning of children between agencies.

## 2. Perceived performance of the ELCC system

This indicator includes six items from the Service Provider Survey. The questions include a performance evaluation of how well services in Halton are planned, located, have minimal wait lists, expand when necessary to meet growing needs, meet the needs of children with special needs and keep “red tape” to a minimum.

## 3. Provision of policies and practices for effective transitions

This indicator includes seven items from the Service Provider Survey. These questions inquire about an agency’s presence of written policies specifically for transitioning children, written protocols for staff, opportunity for child and family to visit the new program, availability of service coordination, designated staff specially trained to handle transitions, staff training on how to create successful transitions and arranged meetings with both agencies prior to transition.

## 4. Awareness of program supports

This indicator lists thirteen various program supports that are available to enhance programs. The respondents in the Service Provider Survey were required to indicate if they have ever heard of each of the fourteen supports listed. The supports listed include:

- |                                 |                                      |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1. Quality First                | 8. Mental health supports            |
| 2. THRC                         | 9. Professional learning             |
| 3. Resource Consultants         | 10. Health and safety funding        |
| 4. Behavioural Consultants      | 11. Wage enhancement                 |
| 5. Occupational Therapists      | 12. Child care stabilization funding |
| 6. Support Facilitators         | 13. Centralized intake at THRC       |
| 7. Speech and language supports |                                      |

## 5. Ease of access of program supports

This indicator includes the same fourteen supports that are listed in the previous indicator. The respondent was now asked “How easy are these supports to access?”



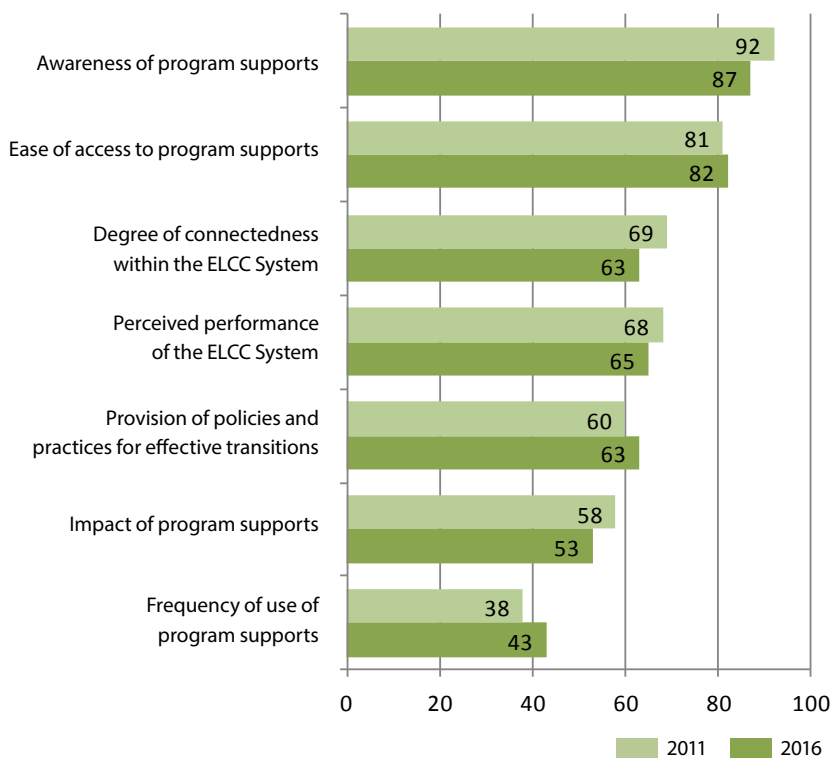
## 6. Frequency of use of program supports

This indicator showed the frequency of use of the program's supports in the past 12 months.

## 7. Impact of programs

This indicator showed how big of an impact thirteen supports had on their program or agency.

**Figure 1 : Average Indicator Scores**



Data Source: Service Provider Survey, 2011 & 2016

### Key findings:

- High awareness of program supports
- High perceived ease of access of program supports
- Moderate degrees of connectedness with the ELCC system
- Moderate perceived performance of the ELCC system
- Moderate provision of policies and practices for transitions
- Moderate perceived impact of program supports
- Low frequency of use of program supports



## B. Programs provide the best supports for children and families

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### 8. Organizational family engagement practices

This indicator includes sixteen items from the Service Provider Survey. The questions ask how well families are provided with information about the program, philosophy, policies and procedures, the extent to which families are included in the planning and decision-making related to the program, the extent to which families receive information on their child, how well families are kept informed of changes, if there are meaningful opportunities for families to raise concerns or make suggestions and if the programs reach out to families to find out more information about their children.

### 9. Support for professional development

This indicator is comprised of three items from the Educator Survey. The questions include:

1. My manager encourages and supports my development;
2. I get the training I need to do my job and;
3. The quality of training and development I have received is good.

### 10. Satisfaction with compensation

This indicator includes six items from the Educator Survey related to the educators beliefs and opinions about their wages and benefits. The questions ask about their sense of fairness about their wages and benefits, if their pay adequately reflects their work, if their benefits and vacation are adequate and if they feel they have a chance to be promoted.

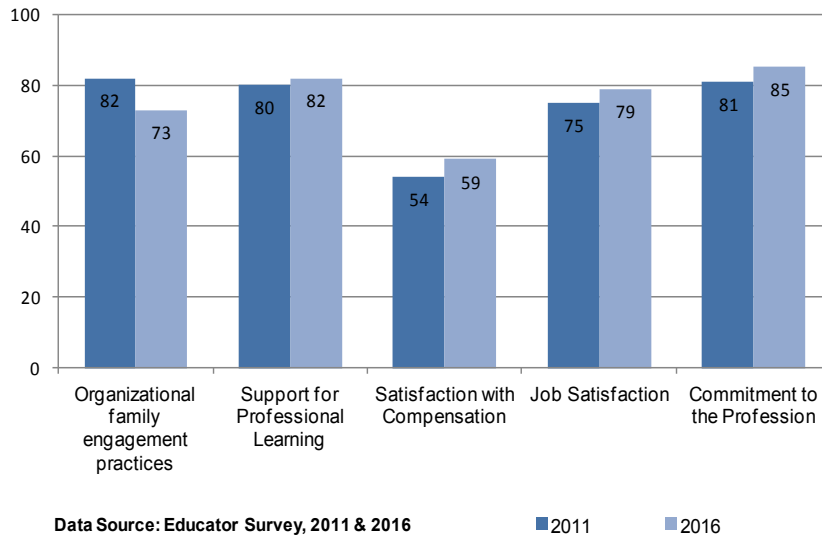
### 11. Job Satisfaction

This indicator includes nine items on the Educator Survey related to elements of job satisfaction. These elements include getting a sense of whether or not they work in a stimulating work environment, that their work is rewarding, that they receive personal satisfaction from a job well done, their sense of control over their job, if they are exhausted and emotionally drained at the end of their day and their sense of frustration with the job.

### 12. Commitment to the profession

This indicator consists of six items from the Educator Survey. The items range from asking if they are glad they chose this profession, their intent on staying in the profession, their interest in the fate of the profession and their interest in improving their skills.

**Figure 2 : Average Indicator Scores**



### Key findings:

- High support for professional learning reported by educators;
- High job satisfaction;
- High commitment to the early education profession;
- Moderate levels of organizational family engagement practices;
- Moderate levels of satisfaction with compensation (salary and benefits);
- Moderate levels of structural family engagement practices at an organizational level;



## The Service Provider Perspective:



## What we heard from school-age child care providers and municipal recreation providers

For this plan, focus groups were held with child care operators of school age child care programs and with recreation providers. The results of these focus groups reveal numerous and consistent issues related to the operations of child care and recreation within schools. These issues are not new, nor unique to Halton. The list of issues includes the cost of renting school space (particularly for summer care), inconsistent communication between schools and programs, inconsistent practice between schools, inconsistent relationships between schools and programs and lack of a consistent culture and belief that schools and community programs are serving the same children.

## The Family Perspective:



## What we heard from families and children that use school-age child care programs

- **Programs are not always available when parents need them:**  
For example, during the last week of summer it can be difficult to find licensed school age programs in schools, and schedules of some summer programs may not work for parents that are employed.
- **Some of the programs parents are looking for are not available:**  
Programs named by parents that are not available include: drama groups, arts and crafts, and other programs for children four to six years of age (some parents say it seems more programs are available for children aged six and older), math programs and flexible, part time after school care (if there are spots available it is for certain days only, i.e., M/W/F or T/TH).
- **Finding school age programs (especially for summer) that take children of different ages can be challenging:**  
Some parents report that it is hard to find information on summer camps when you have children of different ages. Parents also note that they have to send children to two different programs due to the ages of their children. Some parents would prefer to have the camps go by grade versus age limitations.
- **The cost of school age programs can be a factor:**  
Having subsidy available for all after school programs was identified as a way to help with the cost/affordability of after school programs. Some parents expressed concern that their children only attend after school programs for half an hour but are charged the full rate.
- **It is difficult to find information about school age programs and challenging to coordinate if you are registering for multiple programs:**  
It is hard to find links to all of the after school programs online and parents want access to more detailed information about the programs themselves (e.g., schedule, environment). Coordinating the different after school programs and busing is also challenging for some parents.
- **Not all school age programs are located in a convenient place for parents:**  
Some parents in Georgetown and Oakville reported that the community is large, resulting in a fair amount of driving to get to specific programs.

## The Child Perspective:



## What we heard from the school-age child

Children drew pictures of what they would like to have in after school programs and, if able, provided a written description of their picture. Four key themes emerged from this activity and are listed in order of priority below. Overall, children would like specific activities to be added to school-age child care programs (e.g., dodgeball), and would like some new amenities to be available (e.g., swimming pool).



### Activities (47.3 per cent of children):

Children would like additional activities to be offered at after school programs. Activities that were named include: dodgeball, kite flying, video games, trips, gymnastics, movies, swimming, being allowed to stay inside and to complete homework.



### Amenities/equipment (25.5 per cent of children):

Children would like new amenities/equipment to be available for after school programs. These include: baseball equipment, soccer field, swimming pool, sprinklers, pet rabbits and toys.



### Food (14.5 per cent of children):

Children would like more “junk” food to be available at after school programs. Their food suggestions include: juice, other than apple juice, pizza, candy, popsicles and ice cream treats.



### Electronics (12.7 per cent of children):

Children would like to be able to use electronics (e.g., phone, internet) and play video games at after school programs.



## C. Staff contribute to the healthy development of children and families

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### 13. Self-efficacy to support inclusion

This indicator included five items from the Educator Survey. These items asked about the educator's confidence to support children with special needs, children who are newcomers to Canada, children who do not speak English, children from diverse cultural, religious or ethnic backgrounds and children from lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender families.

### 14. Self-efficacy for program delivery

This indicator is comprised of nine items from the Educator Survey. The items range from asking educators how confident they are in nurturing the development of children, evaluating their programs, adapting programs to unique settings and situations, working effectively with other professionals, communicating effectively with families, communicating with co-workers and feeling confident that they can do their work.

### 15. Self-efficacy for linking families to community supports

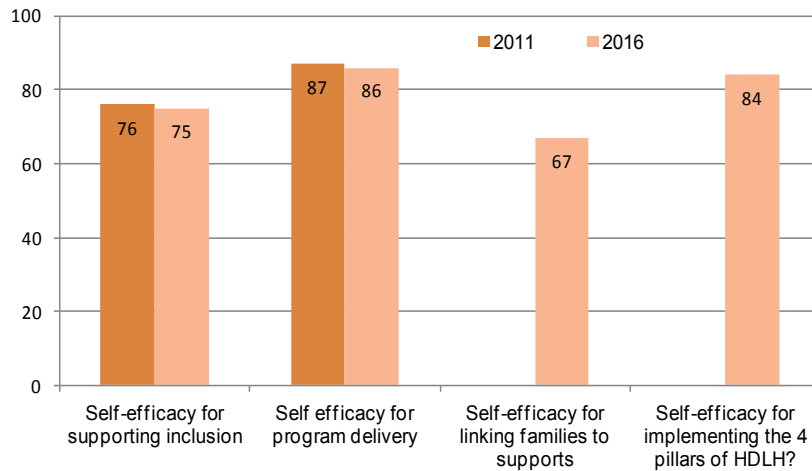
This indicator includes four items from the Educator Survey. These items inquire about an educator's confidence to link families to community supports for parenting, services for children, developmental concerns and mental health.

### 16. Self-efficacy to implement *How Does Learning Happen?* – Ontario Pedagogy for the Early Years

This indicator includes a series of sixteen items that ask about an educator's confidence to implement the four pillars of learning described in the province's *How Does Learning Happen?*. The series of items ask about belonging, well-being, engagement and expression. In addition, these same questions are repeated for children, families, colleagues and community. For example, "How confident do you feel in creating a sense of belonging for children?" Please refer to Appendix A for more detailed information about *How Does Learning Happen?*.



**Figure 3 : Average Indicator Scores**



Data Source: Educator Survey, 2011 & 2016

### Key findings:

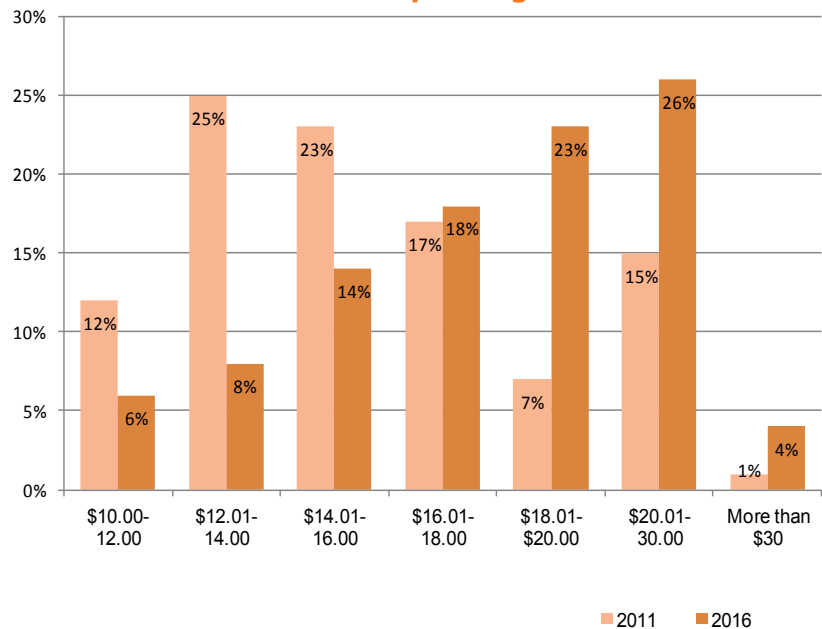
- High ability and competency of staff
- Moderate levels of self-efficacy to link families to community supports



### Wages – a key enabler of quality

Low wages of educators working in child care programs has been a chronic problem for years. The results from Figure 4 show significant improvements in wages over the past five years. This is mostly due to provincial policy changes that have focused on wage enhancements for educators.

**Figure 4 : Halton ECE Hourly Salary including General Operating Grant**



Data Source: Educator Survey, 2011 & 2016

## D. Families are empowered, informed and key to their child's care

### 17. Informed decision-making practices

This indicator consists of five items asked in the Family Survey. These items tap into the families' behaviours when selecting a program for their child. This includes asking if they learned about what makes a good quality program, if they used a database or directory to find information about available programs, whether they talked to others to find information, whether they had an in-depth visit with interested programs and whether they asked other users about the program.

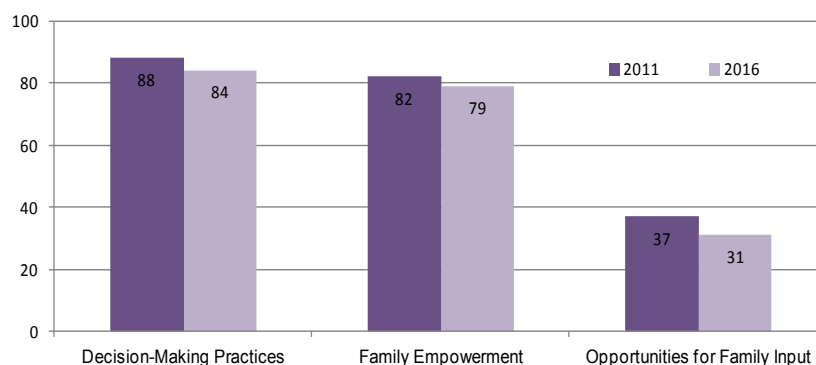
### 18. Family empowerment

This indicator consists of six items from the Family Survey. These items ask about their understanding of their child's program, their own sense of being able to make a good decision about what their child needs, the extent to which they feel they have a right to approve decisions made about their child, the extent to which their own knowledge and experience can help improve the program, their ability to make sure staff understands their child's needs and their ability to speak to staff about the program.

### 19. Opportunities for family input

This indicator consists of one item from the Family Survey. Families are asked if their child's program provides opportunities for family members to be on committees or other groups that make decisions about the program's policies and operations.

**Figure 5 : Average Indicator Scores**



Data Source: Family Survey, 2011 & 2016

#### Key findings:

- High sense of empowerment by families
- High knowledge within families on how to choose quality programs
- Low parental involvement in programs



## What is stressing families?

(Data source: OMSSA Benchmark Poll, 2016)



## E. All children's early learning and care needs are met

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### 20. Perceived accessibility of programs

This indicator includes four items from the Family Survey. These items ask families about their perceptions that child care programs are 1. Too far from my home; 2. Transportation is a problem; 3. Costs prevent me from getting the care I want and; 4. I have trouble communicating with staff because of language difficulties.

### 21. Perceived supply of programs

This indicator consists of six items from the Family Survey. These items include:

1. I have difficulty finding the program I want;
2. There are good choices for child care where I live;
3. In choosing programs, I have to take whatever I can get;
4. I cannot access programs because of wait lists;
5. I found a program that shares my values and;
6. I found a program that was sensitive to my cultural beliefs and values.

### 22. Awareness of financial supports

This indicator consists of one item from the Family Survey. The item is "Are you aware that there is financial assistance available to Halton families that qualify to help pay for the cost of child care?"

### 23. Need for licensed child care

This indicator uses a formula to calculate need for licensed child care. The formula considers the current supply and demand for child care. Supply is measured as simple counts of child care spaces. Demand is calculated using labour force participation by females, an estimate of the use of unlicensed child care and of licensed child care. These rates are collected from parent reports in the Kindergarten Parent Survey (KPS).





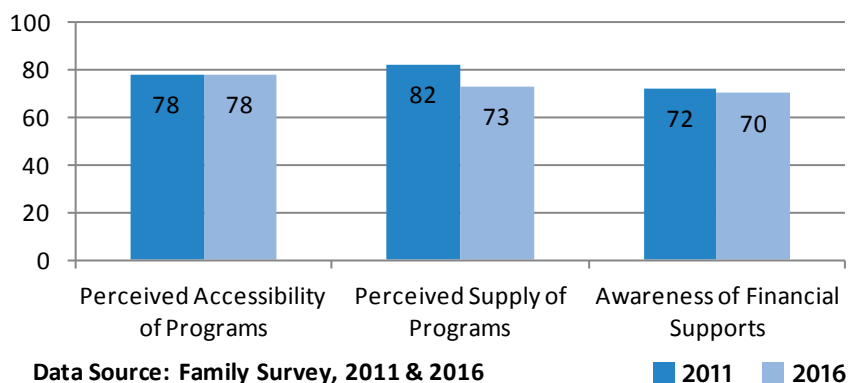


**Figure 6:**

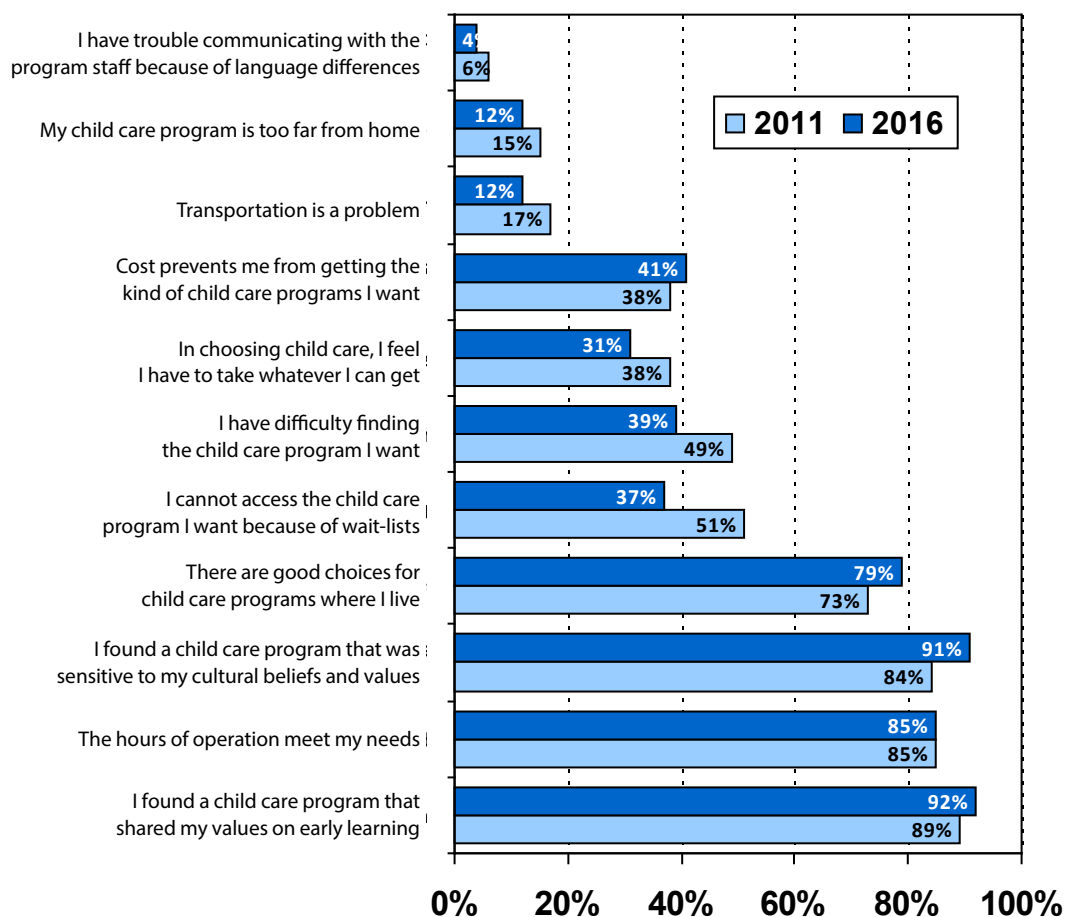
Average indicator scores show that families are reporting high levels of accessibility to programs. This means that they perceive programs are easy to access, affordable and culturally appropriate for their family. Families are also reporting high levels of supply which suggests that they are not experiencing large wait times for service or difficulty finding programs but sufficient choice that satisfies their values and beliefs.

Information on wait lists from service providers suggest the opposite is found and there are significant wait times in some areas of Halton. Figure 7 provides more detailed findings on families' perception of children's programs in Halton.

**Figure 6 : Average Indicator Scores**



**Figure 7 : Percent of families who report agreement with the statement**



# Need for licensed child care

- Infant, toddler and preschool care will continue to be in demand in Halton
- Demand for preschool spaces has increased by 15 per cent since 2009
- The greatest number of additional spaces will be needed in school age care

Table 3 below provides a description of the projected demand for licensed child care up to the year 2020. To estimate the current and projected future need for child care, a number of assumptions were made about annual growth in supply and annual growth in the number of children in need of licensed care. A positive number represents a surplus in spaces while a negative number will show space shortages.

The Ontario Ministry of Finance predicts a modest increase in the number of children under the age of 12 each year between 2016 and 2020. While this trend will result in the need for an expansion of child care spaces of all types, the forecast shows that in order to keep up with growth, Halton will need to increase child care supply by two per cent each year until 2020. This figure is based on both Ministry of Finance population projections for children aged 44 to 72 months (3.8-6 years) and past trends in preschool spaces locally over the last five years. Further data related to population counts are available in Appendix B and Appendix C.

**Table 3: Supply and demand analysis for licensed child care, 2016**

Types of Licensed Child Care Space	Total Number of Children <sup>a</sup>	Number of Children who will need a Licensed Child Care Space	Actual Number of Licensed Spaces <sup>h</sup>	Space Surplus/ Shortage <sup>i</sup> 2016	Projected Space Surplus/ Shortage <sup>j</sup> 2020
Infant	3,257	694 <sup>b</sup>	776	+82	+100
Toddler	6,514	2,457 <sup>c</sup>	2,632	+175	+232
Preschool	8,142	3,939 <sup>d</sup>	6,142	+2,203	+2,452
Full-day Kindergarten	13,645	575 <sup>e</sup>	575	0	+38
B/AS Kindergarten**		5,499 <sup>f</sup>	5,499	0	+221
School-Age***	53,580	9,733 <sup>g</sup>	9,733	0	+496
<b>Total</b>	<b>98,784</b>	<b>22,898</b>	<b>25,357</b>	<b>+2,459</b>	<b>+3,539</b>

\*\* Before and After school spaces for 4 & 5-year olds

\*\*\* Before and After school spaces for 6-12-yr olds

<sup>a</sup> Represents a surplus in spaces

- Represents a shortage of spaces

<sup>a</sup> Ministry of Finance population projections. Spring 2016

<sup>b</sup> Number is based on an 82% female Labour Force Participation Rate. Demand is further calculated based on a 26% demand for licensed infant spaces.

<sup>c</sup> Number is based on an 82% female Labour Force Participation Rate. Demand is further calculated based on a 46% demand for licensed toddler spaces.

<sup>d</sup> Number is based on an 82% female Labour Force Participation Rate. Demand is further calculated based on a 59% demand for licensed preschool spaces.

<sup>e</sup> Number is based on an 82% female Labour Force Participation Rate. Demand is further calculated based on a 5% demand for licensed full-day kindergarten spaces.

<sup>f</sup> Number is based on an 82% female Labour Force Participation Rate. Demand is further calculated based on a 49% demand for licensed Before and After school kindergarten spaces.

<sup>g</sup> Number is based on an 82% female Labour Force Participation Rate. Demand is further calculated based on a 22% demand for licensed school-age spaces.

<sup>h</sup> Number of licensed child care spaces as of June 2016. Private Home Day Care spaces are not included.

<sup>i</sup> Number of licensed child care spaces (supply) minus the number of children in need of a licensed care (demand).

<sup>j</sup> To project space surplus or shortage in 2020, an assumption of 2% annual growth in supply of spaces is made. To project demand in 2020, a 2% annual growth in the number of children in the need of licensed care is used.

# Projected need for licensed child care

Table 4 shows the projected need for licensed child care spaces by municipality. These estimates are calculated using the same ratios used to calculate overall demand. Nursery and private home child care spaces are not included in the calculation for space needs.

Determining where licensed child care spaces are needed and having an accurate picture of the type of spaces most in demand are essential components necessary to building a child care system using a systematic approach. Table 4 provides a picture of the estimated shortfall or surplus in licensed child care spaces by type and municipality for the year 2020. Future demand is calculated with the assumption that the rate of utilization of non-parental child care will remain constant between 2016 and 2020. A positive number represents a surplus in spaces while a negative number will show space shortages.

These projections show a higher need for additional spaces in Milton, which continues to be reflective of the population change in this community, but there is some need in Acton. These space projections do not consider the potential for surplus spaces to be converted to accommodate different age groups where there are identified shortages. It also does not take into account the finding that parents who are currently using unlicensed care would likely choose licensed care, if it were available, affordable and accessible.

Forty per cent of Halton's licensed child care is programming for children under three years and eight months. Given the upsurge in family preferences for licensed care in a centre, as identified through the 2015 Kindergarten Parent Survey, a large number of female workers expected to enter or return to the workforce, and a continued awareness about the importance of early childhood education and development, it is highly likely that any surplus in infant, toddler and preschool spaces will continue to be filled.

**Table 4: Supply and demand analysis of projected child care space need by municipality, 2020**

Child Care space type	Halton	Oakville	Burlington	Milton	Georgetown	Acton
Infant (0 - 18 months)	+100	+94	+67	-50	-7	-4
Toddler (18 - 30 months)	+232	+364	+165	-279	+2	-21
Preschool (30 months - 3.8 years)	+2,452	+1,433	+958	+43	+50	-32
Full-day Kindergarten (3.8 - 5.8 years)	+38	+58	-3	-74	+46	+10
B/AS Kindergarten (3.8 - 5.8 years)	+221	+414	+2	-154	+9	-50
School-Age (6 - 12 years)	+496	+1,137	-203	-427	+76	-88
<b>Total</b>	<b>+3,539</b>	<b>+3,501</b>	<b>+986</b>	<b>-940</b>	<b>+175</b>	<b>-185</b>

\* represents a projected surplus

\* represents a projected shortage

# Projected need for child care fee subsidy

Table 5 shows a profile of the distribution of fee subsidy for 2016 in Halton. Currently, there are 2,326 spaces for fee subsidy which costs about \$18 million to support. About three per cent of children aged 0-12 years are in receipt of fee subsidy.

**Table 5: Number of licensed subsidized child care spaces**

	2016	2020
Number of fee subsidy spaces	2,326*	2,498
Number of children aged 0 - 12 years	91,653	96,071
Percentage of children aged 0 - 12 years in receipt of fee subsidy	2.6%	2.6%

\*Please note that multiple children could occupy one space depending on subsidy need and type of care

\*\*For an explanation for how the projected need was calculated, refer to Appendix D

## Conclusion

The ELCCP lays a strong foundation for identifying the key components of a quality early learning and child care system. It also provides extensive information and research built from a robust collection of stakeholder knowledge, experiences and ideas. While many parts of the system are working well, there are challenges that need to be addressed. The following Recommendations and Actions support the findings.



# Recommendations

## 1. Supporting families



### Key research findings:

- Families are having difficulty navigating through the complexities to access and register for individual services. Families expect better digital technologies.
- Families would like to have more program variety in their school-age child care options.
- Managing the cost of care is the most stressful issue for families that use child care programs.
- It is still evident from the Early Development Instrument (EDI) scores that children are arriving to unidentified needs. In the research conducted, it was clear that there is a need to improve early identification processes, build awareness of the programs and supports available to families, and to build confidence levels of front line child care staff to refer families appropriately.

## Recommendations and actions

1. Develop digital strategies and marketing plan	Completion Year
• Develop a broad digital technology strategy that aligns with Halton Region's corporate strategy for connecting with residents.	2018
• Develop a significant marketing campaign to build awareness of Halton iparent which is a Halton website dedicated for the sharing of information on program and services for families with children of all ages.	2017
• Provide the necessary supports to shift parents from using unlicensed child care to licensed child care programs.	Ongoing
2. Explore innovation in child care programs	Completion Year
• Pilot test an alternative, innovative and inclusive model at the neighbourhood level for out-of-school time that incorporates recreation programs and a variety of neighborhood supports such as licensed home child care, licensed child care, OEYC, local schools and colleges, etc.	2019
3. Promote early identification of children	Completion Year
• Provide service providers and physicians with more enhanced training/support for identifying needs and equip them with tools like the Nipissing screening tool to help in this process.	Ongoing
• Conduct research to better understand the underlying reasons why children are not identified with needs prior to school entry and why the available services/supports were not utilised.	2017

## 2. Supporting early learning & child care programs



### Key research findings:

- Awareness of available program supports for child care programs is high according to the research, but use and utility of the supports need attention. From the research conducted for this plan, the factors related to poor uptake and utility are not identifiable.
- The research showed that the number of Registered Early Childhood Educators (RECE) per child care room is lower than in previous years. This was likely due to the loss of RECEs in child care programs to the Full Day Kindergarten (FDK). Higher wages and benefits are strong incentives for RECEs to move from the child care sector to the FDK program.
- Educators are showing high job satisfaction, high commitment to the profession and high belief in themselves to perform their job well. Educators expressed challenges related to limited confidence in their ability to connect families to community supports and to effectively implement aspects of the new CCEYA and the provincial pedagogy, *How Does Learning Happen?*
- The new CCEYA includes significant changes to licensed child care programs, recreation and the role of the CMSM. As service providers are transitioning, enhanced supports may be required.
- Child care planning for growth in the system needs to be more purposeful and in conjunction with the Ministry of Education (EDU) Child Care Quality Assurance and Licensing Branch to better meet local needs.
- Operational issues continue to exist for operators of school-based programs related to the sharing of and type of space within schools.



## Recommendations and actions

1. Provide leadership and support to increase the quality of programs	Completion Year
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conduct research to understand and identify factors that are contributing to poor use and impact of supports for early years and child care programs and develop strategies to make improvements. This should include intensive consultation with the end users (both Senior staff and front line) of these supports. This would build on the leadership strategies already taking place through THRC.</li> </ul>	2018
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide leadership and resources to support better understanding of the new legislation (CCEYA).</li> </ul>	Ongoing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work with the local community colleges to continue to support the implementation of How Does Learning Happen? into the curriculum and college placements. This could include collaborating between local colleges and service providers to design and deliver new and innovative college placements that focus on How Does Learning Happen?</li> </ul>	2017
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to support the ELCC community to implement How Does Learning Happen? and make connections between the theory and practice. This would be inclusive of any service providers working with families and children.</li> </ul>	Ongoing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Advocate for increased Provincial investment of Wage Enhancement Grant to increase salaries for Registered Early Childhood Educators.</li> </ul>	2017
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Further enhance community program staff's understanding of the system of supports for children and families.</li> </ul>	Ongoing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explore the potential for a centralized child care RECE supply list which could include collaboration with school boards.</li> </ul>	2020
2. Further develop the role of the service system managers (CMSM)	Completion Year
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Advocate to the provincial Ministry of Education that they consult with local CMSMs to ensure child care need prior to issuing new child care licenses.</li> </ul>	2017
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The CMSM will work with the Ministry of Education and school boards to establish capital priorities for new/modified programs. The Region's existing ELCC investment priorities may be leveraged to support system growth and/or enhancement.</li> </ul>	2020
3. Develop a collaborative approach on school usage	Completion Year
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop a collaborative approach on school usage with community partners through a consistent culture of partnership at the local school level and an increased awareness and understanding of the existing reciprocal agreements.</li> </ul>	2017
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improve community collaboration and partnerships by building a networking table that brings child care, recreation partners and school boards together to build relationships, identify potential partnering opportunities and share best practices between sectors.</li> </ul>	2017



### 3. Supporting children with differing abilities



#### Key research findings:

- *There are challenges and issues with transition to school between community programs and schools.*
- *Children with differing abilities are still having some difficulty participating in community programs. A particular challenge highlighted was that families fail to disclose the needs of their child.*

### Recommendations and actions

1. Ensure effective transitions for children	Completion Year
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Continue to provide seamless transition to school for children by building better partnerships between community providers and schools, developing policies where needed that remove potential barriers to sharing of information and ensuring that children are not left without service.</li></ul>	Ongoing
2. Through marketing and education build better awareness of supports and promote information sharing	Completion Year
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Build better awareness of the expert supports that are available to community programs to help them better support children with special needs.</li></ul>	Ongoing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Build better awareness by families of the existing supports for children for special needs that are available in child care and recreation programs.</li></ul>	2018
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Develop a collaborative strategy to identify contracted licensed homes that can provide the best support to children with special needs.</li></ul>	2018

# Who are the lead agencies for implementing the recommendations?

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<b>Halton Region</b>	Halton Region, Consolidated Municipal Service Manager for Children's Services - offers a variety of services and programs, including service co-ordination through Child Care Services, Children's Developmental Services, Community Development Services, Directly operated Child Care Centres, Program Support Services.
<b>EduCare</b>	EduCare Partnership Committee– a community-based committee of all school-based child care program providers, CMSM and school boards.
<b>HDSB</b>	Halton District School Board – Operates 81 elementary schools and 17 high schools serving nearly 57,000 public school students.
<b>HCDSB</b>	Halton Catholic District School Board – Operates 41 elementary schools, 8 secondary schools and 3 continuing education facilities serving over 29,000 students.
<b>MCRC</b>	Milton Community Resource Centre – A non-profit, multi-service organization that provides services to children and families in Milton and surrounding communities.
<b>OK-EY</b>	Our Kids Network – Early Years Committee – Halton's community collaborative committee for children aged 0 to 6 years. This committee has been in existence for over 20 years and has wide community agency representation.
<b>Partners</b>	OKN Community Partners – Halton's community collaborative committee for children with differing abilities aged prenatal to 6 years.
<b>Sheridan</b>	Sheridan College – A post-secondary institution providing a number of educational programs related to early childhood education. Sheridan serves close to 17,000 full-time students in campuses in Oakville, Brampton and Mississauga.
<b>THRC</b>	The Halton Resource Connection - Works in partnership with individuals and organizations who serve the interests of children and youth within the Halton community, providing curriculum resources, services, equipment, and professional development which enhance the quality of care.



# APPENDIX A

## *How Does Learning Happen? Ontario's Pedagogy for the Early Years*

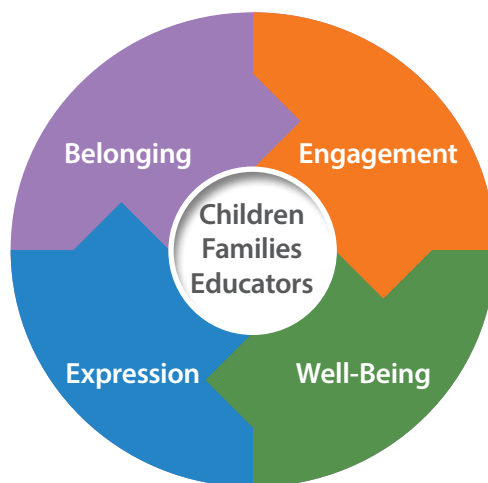
In 2014 the Ontario government released its new pedagogy<sup>1</sup> in order to improve educator practice. This pedagogy is a first for Ontario and represents new standards of professional practice for educators. Pedagogy is “the understanding of how learning takes place and the philosophy and practice that support that understanding of learning”.<sup>2</sup> Curriculum (the content of learning) and pedagogy (how learning happens) in early years settings are shaped by the view of the child, the role of educators and families, and relationships among them. At the core of *How Does Learning Happen?* are the four foundational conditions that are important for children to grow and flourish. The four foundations are belonging, well-being, engagement and expression.

**Belonging** refers to a sense of connectedness to others, an individual’s experiences of being valued, of forming relationships with others and making contributions as part of a group, a community or the natural world.

**Well-being** addresses the importance of physical and mental health and wellness. It incorporates capacities such as selfcare, sense of self, and self-regulation skills.

**Engagement** suggests a state of being involved and focused. When children are able to explore the world around them with their natural curiosity and exuberance, they are fully engaged. Through this type of play and inquiry, they develop skills such as problem solving, creative thinking, and innovating, which are essential for learning and success in school and beyond.

**Expression** or communication (to be heard, as well as to listen) may take many different forms. Through their bodies, words, and use of materials, children develop capacities for increasingly complex communication. Opportunities to explore materials support creativity, problem solving, and mathematical behaviours. Language-rich environments support growing communication skills, which are foundational for literacy.



Most people will agree that implementation of *How Does Learning Happen?* is a journey not a destination. *How Does Learning Happen?* is not a checklist or a prescribed approach to learning. *How Does Learning Happen?* describes effective practices and emphasizes positive relationships as critical for quality early years programs. It is meant to promote deeper reflection on how to create places and experiences where children, families, and educators explore, question and learn together.

<sup>1</sup> *How Does Learning Happen? Ontario's Pedagogy for the Early Years*. Ministry of Education, Ontario, 2014.

<sup>2</sup> *Early Learning for Every Child Today: A Framework for Ontario Early Childhood Settings* (Ministry of Education, Ontario, 2007), p. 90.

## Implementation of *How Does Learning Happen?* in Halton

Through consultation with child care operators and managers, it is evident that the implementation of *How Does Learning Happen?* is one of the major operational challenges facing child care programs today. It will take considerable effort to shift current beliefs and practices to align with the mechanisms of learning described in *How Does Learning Happen?* Educators reported high levels of certainty that they can support the four pillars of learning as described in *How Does Learning Happen?* (Belonging, Well-being, Engagement and Expression). Table 6 shows that 67 per cent of educators feel very confident that they create a sense of belonging for children. Educators feel least confident in creating a sense of expression for children. Table 6 also shows that confidence is highest for supporting children and decreases when asked about families, colleagues and community. This is true for all the pillars.

**Table 6: Per cent of educators reported “very confident” in providing a sense of belonging, well-being, engagement and expression for children, families, colleagues and community**

	Belonging	Well-being	Engagement	Expression
Children	67%	67%	61%	59%
Families	53%	51%	47%	42%
Colleagues	48%	44%	45%	42%
Community	29%	27%	25%	24%

When operators and managers of child care programs were shown the data in Table 6, only six per cent agreed that these results are definitely reflective of what they were observing or hearing. Thirty-seven per cent of the 73 respondents felt that the results were over-stated. Ninety per cent of the program operators felt that educators were either somewhat confident or not at all confident in their practice of *How Does Learning Happen?*. Eighty-six per cent of operators feel that extra effort and supports are needed to improve practice of *How Does Learning Happen?*.



# APPENDIX B

## Profile of licensed child care spaces in Halton

Since the introduction of full-day kindergarten in 2010, the number of licensed spaces has increased across the province with the addition of 86,000 spaces. Much progress has been made in the past five years in Halton. In terms of licensed spaces, there were 15,395 licensed child care centre spaces in 2011 compared to 25,357 spaces in December 2015. This is an increase of 9,962 spaces or a 65 per cent increase in spaces in the last five years.

The number of child care spaces relative to the population of children under the age of 12 has steadily improved over the last six years. The ratio of number of spaces per 100 children in the 0-12 age group is up 53 per cent, increasing from 19 spaces per 100 children in 2010 to 29 spaces per 100 children in 2016.

**Table 7: Spaces in licensed child care**

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Total spaces in licensed child care centres, nursery schools and private homes <sup>1</sup>	15,453	16,570	17,614	19,677	21,752	24,054	26,407
Number of spaces in child care centres (including nursery school spaces)	14,278	15,395	16,439	18,627	20,702	23,004	25,357
Number of spaces in private home child care	1,175	1,175	1,175	1,050	1,050	1,050	1,050
Number of children under 12 years <sup>2</sup>	83,058	84,962	85,290	88,319	89,183	90,534	91,653
Number of spaces per 100 children	19	20	21	22	24	27	29

<sup>1</sup> Ontario Municipal Management System, June 2010 & June 2016

<sup>2</sup> Ontario Ministry of Finance population projections, Spring 2016

## Types of licensed child care spaces

- In the past five years, the number of licensed child care spaces in non-profit programs has steadily increased.

In 2010, non-profit child care centres represented 50 per cent of the child care system. Child care spaces in this sector have grown steadily and now make up 65 per cent of all licensed child care spaces in Halton. Provincially, 77 per cent of child care program spaces are non-profit.

**Table 8: Availability of licensed child care (June, 2016)**

<b>82,165</b>	Total Halton population children aged 0-12 years
<b>35,034</b>	Children aged 0-6 years (Ministry of Finance Projections, 2017)
<b>47,131</b>	Children aged 6-12 years (Ministry of Finance Projections, 2017)
<b>295</b>	Licensed child care centres
<b>24,656</b>	Licensed full-day centre-based child care spaces
<b>701</b>	Licensed nursery school spaces
<b>8,809</b>	Licensed full-day spaces for children 0-3.8 years
<b>15,847</b>	Licensed school-age spaces for children 3.8-12 years
<b>6,121</b>	Before and afterschool extended day spaces for 4 & 5 year olds
<b>9,726</b>	Before and afterschool extended day spaces for 6-12 year olds
<b>821</b>	Licensed spaces in centres providing programming in French
<b>Licensed home child care (previously private home day care)</b>	
<b>1,050</b>	Licensed private home child care spaces
<b>8</b>	Number of private home child care agencies in Halton
<b>5</b>	Non-profit agencies
<b>3</b>	Commercial agencies
<b>191</b>	Number of private homes associated with a licensed agency
<b>6,962</b>	Number of private homes in Ontario
<b>Unlicensed child care</b>	
<b>20%</b>	Families who prefer unlicensed programs (KPS 2015)
<b>12,721</b>	Estimated number of children in unlicensed programs

## Services in child care

- A growing number of families are accessing financial supports each year
- Support for children with special needs is growing

Fee Subsidy	
102	Contractual Child Care Service Management Agreements
2,326	Fee subsidy spaces
172	Children on the wait list for child care subsidy (includes children who qualify but may be waiting for a specific program or have a later start date)
Support for Children With Special Needs	
854	Children with special needs receiving service (Inclusion)
58	Children with special needs who are new to service (waiting for service)

## Average cost of child care in Halton

- In general, child care becomes more affordable and more available as children get older, with infant care (for children under 18 months) much more expensive than care for preschoolers aged three to five.

Halton has one of the higher centre-based child care space costs in the province. The annual child care cost per subsidized child care space in 2015 was \$7,175. (Ontario Benchmarking Index, 2015)

Table 9: Average cost of licensed child care in Halton (June, 2016)	
\$64.60	Average daily rate for an infant space (0-18 months)
\$52.54	Average daily rate for a toddler space (19-30 months)
\$48.00	Average daily rate for a preschool space (2.5 years-3.8 years)
\$22.20	Average daily rate for a before and after school space (3.8-12 years)
\$16,861	Average yearly rate (261 days) for an infant space (0-18 months)
\$13,713	Average yearly rate (261 days) for a toddler space (19-30 months)
\$12,528	Average yearly rate (261 days) for a preschool space (2.5 years- 3.8 years)
\$4,174	Average yearly rate (188 days) for a before and after school space (3.8 to 12 years)



# APPENDIX C

## Population count and licensed spaces by municipality

- The population counts are based on Ministry of Finance Projections for 2016
- From 2016 to 2020, the overall growth in the Region for children 0-12 is expected to be 4,418 or about 4 per cent from the 91,653 in 2016

**Table 10: Population count by child care space type and municipality (June, 2016)**

Child care space type	Halton (100%)	Oakville (30%)	Burlington (30%)	Milton (30%)	Georgetown (8%)	Acton (2%)
Infant (0-18 months)	9,771	2,931	2,931	2,931	782	195
Toddler (19-30 months)	6,514	1,954	1,954	1,954	521	130
Preschool (30 months-3.8 years)	8,142	2,443	2,443	2,443	651	163
Kindergarten (3.8-5.8 years)	13,645	4,094	4,094	4,094	1,092	273
School-age (5-8 years)	53,580	16,074	16,074	16,074	4,286	1,072
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>91,653</b>	<b>27,496</b>	<b>27,496</b>	<b>27,496</b>	<b>7,332</b>	<b>1,833</b>

**Table 11: Licensed spaces by municipality (June, 2016)**

Child care space type	Halton	Oakville	Burlington	Milton	Georgetown	Acton
Infant (0-18 months)	776	292	267	159	48	10
Toddler (19-30 months)	2,582	1,022	878	468	185	29
Preschool (30 months-3.8 years)	5,543	2,220	1,804	1,139	332	48
Kindergarten (3.8-5.8 years)	6,029	2,164	1,727	1,540	518	80
School-age (5.8-8 years)	9,726	3,840	2,602	2,365	814	105
Nursery school	701	307	266	94	34	0
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>25,357</b>	<b>9,845</b>	<b>7,544</b>	<b>5,765</b>	<b>1,931</b>	<b>272</b>
Private home spaces	1,050	250	300	375	125	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>26,407</b>	<b>10,095</b>	<b>7,844</b>	<b>6,140</b>	<b>2,056</b>	<b>272</b>

## Need for licensed child care spaces by municipality

The table below shows the current need for licensed child care spaces by municipality. These estimates are calculated using the same ratios used to calculate overall demand. Nursery and private home child care spaces are not included in the calculation for space needs.

While the data shows that we currently have a surplus in licensed child care spaces overall across the region, there may be significant differences among Halton neighbourhoods in terms of demand for child care. For example, some areas may have fewer families where both parents work or parents who work but might rely on nannies or family members to care for their child, which effectively lowers the demand for preschool spaces. It is also important to recognize that families travel to other parts of Halton to access child care services as some neighbourhoods may have surplus child care spaces or some areas are better served than others. The table below provides an indication of how different areas in Halton compare with each other in terms of demand for and supply of child care.

**Table 12: Supply and demand analysis of current inventory of child care spaces by municipality (June, 2016)**

Child care space type	Halton	Oakville	Burlington	Milton	Georgetown	Acton
Infant (0-18 months)	+82	+84	+59	-49	-8	-4
Toddler (19-30 months)	+175	+325	+141	-269	-2	-20
Preschool (30 months-3.8 years)	+2,203	+1,305	+866	+21	+41	-31
Full-day Kindergarten (3.8-5.8 years)	+16	+48	-9	-74	+41	+9
B/AS Kindergarten (3.8-5.8 years)	+16	+326	-55	-199	-7	-50
School-age (5.8-12 years)	+90	+940	-298	-505	+41	-88
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>+2,581</b>	<b>+3,028</b>	<b>+704</b>	<b>-1,075</b>	<b>+107</b>	<b>-184</b>

\* Represents a surplus in spaces

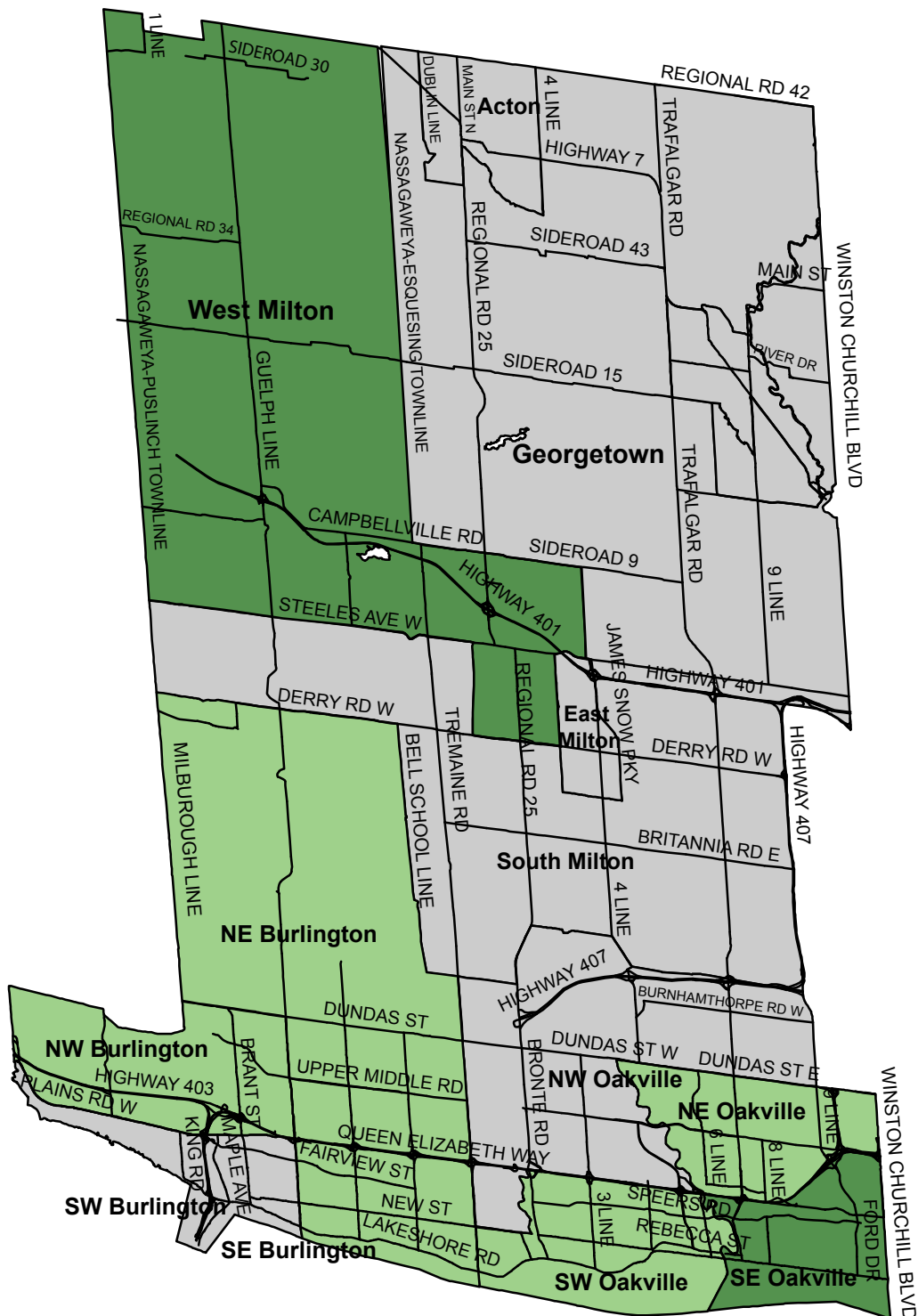
\* Represents a shortage of spaces

- In comparison to other municipalities, Milton is particularly short in toddler and school-age care. Acton also shows a small shortage of spaces.
- In 2016, there were 9,962 more licensed child care spaces than in 2011 for families to access. This number compensates for some of the shortage in 2011 of 2,300 spaces, plus a further estimated 3,000 spaces by 2015. However, demand for infant, toddler and preschool spaces grew, translating into more children needing care than anticipated. This increase in demand may explain the shortfall of some spaces in specific areas.
- Some neighbourhoods may be saturated with child care spaces where a growth community with young children will have a shortfall.
- Any new elementary school capital builds being proposed in child growth areas in Halton Region should be highly considered for child care development to ensure seamless child care opportunities for families and children.

Comparing demand data (child care utilization rates) with the current supply of licensed child care spaces allows us to estimate whether an area is operating in excess or shortage of licensed child care spaces. Maps 1, 2 and 3 provide a detailed look at the child care market saturation levels across Halton.

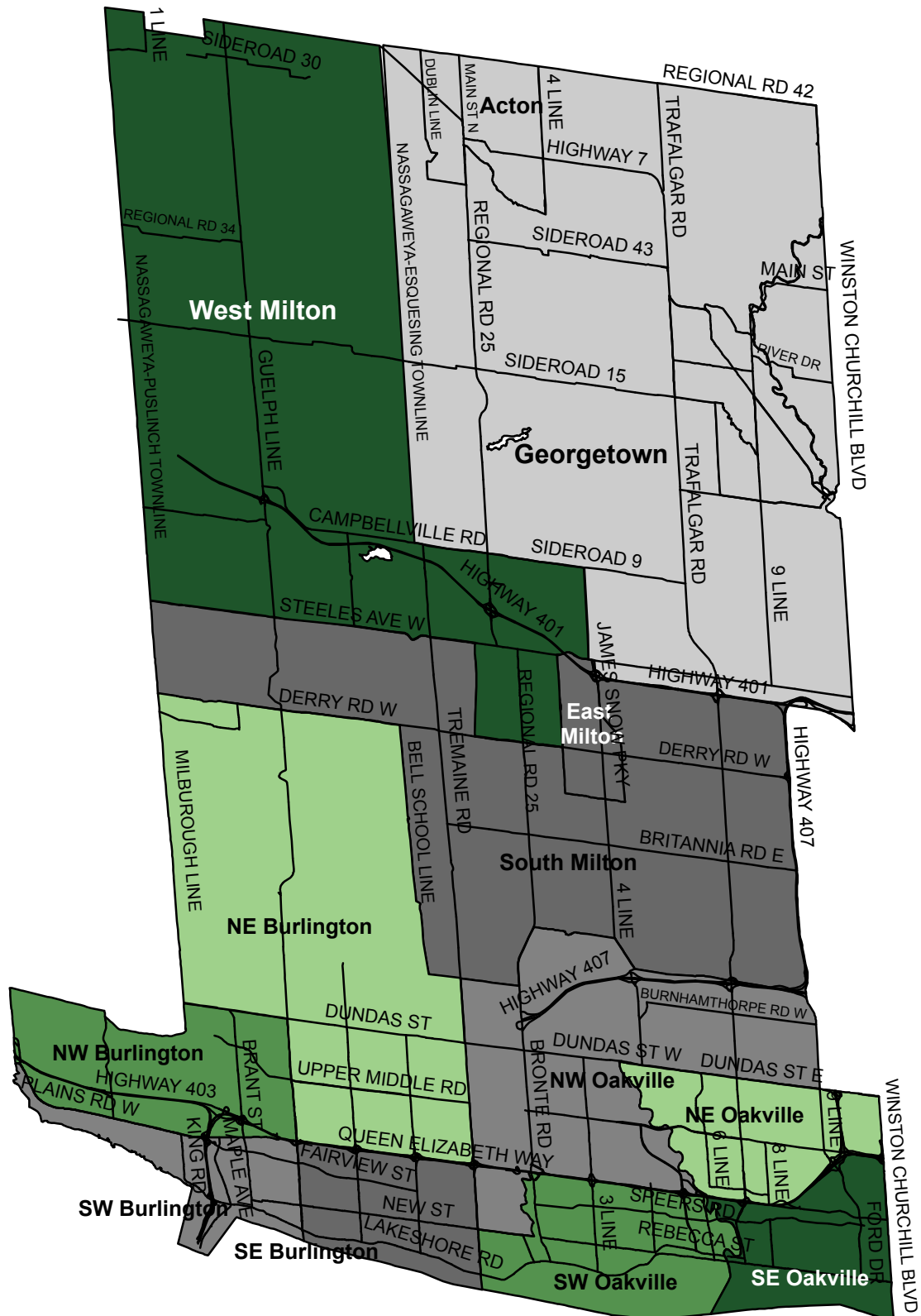
**Map 1** provides current child care need for infant spaces

Excess	Shortage
+ 0 to 75 spaces	- 0 to 75 spaces
+ 76 to 150 spaces	- 76 to 150 spaces
+ Over 150 spaces	- Over 150 spaces



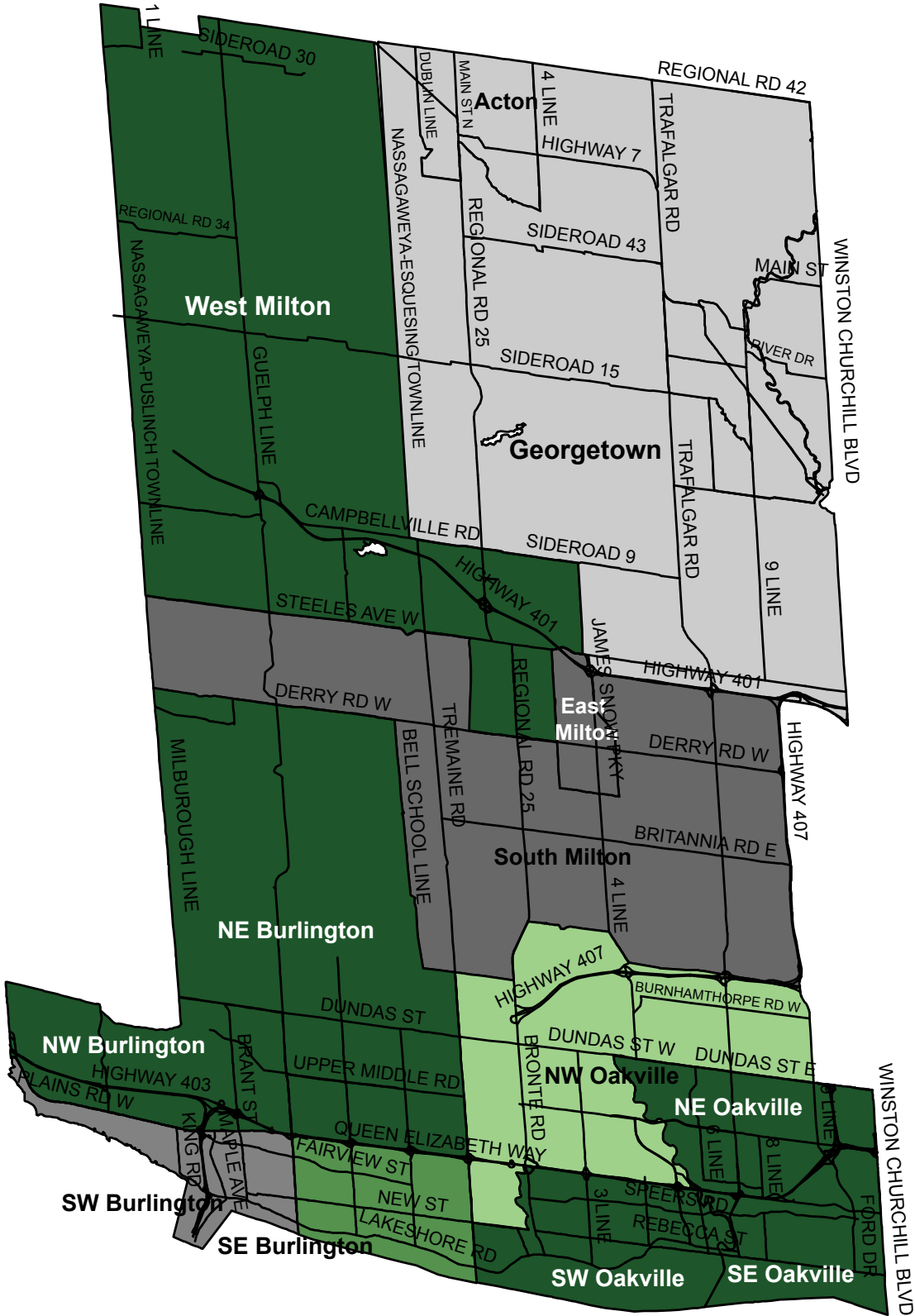
**Map 2** provides current child care need for toddler spaces

Excess	Shortage
+ 0 to 75 spaces	- 0 to 75 spaces
+ 76 to 150 spaces	- 76 to 150 spaces
+ Over 150 spaces	- Over 150 spaces



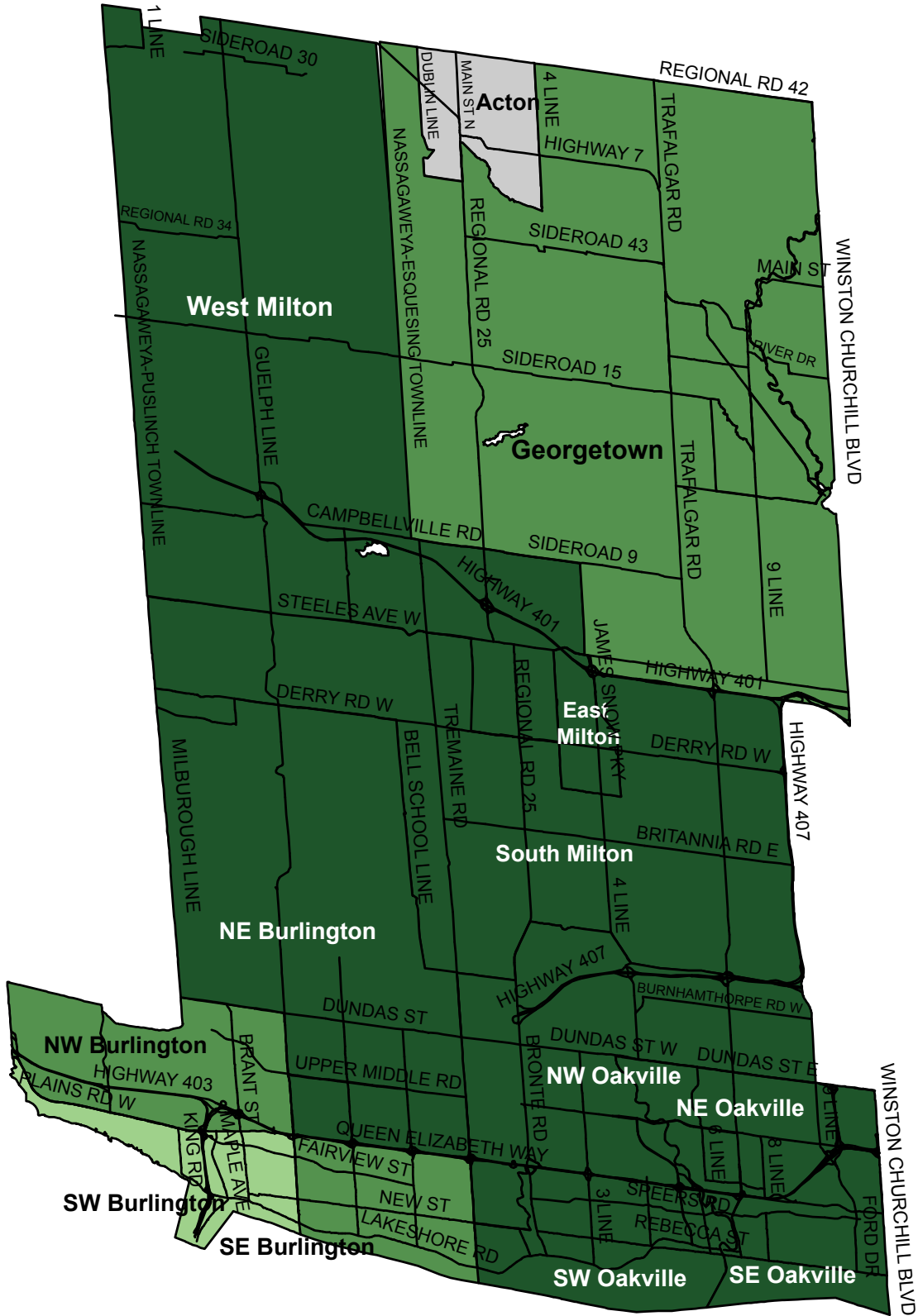
Map 3 provides current child care need for pre-school spaces

Excess	Shortage
+ 0 to 75 spaces	- 0 to 75 spaces
+ 76 to 150 spaces	- 76 to 150 spaces
+ Over 150 spaces	- Over 150 spaces



Map 4 provides current child care need for school-age spaces

Excess	Shortage
+ 0 to 75 spaces	- 0 to 75 spaces
+ 76 to 150 spaces	- 76 to 150 spaces
+ Over 150 spaces	- Over 150 spaces



## APPENDIX D

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### Calculation of projected need for fee subsidy

To estimate the projected need in 2020 for fee subsidy, the current service rate of 2.6 per cent and a child population growth rate of 4 per cent were considered. Using these figures, it is estimated that 2,498 children will need child care fee subsidy in the year 2020. This means that in order to maintain the current service rate of 2.6 per cent for fee subsidy, there will be an additional need for 152 more fee subsidy spaces in the year 2020.

