

# EARLY YEARS COMMUNITY PLAN (EYCP)

## 2024 Community Sessions Post-Event Report Executive Summary

In May 2024, the City of Hamilton's Children's and Community Services Division hosted three [Early Years Community Plan \(EYCP\)](#) Community Sessions. A total of 175 attendees representing 63 unique agencies across the city attended the sessions.

Attendees participated in various engagement activities as a part of each session, providing opportunities for them to share their input, insights and ideas. These sessions were designed to gather feedback on key areas within the EYCP and to identify ongoing challenges faced by the Early Years System.

### Attendees by service area\*

Early Years and Child Care\*\*



61%

Recreation, Arts & Community Programming



11%

Health, Income, Education & Housing Supports



11%

Other



17%

\*Percentages shown do not include staff from the City of Hamilton's Children's and Social Services Department.  
\*\*Includes Licensed Centre and Home-Based Child Care, EarlyONs, Co-Ops and Before and After School Care.

## ENGAGEMENT METHODS



Interactive Polls



Facilitated Table Discussions



Post-Event Survey



## FINDINGS

What themes did the engagement present?

- 1. Workforce Crisis:** Hamilton's Early Years workforce is facing a severe staffing shortage.
- 2. Limited Incentives:** There are insufficient financial incentives, a lack of non-monetary recognition, and limited opportunities for personal and professional growth for Early Years professionals.
- 3. Increased Care Needs:** Early Years professionals are struggling to meet the needs of individuals requiring enhanced care.
- 4. Rigid System Delivery:** The current delivery of the CWELCC System restricts the flexibility that child care providers need to support families and staff. This includes issues like competitive wages, performance incentives, centre expansion, and managing waitlists.



## NEXT STEPS

How will this information be used?

- 1. Organize for Workforce Improvements:** In collaboration with Children's Services divisions across Ontario and in partnership with the College of Early Childhood Educators (CECE), the City of Hamilton will advocate for improvements to the early years and licensed child care workforce in alignment with the 'Knowing Our Numbers' project.
- 2. Increase Engagement Opportunities:** The City of Hamilton will increase opportunities for early years educators to participate in future EYCP engagement activities.
- 3. Action on Specialized Care Support:** The City will ensure that the Early Years Special Needs Resourcing and HR Workforce Operational Committees take action on the expressed challenges relating to supporting individuals requiring specialized care.
- 4. Action and Evaluation Planning:** The City of Hamilton will develop and implement an Action and Evaluation Plan to support the emerging priorities identified in the Early Years Community Plan (EYCP), 2023 Update.