

Hamilton  
**Best Start**

Hamilton  
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# Best Start:

Hamilton's Early Learning  
and Care Community Plan

- 2007/2008 -

JUNE 2007



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## Introduction

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Integration is different. It is challenging and it takes time. And yet overwhelmingly, as the consultation that ultimately led to the development of this document unfolded, an unequivocal commitment to integrating of services was observed throughout the community.

Why?

Why do the individuals and organizations that work with children, parents and families in Hamilton add hours to their days, meetings to their schedules and complexities to their practices in pursuit of integrated services?

One stakeholder summed it up by saying: *“...why integrate? Because no matter where we live, work or play, we are talking about the same children and families...our children and families.”*

This statement acknowledges the fact that children and families do not live in isolation. Nor do their needs – no matter how minor or profound – fit neatly into one service area. Child care, early learning, health, education, recreation and other services overlap and intersect throughout the lives of children and their families. Integration represents an attempt by individuals and organizations to ensure that the appropriate responses to needs are available and accessible when and where they are required in the life of a child.

This is what makes integration different...and challenging and time consuming. But it is also its allure.

## Joint Service Planning Process

In the past Service Plans have been developed in Hamilton – for child care or Ontario Early Years Centres (OEYCs) – cooperatively; their processes coordinated and jointly planned. Ultimately, though, as unique and distinct requirements for each plan were identified in the Ministry of Children and Youth Services (MCYS) guidelines that had framed this work, an individual and separate plan was developed and submitted on behalf of each of these sectors.

In 2007, however, MCYS guidelines for the development of Hamilton’s Service Plans for Best Start, Child Care and Ontario Early Years Centres, were interconnected and interdependent. They used common language and sought cross-referencing amongst the three areas. Most critically, the guidelines focused on the integration of services.

The importance of this shift cannot be understated. It represents a significant level of support for and responsiveness to the Hamilton community from both the local regional office of the MCYS as well as its corporate counterparts. And ultimately it emboldened this community to refocus its efforts. Instead of developing three connected – but distinct – service plans, it has now created one community plan that speaks to Hamilton’s system of early years services, holistically and comprehensively.

With unwavering support, leadership and strong management from the City of Hamilton as the project manager, the community accepted this challenge.

A Project Team was formed, consisting of representatives from the CMSM, the MCYS, child care, OEYC, the Best Start Network and Affiliated Services for Children and Youth. Collectively

this group sought to bring to the fore of this project, the values and principles of Hamilton's Best Start Vision. The group and its consultants committed to use the Vision to overarch community service planning activities, ensuring that these took place within a broader framework for the development of a single, integrated, early years service system-wide community plan.

The consultation engaged community stakeholders in a variety of settings and contexts.

Focus groups were held with Hamilton's Best Start Network, the Early Child Development Integrating Committee (referred to in the document as ECDIC or the Integrating Committee), the Child Care Supervisors' Network, the CMSM Child Care Working Group, OEYC Coordinators, Directors and their partners, as well as representatives from all local School Boards. Individual interviews were conducted with over 30 key informants from across the spectrum of early years service providers, planners, and funders. The consultation process relied considerably on members of the Aboriginal, French-speaking, and diverse communities including recent immigrant and refugees, and those that work with them. See [Appendix 1](#) for a description of the organizations and groups involved in the consultation process.

Parents and caregivers, critical to understanding and building an effective and responsive early years system, were also included in the consultation. This was done through the nearly 25 stories from parents collected by their community child care providers and OEYCs. Some of these parent stories have been included in this plan.

Additionally, on May 25th a presentation on the Community Plan development process was held. The presentation was made by the consultants to community stakeholders from across the early years system and it was an opportunity to highlight findings and provide attendees with a preview of Hamilton's Community Plan. See [Appendix 2](#) for a complete list of participating organizations and stakeholder groups.

While there are some unique data elements required for the child care and OEYC portions of this report, those who participated in this consultation were asked to do so with the understanding that Best Start, child care and OEYC are parts of a whole and not separate or distinct from one another. Implicit in this process, then, is the that Hamilton's Best Start Network and its members were active participants in all areas of the development of the Community Plan...just as child care and OEYC representatives actively and comprehensively participated in the development of the Best Start section.

*(Please note: Recently Hamilton has made the decision that Best Start hubs will be referred to as Ontario Early Years Centres. This decision was based on the fact the OEYCs have a positive reputation in our community with parents and children for access to many important services. The Best Start initiative was built on the name recognition of OEYCs and will continue to provide the services to families that include speech and language services, infant hearing screening, public health services, post partum services, support for the 18 month well baby check up, and a number of other options reflective of the communities they serve. Because this decision was made in the midst of the development of the Community Plan both terms (hubs and OEYCs) are used interchangeably throughout the report.)*

## **Best Start – Part of a Larger Community**

Beyond the inclusiveness and interconnectedness of this process with its focus on the early years service system, one final observation is noteworthy.

Individuals, along with the organizations and networks that they represent, articulated an understanding that the Best Start initiative, itself, the embodiment of Hamilton’s early years service system, is part of a larger community.

Several participants in the consultation identified the need to reflect on the larger community. Understanding this context and seizing the opportunities that it affords allow organizations to better serve children and families. Specifically, the role, work and relationships of Hamilton’s Roundtable for Poverty Reduction and its goal of “Making Hamilton the Best Place to Raise a Child” were viewed as critical complements to the Best Start initiative.

### **Why Integrate?**

Why integrate? Because by creating linkages, building on relationships and understanding the wider context in which families live, Hamilton is striving to create an early years service system that most appropriately responds to the needs of children and their families when and where it is needed.

# Chapter 1: Best Start Community Plan

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## Section 1: Progress Towards Achieving the Long-term Vision for Best Start

Section 1 provides an overview of the Best Start Vision as well as a brief commentary on the changes to the Vision and overall initiative since the submission of the Phase One Implementation Plan (January 2006). Hamilton's overall progress in achieving components of the Best Start Vision are also highlighted including progress made towards closing the gaps in service and better meeting the needs of the community and implementing key Phase One components of Best Start (such as, child care expansion, early identification enhancements, and integrating child care with schools). Implementation challenges and obstacles faced by the community over the past year are also presented.

### Overview of Hamilton's Best Start Vision

#### ***Best Start: making Hamilton the best place to raise a child.***

*Hamilton's children deserve the best start in life and the chance to achieve their very best in school. Best Start will support families by offering a broad range of services for children 0-6 years of age that will ensure their children receive the best possible opportunities early in their lives. Neuroscience and human development studies show that experience-based brain development in the early years of life affects learning, behaviour and health throughout a person's life (The Early Years Study, 1999). Best Start is the initiative that recognizes this research and puts theory into practise. It empowers communities to offer comprehensive, flexible, integrated and seamless services for all children and parents at familiar neighbourhood locations. The long-term nature of Best Start means that we will move beyond preparing children for early learning successes to preparing the next generation of adults to be full participants in their own communities.*

### **Hamilton's Best Start Vision**

#### **Best Start is about children**

*Each child is an active learner, full of curiosity and potential, eager and capable of achieving success in school and beyond.*

*Best Start is about providing the supports to bring out the best in young children.*

#### **Best Start is about families**

*Parents are the first, most important and most lasting teachers in a child's life.*

*Best Start is about supporting parents and families, and collaborating with them to enable them to provide children with the best possible opportunities early in their lives.*

#### **Best Start is about community and connections**

*Community partners view themselves as part of an integrated system of supports for early child development and parenting.*

*Best Start is about strengthening partnerships and enhancing the integration of all community supports for children and their families.*

#### **Best Start is about our future**

*A continuous learning environment, a commitment to early child development and parenting are key priorities for our community.  
Best Start is about doing what is best for our children and our future.  
The Best Start Vision still remains valid today and continues to provide the community with a focus and access point to the Best Start initiative.*

However, as submitted in the Phase One Implementation Plan (January 2006) the 10-year Best Start Vision and accompanying three-year plan reflected unprecedented and appropriately resourced three-year expansion of child care in Hamilton. When the funding for these spaces was significantly reduced, so too were the plans for expansion. The high-level Best Start Vision did not change but the community's ability to implement the Vision was impacted by the funding cut.

The change to the Best Start funding, however, did provide the community with an opportunity to 'give pause', consider how the Vision could be implemented within the new funding parameters, and reflect on some other considerations (for example, planning principles, quality and capacity within current system).

Today the commitment to the Best Start Vision and to system integration remains strong. Key stakeholders report feeling very proud of Hamilton's level of commitment to the Vision and our progress and accomplishments to date. There is great optimism amongst stakeholders in regards to what the community can achieve over the next several years in terms of moving forward with the Best Start Vision and system integration.

## **Overall Progress, Closing Service Gaps and Meeting Needs of Community**

### **Increased awareness and understanding of the importance of the early years and integration**

Over the past 12 months, Hamilton's Best Start initiative has contributed to an increased awareness of the importance of the early years within children's services sectors and beyond. Consultations revealed that service providers are beginning to think and work differently. There is a sense that Hamilton is moving closer to the ultimate goal of seamless services and supports for children and families.

For example, Best Start's Primary Care Strategy has been very successful in engaging local family physicians and community nurses. There has been an increase in the levels of awareness and comfort regarding the importance of the early years and the value of working with other services and supports in the community. Similar progress is being reported within the schools. The Best Start initiative has provided an opportunity for school principals and teachers to enhance their awareness and understanding of neighbourhood issues and the value community partnerships can bring to the classroom.

### **Continued commitment to partnerships and collaboration**

Partners in the Hamilton Best Start initiative have demonstrated a strong commitment to the Vision despite changes to funding and scope. New partnerships are being created and existing ones strengthened. Members have expressed that this dedication is due – in part – to the clarity of the Best Start Vision; it sets a clear direction and focus for the community.

Commitment to the Best Start Vision and the overall initiative is evident in the following examples.

- The wide range of individuals and organizations represented around the Best Start Network table and its various planning bodies. The commitment of these individuals to meet on a monthly basis.
- Aboriginal and French-speaking community representatives feel more involved in and connected to system planning and implementation processes.
- School teams and community teams are working together
- Early Literacy Hamilton's agreement to provide leadership in the development of integrated literacy services within the Best Start framework
- Public Health Services programs are working together across program lines and returning to a more neighbourhood-focused service delivery approach.
  - Public Health Nurses (PHNs) are now viewed as members of the OEYC provider teams. This is resulting in increased service coordination and identification of opportunities for further integration to better meet the needs of the community.
  - Healthy Babies Healthy Children (HBHC) PHN resources have been aligned to reflect the Best Start neighbourhoods
  - HBHC PHNs and family home visitors have incorporated OEYCs into their practice and services plans (for example, OEYCs are being used as meeting places to ensure families are getting connected with the staff at their local OEYC)
- Early Words preschool speech and language and infant hearing service delivery model has been redesigned to provide services in child care and OEYCs throughout the community

### **City-wide benefits**

A key accomplishment of the past year has been the ability of the initiative to strike a balance between expansion and improvements in the demonstration site area and across the city overall.

The Integrating Services Coordinator position and the project management support provided by the City of Hamilton have been critical in achieving city-wide benefits.

### **Closing the gaps in service – significant service expansion and improvements**

There has been significant service expansion and improvements over the past year. The community decision to building on the existing OEYC infrastructure has facilitated the expansion and integration process.

Examples of service expansion include:

- Over 1,100 new child care spaces created throughout the city (see Section 1c - page 8 - for more details)
- Creation of seven early learning and care centres (hubs) resulting in the provision of new services being offered at the neighbourhood level (such as, speech and language screening, dental screening, nutrition consultation, physical activity programs, anti-bullying resources, parenting programs, mental health services, etc.).
- Implementation of the 18-month well baby screening program (Primary Care Strategy) (see Section 1c – page 9 - for more details)
- Increased direct services for Aboriginal and French-speaking children and families
- Early assessment intervention – special needs

Examples of service improvements include:

- A more holistic approach to working with children and families
- New partnerships being forged as part of the post-partum mood disorder initiative
- Aboriginal service provider representatives have indicated that early years programs and services are being contemplated and delivered in more culturally appropriate and sensitive

ways; new partnerships are being forged therefore improving access to services for their clients

- Stronger alignment and increased coordination of special needs services and resources

### **Front-line staff recognizing importance and acting as facilitators of integration**

Front-line service providers are feeling energized by the opportunities presented by the Best Start initiative. An increasing number of front-line staff are contacting the Integrating Services Coordinator with ideas and opportunities for service coordination and collaboration. For example, there are numerous examples of child welfare workers working together with OEYCs, child care programs, and schools at the neighbourhood level. Behavioural therapists are bringing children into OEYCs during their therapy sessions.

### **Early stages of parent and neighbourhood engagement**

Parent advisory committees are starting to gel and an increasing number of service providers are participating in these meetings. Exciting developments include:

- School council meeting held at a demonstration area hub / OEYC
- School staff touring their local hub / OEYC
- Early childhood educators (ECEs) from child care programs and Kindergarten teachers sharing practice information
- ECEs and Kindergarten teachers meeting to discuss students making the transition from child care to school

*“Our neighbourhood is fortunate to have the right players networking each month. Individuals that consistently update, communicate, and brainstorm ways of collaborating effectively for the benefit of our collective clients. Each ‘advisory team’ has representatives from our organization, OEYC and child care parents, staff, caregivers, and community partners such as Public Health and Chedoke-McMaster and Boards of Education staff -- both Separate and Public.” – Best Start demonstration site centre operator*

### **More inter-professional development and networking opportunities**

Increased professional development and networking opportunities are now available to a wider service provider audience. Two very successful joint professional development sessions were offered in 2007 with over 300 participants at each event. Participants included ECEs, Kindergarten teachers, principals, and other early learning and care professionals. Sessions focused on the value of working together across traditional sector and professional boundaries.

### **Enhancement and streamlining of planning and coordination**

Development of the Best Start committee structure, terms of reference, work plans and logic models has enhanced the community’s ability to plan in a more coordinated and streamlined manner. Dedicated positions and project management support have been critical to the coordination of early years planning in the community.

At an inter-governmental level the strong relationship between the City of Hamilton and the local regional office of the Ministry of Children and Youth Services (MCYS) has resulted in aligning some aspects of OEYC system management including the streamlining of OEYC reporting requirements. As such, consistent and simplified processes for budget reporting and funding requests have been developed.

### **Built in evaluation strategies ‘up-front’**

Key building blocks for the evaluation of Best Start were established in the past year. Evaluation infrastructure and expertise were acknowledged through an invitation to present at the southwest Best Start demonstration area meeting. Key accomplishments include:

- Creation of the Early Years Research and Evaluation Committee
- Recruiting evaluation expertise and filling staffing positions
- Creation of logic models for the Best Start initiative, the Early Child Development Integrating Committee (herein referred to as the Integrating Committee), and the 18-month well baby strategy
- Creation of the Best Start Glossary (developed to ensure Network members and stakeholders have a shared understanding of commonly used terminology)

### **Early knowledge mobilization ‘wins’**

Best Start research and evaluation staff/supports, the local Understanding the Early Years initiative, and the OEYC Early Years Data Analysis Coordinator have been working together closely to meet the information needs of Best Start in an integrated fashion. These partnerships have resulted in several early knowledge mobilization ‘wins’:

- Best Start Network members are becoming more familiar with the value of incorporating research and evaluation findings into the service planning and implementation process. They are talking about research and evaluation in new ways.
- Best Start Network members, Mohawk College ECE faculty, school boards, and other key stakeholders are being engaged in thinking about the analysis, dissemination and utilization of local Early Development Instrument (EDI) data.
- The Best Practices work group is in the process of finalizing a framework to guide the development of integration best practices. This framework includes a tool for self-assessment and monitoring of integration efforts that can be used by service providers, agencies or parents.

### **Getting the message out; early communication ‘wins’**

Communications support from the City of Hamilton resulted in the development of key messaging and communication tools. Tools were made available to Best Start Network members via a website ([www.hamiltonbeststart.ca](http://www.hamiltonbeststart.ca)) and were used to support members as they shared the Best Start Vision within their own organizations and across the community. The result was consistent and powerful messaging.

Over the past year Best Start Network members have been busy spreading Hamilton’s Best Start message and the importance of early child development overall.

### **Implementation of key components - child care expansion, early identification programs, and integrating with schools**

*“Before this Centre, I never liked the idea of my child attending child care...but it is so convenient and helpful that I can drop my oldest child off at child care and then go and play with my youngest child in the drop-in centre.” -- Parent*

### **Child care expansion**

Key accomplishments in the child care community include:

- Creation of new child care spaces across the city (over 1,100 overall including 288 pre-school universal spaces) and not just within the demonstration area

- Opening the Best Start demonstration sites within very tight timelines especially given the extent of the renovations required in some schools, the number and size of local school boards, the demands of the child care licensing process, and zoning by-law obstacles
- Provision of coordinated communications support to child care operators regarding the universal preschool spaces. This ensured consistent language and approaches were used to promote the new spaces. Promotional products were also made available in French.

See Section 5 (Child Care Service Plan, page 39) for more details.

### **Early identification and intervention programs**

Best Start has resulted in multiple points of access to early identification of special needs.

#### Child development screening clinics

Child development screening clinics are offered at all seven main OEYC sites as well as the demonstration area hubs. Through these traveling clinics parents can access speech and language, vision, dental, nutrition, and behavioural consultation and screening services for their children. New partnerships are increasing the number of early identification and intervention programs available to children and parents.

#### Primary care strategy / 18-month well baby visit

The development of the 18-month well baby visit component into a broader engagement strategy for the primary care sector (city wide) has been major 'quick win' over the past year.

Key advancements include:

- Engagement of 300 to 400 primary care physicians and nurses across the community
- Increased use of the Rourke Baby Record and increased dialogue with parents about the importance of early child development
- Development, dissemination and strong uptake of an 18 month visit developmental flow chart and referral tool for family physicians (see [Appendix 3](#))
- Anecdotal evidence of 18 month well-baby visit having some affect: increased family physician referrals to OEYCs, HBHC, and therapeutic child care program are being reported

#### Pre-school Speech and Language and Infant Hearing Program enhancements

Enhanced funding for pre-school speech and language (PSL) and Infant Hearing Program (IHP) allowed for the lowering of wait times for intervention, serving additional cohorts and enhanced service expectations.

Key accomplishments over the past year for PSL include:

- Alignment of selected PSL providers with Best Start service provider team boundaries
- Most families are experiencing their first contact with PSL at the neighbourhood hubs/OEYCs resulting in increased ease of access to services, decreased wait times for interventions, and increased linkages to the family supports available at local hubs/OEYCs.
- Collaboration with the English school boards and CCAC to enhance services for JK and SK children.
- Implementation of a pilot project whereby specific PSL staff are assigned to a child care program to develop relationships with staff and families, pro-actively identify children with special needs, and ensure continuity of care.

Key accomplishments over the past year for the IHP include:

Weekly IHP screenings at OEYC main sites

An additional age cohort of children between 2 ½ years and 6 years of age received audiology and hearing evaluations

- Increased Family Support Worker time has allowed the option of an initial home visit for newly identified children and enhanced integration of child’s teams services through a family centered model and Board-specific transition to school processes

*“Some of the benefits we have observed in terms of child care being integrated into a school include: parents appreciating one place to drop off and pick up; children and families have fewer transitions; and children are able to participate in School activities. Also, our child care staff are able to discuss a child’s individual needs directly with his or her teacher, helping us to ensure achievement and success for our children.” – Child care operator*

### **Integrating child care with schools**

This key component of the Best Start initiative has seen significant progress over the past year. Accomplishments include:

- School boards recognized the need to dedicate resources to support participation in the Best Start initiative and facilitate school-community linkages.
- In response to the child care expansion local school boards have examined, revised, and in some cases developed new policies and procedures within very tight time timelines.
- In-service sessions are being held with school principals to raise awareness and understanding of the value of working with community partners (such as child care programs) and parents.
- Inter-professional development and learning sessions for Kindergarten teachers and ECEs have been held to increase awareness and understanding of each other’s expertise and the value of child care – OEYC – school partnerships.
- The Best Start initiative has helped to further coordinate the transition from child care to school process. It has helped to bring the key players together with a common goal and improved the sharing of information across sectors. This is the case for special needs children as well.

### **Overcoming implementation challenges and lessons learned**

Over the past year the community overcame several implementation challenges. While addressing each of these challenges required strong commitment and dedication the experiences have provided valuable lessons learned for the years ahead.

#### **Implementation challenges**

##### **Shifting from cooperation to integration**

Best Start is challenging the community to move from cooperation to integration. This shift requires processes aimed at developing awareness, understanding and trust over time among community partners.

Through the creation of the Best Start Network and its committees the community has eliminated some duplicate planning tables and provided venues for the required relationship building. These integrated planning tables help programs and organizations to strategize together about best approaches and then “sell it” internally.

There is some anecdotal evidence that these common planning tables are helping. Small but important examples of change include:

- Alignment of service delivery boundaries

- Sense of optimism among network partners that these structures are appropriately positioned and composed to address system fragmentation, and
- Common planning approach for Best Start, child care and OEYCs

### **Implementing an initiative**

Implementing a multi-faceted initiative – as opposed to a program or service – has brought along unique challenges. Planning and implementation timelines are often stretched given the wide range of partnerships and stakeholders involved in the process and the need to think differently about day-to-day operations. Over time the network has become more comfortable with the process of what it means to implement an initiative. The Network is more comfortable with the collective decision-making process and moving ahead with ideas despite longer-term uncertainties. Local decisions are being made that are in keeping with the Best Start Vision with the Network being comfortable stepping-back and taking a measured approach to decisions and implementation when necessary.

### **Tight timelines**

The Best Start implementation timelines were very tight given the amount of work required. These timelines presented challenges for each Best Start Network member (for example, members who represented large organizations felt pressed as they took information back to their organization for internal discussion and feedback). The ability of the network and broader community to respond to this challenge reflects the goodwill and respect at the table.

### **Availability of space**

Finding appropriate space within schools for Best Start hubs was a challenge especially given the tight timelines. Class room size, proximity to an entrance and washrooms, and availability of kitchen facilities are examples of how space impacts a program's ability to function. The school boards and key community partners worked very hard to find the most appropriate available space within the given timelines and budget context.

### **Zoning by-laws**

Municipal zoning by-laws presented another challenge to service expansion. Communication mechanisms were put into place during the rapid expansion phase to ensure construction had timely advice from appropriate City departments. Some zoning issues were not resolved (for example, parking space requirements) resulting in fewer child care spaces at some demonstration sites than originally anticipated. However, on the whole the inclusion of the City's building and planning departments in the planning phase was invaluable and helped to mitigate potential delays in construction.

### **Lessons learned**

#### **Build on what works**

Hamilton's Best Start hubs were developed on the pre-existing OEYC infrastructure. This facilitated the community's ability to respond to the rapid service expansion requirements and allowed the new sites to build on a strong base of community awareness. Furthermore, numerous Best Start committees were created based on long-standing advisory groups and planning bodies within the community. Building on the existing OEYC infrastructure and planning bodies will help to address the long-term sustainability of the Best Start initiative.

#### **Integration takes time and resources**

Experiences over the past year have served to highlight the fact that system integration is a community development process. The work requires significant time and energy and can

sometimes feel slow moving. Timelines and expectations need to reflect the realities of a community development process. Yet it is equally important to set and reach key milestones to ensure progress and accountability.

Dedicated resources (such as the Integrating Services Coordinator and project management support) have been essential to the process and help to ease the participation burden among network members. Over and above these supports it is important to acknowledge the significant commitment and contribution of the individuals and organizations engaged in this system integration work.

*“The impact of integration is wonderful! However I struggle with the amount of pressure that is on our already over-pressured Early Learning and Care System...many of us work over the number of hours that we get paid for. We need to look at the sustainability of a system that is built this way.” -- Child care operator*

### **Communication is critical**

Best Start Network membership is diverse and therefore presented a challenge when developing common messages that were suitable to the range of perspectives and interests at the table. Furthermore, Best Start is a multi-faceted initiative. It has been challenging to keep all activities in alignment in terms of communication (for example, consistent messaging). It has taken time to understand the nature of this far-reaching initiative and the role of communications from a more strategic perspective.

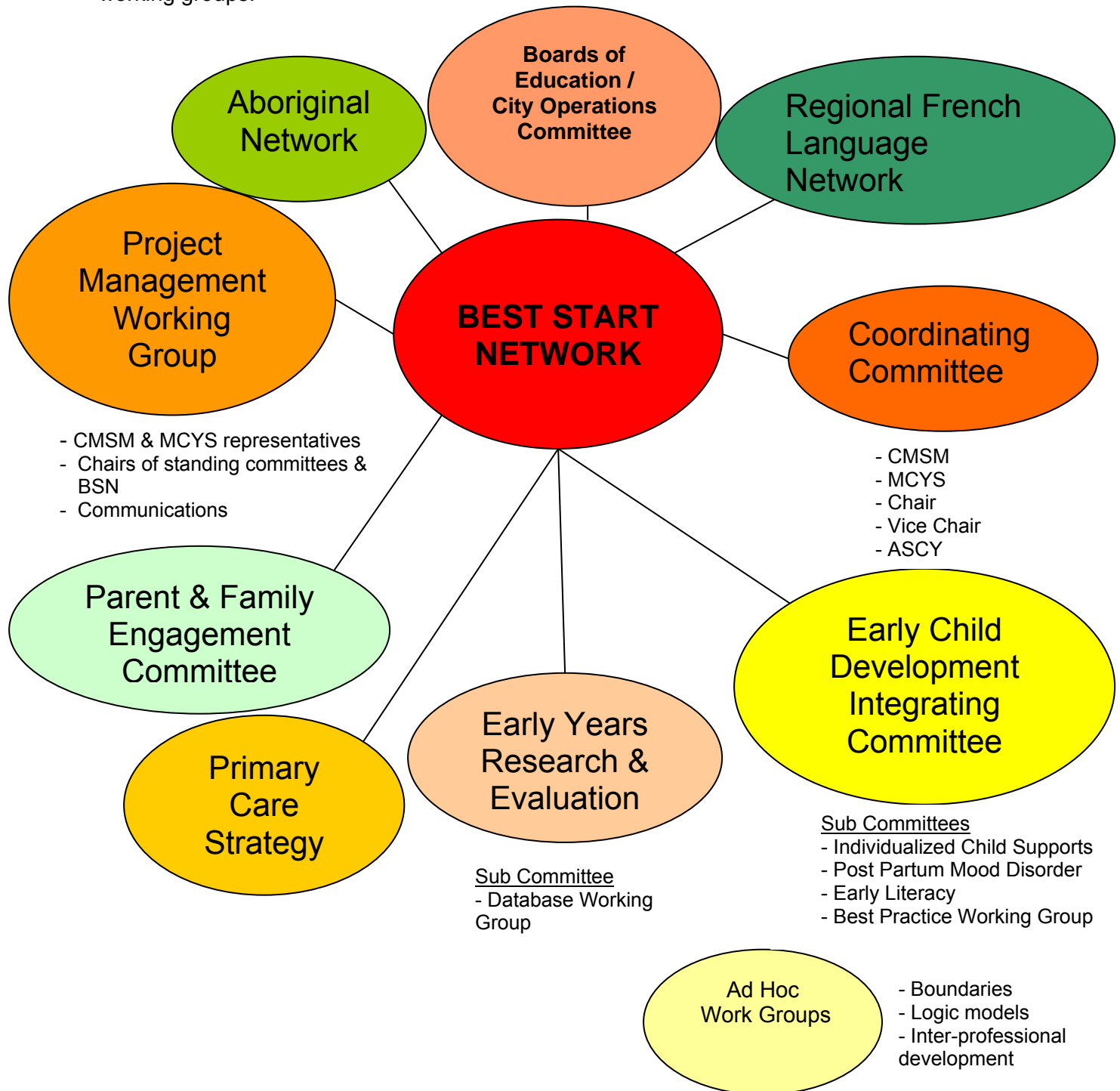
Promoting universal programs to parents and families has presented another communications challenge. Front-line experiences have demonstrated that word-of-mouth is critical for promoting programs among parents. Strengthening communications with parents and families is a key area of focus over the next year.

Finally, it is important to acknowledge the critical importance of good communications from and with the regional office of the MCYS. Hamilton’s Best Start initiative has benefited greatly from a strong relationship with its local MCYS office.

## Section 2: Best Start Network Composition, Activities and Community Engagement Process

### Network composition and activities

The below graphic depicts the overall Best Start Network structure including committees and working groups.



### **Network composition and terms of reference**

The Best Start Network is made up of over 50 individuals representing key sectors and stakeholder groups including parents (or families), Boards of Education, post-secondary education facilities, child care providers, health and social service agencies and specialized children's services, municipal and provincial governments, Aboriginal, French-speaking, special needs and diverse communities, and a range of community-based children's service providers and programs. The full Best Start Network membership is provided in [Appendix 4](#).

The Best Start Network's terms of reference have not been revised since their submission to the MCYS. Terms of reference for key committees (such as, Integrating Committee, Primary Care and Research and Evaluation) are currently in draft form and will be finalized over the next several months. These documents are available upon request.

### **Network accomplishments**

Many of the Network's accomplishments over the past year are highlighted in Section 1.

Noteworthy accomplishments include:

- The creation of a network of key multi-sectoral stakeholders who remain committed to the Best Start Vision. This is a first and key step in creating a structure for integrated planning and delivery of early learning and care services for Hamilton.
- The committee and work group structure supports work taking place outside of the larger Best Start Network resulting in faster progress and ensuring relevance to the front-line. Strong communication linkages between the Network and its committees have ensured alignment of activities and outputs.
- The committee structure has meant that individuals from outside the Best Start Network can be drawn into the work based on areas of expertise and interest. This has resulted wider engagement across stakeholder groups.
- The creation of the Best Start Network Toolkit to help members deliver key messages and discuss the Best Start initiative among peers and within their communities.
- The establishment of the Coordinating Committee which oversees operational processes, sets Network agendas, and acts as a vetting group for Network information and advice.
- The decision to use the existing Best Start Network structure to plan and implement the new Blind Low Vision strategy.

Additional accomplishments are highlighted in the Best Start Network's 2006/2007 Work Plan (see [Appendix 5](#)). Draft work plans for key committees are also available upon request.

### **Addressing gaps in representation**

Over the next year the Best Start Network and its Coordinating Committee will work to address the following gaps in representation.

- Existing connections to diverse communities (including culturally and/or linguistically diverse stakeholders and newcomer communities) need to be strengthened. The Network will engage the Hamilton Centre for Civic Inclusion for support and advice in addressing this important membership gap.
- The Network will continue to work towards strengthen existing connections to the child welfare sector while building on the relationships that already exist at the front-line level.
- Opportunities to strengthen parent and family representation on the Network will be pursued via the neighbourhood parent advisory committees.
- Opportunities to engage the recreation sector will be sought.

## **Strategies used to facilitate participation of the Regional French-language Best Start Network**

Several strategies were employed to facilitate the participation of the Regional French-Language Network Central-South-West Region Best Start Initiative (RFLNC-SWRBSI) in the community planning process.

Over the past year the RFLNC-SWRBSI and the Hamilton Best Start Network have established strong lines of communication. The RFLNC-SWRBSI has been kept apprised of Hamilton Best Start activities through the following mechanisms.

- RFLNC representative sit on the Hamilton Best Start Network, receive minutes and provide valuable consultation and advice as required.
- The existing strong relationship between the centre de santé (lead for the French-language hub) and OEYCs is utilized.

During the joint community planning process:

- Key informant interviews were conducted with representatives from the RFLNC-SWRBSI.
- RFLNC-SWRBSI members who sit on the Hamilton Best Start Network were invited to the May 25<sup>th</sup> community presentation on the joint Best Start, child care and OEYC community plan.
- A summary report was created for and shared with the RFLNC-SWRBSI on June 4<sup>th</sup>.
- The final 2007/2008 community plan (English version) will be shared with the RFLNC-SWRBSI prior to its submission to the MCYS and translated into French.

## **Linkages between Best Start Network and other children's planning bodies**

The Best Start Network is linked to several child-focused initiatives and planning bodies through its philosophy, funding, representation or any of those combinations. More specifically the membership of the Best Start Network and its Integrating Committee was constructed to ensure linkages with other key children's planning bodies. For example, the Hamilton Roundtable for Poverty Reduction, Boards of Education, Hamilton Health Sciences, and Early Literacy Hamilton are all represented at the network or committee level.

Most notably, Best Start supports and contributes to the work of the Hamilton Roundtable for Poverty Reduction and its vision of Hamilton being the best place to raise a child. This critical linkage, including strategies to further strengthen the relationship between Hamilton Best Start and the HRPR, is described below.

### **Linkages with the Hamilton Roundtable for Poverty Reduction**

In May 2005, Hamilton Community Foundation and the City of Hamilton co-convened a group of individuals that would come to be known as Hamilton Roundtable for Poverty Reduction (HRPR). The HRPR is challenging the community to stand together as a community to find solutions to poverty that will give everyone an opportunity to contribute to the vitality and prosperity of the city. This will require the community coming together to act comprehensively and systematically to tackle the root causes of poverty.

After extensive consultation and review of promising research, the Roundtable launched its highest aspiration for the community to address poverty. *Making Hamilton the Best Place to Raise a Child: The Change Framework* (available at [www.hamiltonpoverty.ca](http://www.hamiltonpoverty.ca)) is a strategic vision for the community, and identifies five critical points of investment in the lives of children

and youth to break the cycle of poverty and level the playing field for all children. These critical points of investment include:

- Quality early learning and parenting
- Skills through education, activity and recreation
- Targeted skills development (post secondary)
- Employment
- Asset building and wealth creation

In the first critical point of investment, the HRPR will work with Hamilton's Best Start Network to implement the Best Start Network's strategies to address the needs for families living in poverty. Specific activities include:

- Rallying additional resources, people and partnerships to:
  - Develop new high quality Early Learning and Care Hubs in under-served, low income neighbourhoods
  - Increase the availability, accessibility and integration of services in existing Early Learning and Care Hubs in low-income neighbourhoods
- Working with Hamilton's Best Start Network to evaluate the effectiveness of Early Learning and Care Hubs in low-income neighbourhoods
- Continuing to participate as a member of Hamilton's Best Start Network (through the HRPR Director)
- Sharing with Hamilton's Best Start Network the most recent trends, information and needs of low income families to inform planning related to Early Childhood Development

Through these activities the Best Start Network and the HRPR will work towards the following outcomes over the next year and beyond:

- Increase the number of high quality Early Learning and Care Hubs in low-income neighbourhoods
- Increase the availability, accessibility and integration of services existing in Early Learning and Care Hubs in low income neighbourhoods
- Increase the understanding and highlight the importance of high quality Early Child Development opportunities in the community

### **Engagement of key stakeholders in planning and implementation of Best Start and strategies to strengthen engagement**

Where early years service and program needs are identified for children and families in the community, the Vision for Best Start holds that appropriate strategies be developed for all children. This means issues and needs, as well as the strategies developed in response to these, need to be developed, assessed and implemented through a lens which reflects the experiences of French-speaking, Aboriginal, special needs, and culturally/linguistically diverse children and their families as well as families living in poverty. Within Hamilton, the Best Start Vision and those that share it, recognize the critical importance of supporting these communities in continuing to be active partners in identifying issues, creating responses and taking action on issues that impact the well-being of our children and families.

### **Engaging Best Start Network members**

Over the next year several strategies will be employed to further strengthen the engagement of Best Start Network members. These strategies are based on feedback received from Network members during the planning process.

In setting Network meeting agendas the Coordinating Committee will work to:

- Ensure the Best Start Vision is kept front and centre and used as a touchstone for decisions
- Protect small group discussion opportunities so members have an opportunity to share experiences and lessons learned
- Provide opportunities for a two-way flow of information (members bring information from the Best Start Network back to their own organization or network and vice versa)
- Develop mechanisms to increase the level of dialogue at meetings and, hopefully, engage members who are not as vocal yet who bring unique and important perspectives to the table
- Ensure Best Start accomplishments are acknowledged and celebrated

Over the next year the Coordinating Committee will work with the Best Start Network to seek role clarity in the following areas:

- Clarifying the role of the Best Start Network
- Clarifying the venue for integrated service delivery discussions and decisions
- Working with individual members to ensure they are clear on their role and potential contributions
- Determining the mechanisms and supports required to see commitment to the Best Start Vision move beyond the senior management levels and down through organizations to the front-line

Develop a larger profile for Best Start in the community

- Build on the existing communication plan
- Develop feedback and information collecting mechanisms to ensure successes (and contributions) are identified, acknowledged and shared across the community

### **Engaging parents and families**

*"We have been so focused on the bricks and mortar work of the past year...it is time to meet the wider community engagement objectives." – Provider*

Over the past year the Best Start Network's Parent and Family Engagement Sub-Committee has focused its energies on the creation of an inventory of how school boards, OEYCs and child care operators currently engage parents in program planning and implementation processes. The inventory will serve as a valuable information base upon which to build a parent and family engagement work plan.

Strengthening the engagement of parents and families will be a primary focus for the Network over the next year. To this end a Parent and Family Engagement Committee has been created with direct accountability to the Best Start Network. This committee will provide the necessary focus and energy to see the following action steps implemented over the next year:

- Development of a work plan; building on the strong engagement framework outlined in the Phase One Implementation Plan (January 2006) as well as the inventory of parent and family engagement activities (described above)
- Continue to nurture and support the existing neighbourhood parent advisory committees
- Work with the neighbourhood parent advisory committees and other parent groups to identify how parents and families want to be involved and engaged in service planning and implementation; this will differ from neighbourhood to neighbourhood and even amongst parents within the same neighbourhood
- Develop specific strategies to reflect the various levels and types of parent involvement

### **Engaging French-speaking stakeholders**

To date the French-speaking community has been engaged in the initiative through representation at the Best Start Network, its Integrating Committee, and the OEYC coordinators' table. The Network also benefits from the strong existing relationship between the Centre de santé communautaire (lead for the Francophone hub) and OEYCs.

Over the next year the Best Start Network will seek to strengthen the engagement of French-speaking stakeholders through the following action steps:

- Establish mechanisms for communication with the new Regional French-language Best Start Network
- Work closely with the Ministry of Children and Youth Services' new French-language Program Supervisor
- Explore opportunities to provide resources to build the capacity of those in the French-speaking community who are supporting the coordination and integration of services (for example, utilize OEYC administration infrastructures to assist with the administration of integrated services for French-speaking families)

### **Engaging Aboriginal stakeholders**

To date the Aboriginal community has been engaged in the initiative through representation at the Best Start Network, its Integrating Committee, and the OEYC coordinators' table. Further linkages to the Aboriginal community are established via the Aboriginal-lead OEYC operated by Niwasa Head Start Preschool.

Over the next year the Best Start Network will seek to strengthen the engagement of Aboriginal stakeholders through the following action steps:

- Continue to develop linkages with Aboriginal stakeholders and community through existing programs and resources such as the new Aboriginal-specific centre
- Strengthen mechanisms for communication with the provincial Aboriginal Working Group
- Explore opportunities to provide resources to build the capacity of those in the Aboriginal community who are supporting the coordination and integration of services

### **Engaging special needs stakeholders**

A wide range of special needs stakeholders are represented at the Best Start Network and its committees ([see Appendix 4](#) for membership list).

Over the next year the Best Start Network will seek to further strengthen the engagement of special needs stakeholders through the establishment of neighbourhood service provider teams (see Section 4, page 27, for details).

### **Engaging culturally and/or linguistically diverse stakeholders**

To date culturally and/or linguistically diverse stakeholders have been engaged in the initiative through representation at the Best Start Network and its Integrating Committee.

*"As a community there's a sense that we are having some success in engaging the immigrant, refugee and newcomer population. We are starting to see families register in our early years programs. In our conversations with each other we have acknowledge that as we move forward in our planning we need to be mindful of the unique needs of this population. While some families are accessing programs there is a considerable number that are not." --Provider*

Over the next year the Best Start Network will seek to strengthen the engagement of culturally and/or linguistically diverse stakeholders through the following action steps:

- Invite the Hamilton Centre for Civic Inclusion to meet with the Best Start Network (September 2007) and the Integrating Committee (June 2007) to discuss possible tools and resources to assist Best Start organizations with the important work of engaging culturally diverse communities
- Continue to engage Settlement and Integration Services Organization (SISO) in the planning and delivery of the post-partum mood disorders initiative
- Explore opportunities to engage the LINC / ESL programs and their child minding / child care programs
- Work with the above key stakeholders to identify creative approaches to engaging this population. These approaches could include speaking with religious/community leaders, strengthening our relationships with our community partners that serve this population, using language specific newspapers, attending cultural celebrations, etc.
- Explore opportunities to provide resources to build the capacity of those in the culturally and/or linguistically diverse community who are supporting the coordination and integration of services

## Section 3: 2007-08 Strategies to Move Forward with the Community Vision for Best Start

### Description of emergent needs and gaps within the community

*“When I speak with other mothers of children with special needs...I am reminded how lucky we were to get this placement. Some have had long waits -- or are waiting still...I would hate for children to miss out on important learning experiences during the critical window of opportunity in the toddler and preschool years.” -- Parent*

The following section reflects strategies to move forward with the community vision for Best Start. The gaps and needs identified herein, as well as the strategies that are identified as means of closing these gaps, were gathered through the community consultation process as well as through an analysis of previous Service Plans and other data available in the community such as the child care unmet needs report.

#### Service gaps

The following were identified as gaps in the early years services system:

- Identifying the families that are not being reached and understanding why – including culturally and linguistically diverse families, newcomer families, families living in poverty, Gay Lesbian Bisexual and Transgender/queer community, etc.
- Access to full-spectrum of services for all, including Aboriginal, French-speaking, newcomer and other culturally and linguistically diverse children/families, families living in poverty/low income
- Meeting increased need for special needs resources (for children, families and staff):
  - Providing child development screening clinics at all sites
  - Serving culturally diverse populations
  - Improving system of referrals and linkages to other service systems and specialized services
- Availability of parent resource materials in French and other languages

#### Community needs

- Early childhood educator recruitment, retention and supply (refer to Section 5 (page 39) – Child Care Service Plan for more details) including the recruitment and retention of French-speaking staff for early years programs and services
- Physical space for service delivery; lack of space (especially high quality space that meets the needs of the population / program) impacts the ability to co-locate and integrate services/programs
- Establishing mechanisms to ensure programs and resources provided under the banner of Best Start are of the highest quality possible

#### Strategies to further close gaps in service and meet community needs

This section identifies and describes a range of strategies the community will undertake to further close the gaps in service and meet community needs.

## **Strategies to further close service gaps**

### ***Ensuring access to full-spectrum of services for all***

The following work has been identified as a key next step for the Integrating Committee. This work will be supported by and through the engagement of neighbourhood parent advisory committees and, once established, the neighbourhood service provider teams.

Key action steps for the next year and beyond:

- Identifying and understanding barriers to access for these families (for example, language, culture, transportation / location, eligibility criteria, wait lists, etc.)
- Continuing to ensure what is offered at each centre reflects the unique neighbourhood needs and circumstances (for example, poverty, mobility, complexity of needs)
- Discussing the need for and develop specific approaches / special programming for working within high needs areas / neighbourhoods
- Ensuring access and continuity for mobile families
  - The service delivery model for the neighbourhood service provider teams will be designed taking into consideration the needs of mobile families; the model will identify mechanisms to ensure a smooth transition for families that move from one neighbourhood / centre to another (for example, have specific providers follow a family across boundaries and help the family get established in the new neighbourhood and with a new team)
  - Good communication between neighbourhood service provider teams will be critical
- Identify staff supports – especially for those working within high needs neighbourhoods

In addition to the above the Best Start Network will continue to support the expansion planning taking place at current Francophone sites (for example, Notre Dame).

### **Extending our reach - identifying the families not being reached and understanding why**

Over the next 12 months it will be critical to extend the early years system's reach to a range of key stakeholder communities including culturally and linguistically diverse communities and newcomer communities

This is work for the Integrating Committee and the Parent and Family Engagement Committee over the next year and beyond. Engaging parent advisory committees and neighbourhood service provider teams in the planning and implementation of this work will also be critical.

Key action steps:

- Use existing knowledge and expertise to identify the families that are not coming through the doors and understand the barriers or obstacles to connecting with the system. Knowledge and expertise will be drawn from parent advisory committees, service provider teams (once established), Integrating Committee, Parent and Family Engagement Committee, and Research and Evaluation Committee.
- Develop a common understanding of the neighbourhoods being served; share this knowledge (demographics and their implications) with key stakeholders and develop common solutions between key partners (effective knowledge utilization)
- Develop targeted outreach strategies (including a strategic communication component) for families who are not connected to the existing service system
  - Work will build on existing meeting places; these 'open doors' will be population and neighbourhood specific (examples could include recreation centres, libraries, long standing neighbourhood-based programs, etc.)

- Utilize mechanisms for promotion / marketing that people already access (for example, community newspapers (geographic- and language-based), local radio, etc.)
  - Recruit parent ambassadors
- Develop strategies to ensure families are aware of the services and programs available in their neighbourhood
  - Develop a marketing or communications plan that speaks to all levels
  - Build on simple, stable messages
  - Identify and promote key points of access to information (such as, Community Information Hamilton's child care information phone line)
  - Train staff so that parents are never sent away without some direction/guidance
- Engage newcomers and diverse communities
  - A range of strategies is required - what works for one group may not be appropriate for another
  - Need to more fully engage key stakeholders (leaders, providers and parents) from these communities and identify what they need
  - Use existing gathering and meeting places that have already established relationships with these communities
- Build on efforts of primary care initiative; engaging family physicians in the Best Start initiative offers an opportunity to reach populations / families that may not currently be connected to the early years system
- Strategies to further engage parents and families will contribute to extending the reach (see Section 2, page 17, for a more detailed discussion of parent and family engagement strategies)

### **Meeting increased need for special needs resources**

Currently the Best Start initiative is servicing new centres by doing 'more of the same'. The next year presents an opportunity to think about a new way of providing special needs supports and resources. It is time to develop a more integrated approach to using the expertise at each centre and across the city.

One challenge to the process of further integrating special needs resources is shifting the predominant view special needs resourcing from child-focused to program-focused. This means that programs are ready for special needs children as opposed to making individual children ready for the program. The Integrating Committee and the new service provider teams are good venues for these conversations and key vehicles to promote a shift in philosophy.

A key action step over the next year is to support the development of neighbourhood service provider teams. An important part of their work will be to find ways to serve a greater number of families in more flexible and accessible ways. (See Section 4, page 27, for more a detailed discussion of the neighbourhood service provider teams)

### **Availability of parent resource materials in French and other languages**

In order to improve the availability of parent resource materials in French and other languages the Best Start Network will work with the new French-language Program Supervisor at the MCYS to leverage available resources to meet this need.

Over the next several months the Integrating Committee and its neighbourhood service provider teams will document the gaps / needs regarding culturally and linguistically appropriate parent resource materials.

## **Strategies to meet community needs**

### **Early childhood educator recruitment, retention and supply**

The Best Start Network will continue to support the new ECE recruitment and retention committee. See Section 5 (Child Care Service Plan, page 39) for a more detailed discussion of strategies to address the ECE recruitment and retention issue.

The Best Start Network and its Integrating Committee will explore opportunities to more effectively coordinate ECE peer mentorship mechanisms. Mentorship and partnering of ECEs or child care programs is already taking place informally through Affiliated Services for Children and Youth (ASCY) and the Supervisor's Network. Enhancing coordination of peer mentorship mechanisms would include the following actions:

- Review and update (if required) ASCY's list of local ECEs with specific skills / training and who are willing to volunteer their time
- Establish a process whereby ASCY (formally) is the primary point of contact / coordination
- Clarify role of the Supervisor's Network as venue for identifying needs and initiating linkages
- Build on lessons learned from the existing peer mentoring mechanism for new ECE recruits

It is important to acknowledge that while the above strategies should contribute to improved recruitment and retention they do not address the core issues (pay, education, and recognition). The ability to address these core issues is limited by the current funding levels for the child care system overall.

### **Ensuring high quality programming across the system**

The Best Start Network and its committees will champion the development of quality guidelines for OEYCs. The following key issues should be considered during this work:

- Guidelines should cover quality of physical space as well as quality of programming. (Note: monitoring the quality of service and system integration will be supported through the use of the best practices working group tool; see Section 4, page 30, for details.) Sustainability of high quality programming should also be addressed.
- Guidelines should build on existing quality assurance mechanisms such as the Healthy Child Care Environments program and its Raising the Bar on Quality initiative.

Preliminary discussions are underway to assess the feasibility of developing a Raising the Bar module for OEYCs with the goal of producing a module by the end of 2007/2008.

In addition to the above, the Best Start Network will build on community efforts to tie funding for early years services and programs to measures of quality (for example, develop expectations regarding quality assurance within service contracts or licensing processes).

### **On-going identification of community needs and continuing to push forward this agenda**

Key action steps for Best Start committees include:

- Continue to monitor where we have gaps in early years services
- Identify and characterize the gaps; this will involve using continuous feedback mechanisms such as existing population and service utilization data, parent / family feedback, unmet needs reports from the Child Care Information Line, OEYC parent surveys, and provider feedback gathered via existing networks and committees (such as, Supervisors Network and the CMSM Child Care Working Group).
- Develop a tool that helps identify whether targets are being met with regards to closing service gaps; integrate this tool into Network and committee work plans

- Bring gaps to the attention of funders future community service plans and other existing reporting mechanisms

### **Outcomes for families – where we’d like to be at the end of 2007/08 and beyond**

During the planning consultation process early years providers and champions identified the following key outcomes for families. These outcomes bring focus and purpose to the work of the Best Start Network over the next year and beyond.

- Families can access the services and supports they need, meaning that services and supports are
  - offered at various times and days
  - located in places that are familiar and comfortable
  - culturally appropriate
  - affordable
  - address neighbourhood-specific needs or strengths
- Parents experience seamless services/programs; collaboration happens between all providers throughout a child’s day
- Parents feel valued, respected and engaged by the programs their children participate in
- Families are informed regarding program quality; they know what to look for and they feel confident in the quality of the programs and services they use
- Reaching a new segment of the population; engaging families that are not currently connected to the early years system

*“Real gaps will only be closed when we dedicate more effort to integration and begin to see more results for families. Services are still too fragmented and even information about how to access services is not available for all families – particularly those with barriers to participation (for example, poverty, language, culture, geography).” -- Provider*

### **Obstacles and challenges to closing gaps and moving forward with Best Start Vision**

#### ***Working with mobile populations and families with complex needs***

Working with mobile populations and families with complex needs presents a challenge to moving forward with the Best Start Vision. Quality of programming and family-provider relationships is critical in these neighbourhoods. Referring families to basic needs services (food, housing, clothing, etc.) is critical yet time consuming work. There is a risk of the educational and/or developmental needs of the child getting lost and expectations in these areas being lowered.

Working with mobile populations presents the challenge of ensuring continuity of support and relationships. This can be challenging within the context of a neighbourhood-based service delivery model. It will be important for the service delivery model to remaining flexible enough to provide continuity for highly mobile families. Each service provider team will need to develop neighbourhood-specific strategies to ensure continuity of care and relationships. (See Section 4, page 27, for strategies to ensure continuity within the neighbourhood service provider team model.)

The Best Start Vision will be an important touchstone for early years providers in their work. Furthermore, professional development and training will be key to supporting providers to meet the needs of all families.

## **Communication**

There are several key communication challenges when considering how to close service gaps and move forward with the Best Start Vision. These include:

- Coming to a consensus on Best Start and hub branding
- The diversity and range of families within the neighbourhoods being served; information on early years programs and services and the mechanisms to share this information should reflect this diversity and range

## **Human resource constraints**

Human resource challenges include:

- Recruitment and retention of high quality ECEs
- Burn out of front-line workers
- Role clarification as the services and system move towards increasing levels of integration
- Availability of high quality interpreter services (language and cultural interpretation)

## **Community development process**

It takes time to develop a sense of community within hubs/OEYCs. It takes time to develop and implement new services especially when integration is the goal. This presents a challenge to the work of the Best Start Network – the challenge of balancing the realities of a community development process with the need to demonstrate impact and value within existing funding and planning cycles. The Network will work to address this challenge by identifying and celebrating successes and milestones on a regular basis with a wide audience of stakeholders.

## **Program mandates and competing demands**

Constraints in mandates at the organizational level pose a challenge for many involved in the Best Start initiative. The tension lies in working towards providing holistic and seamless services while adhering to organizational mandates and priorities.

## **Municipal By-laws**

At a municipal level zoning by-laws (specifically by-laws on parking) have presented a challenge to maximizing program capacity/spaces. Over the next year the Best Start Network will work with the City of Hamilton to identify opportunities to overcome these zoning by-law limitations.

## **Funding**

Funding levels have impacted the ability of the community to close service gaps and move forward with the Best Start Vision. For example:

- Funding uncertainties have impacted the degree of hub implementation (all hubs not open full-time) and accessibility of full-spectrum of services
- Funding formulas and levels are an obstacle to making physical space available for integrated services
- City-wide service expansion has taken place within a context of mostly fixed budgets – there is a lack of funding to address the increased demand on resources that accompanied service expansion

## **Section 4: Strategies for Move Forward with System Integration**

### **BSN Network Strategies for Moving Forward with System Integration**

The section highlights the Best Start Network's strategies for moving forward with system integration. It will explore the integration experience to date, the Best Start Network's integration goals for the next year and beyond, strategies for moving further along the continuum of system integration and how to address challenges and obstacles to system integration.

#### **i) The integration experience to date**

Overall and across the community, there is a sense that Hamilton's work to date would place it somewhere between communication and cooperation on the integration continuum. (See the Integration Index within *Building on the Foundation – Moving Forward: Addendum to the Implementation Planning Guidelines for Best Start Networks – System Integration* (2006) for more information on the integration continuum). However, this is a broad generalization and clearly within the community there are areas where integration is far more advanced and others where it may be less so.

Looking at integration from a variety of perspectives, then, is perhaps a more useful way to understand the 'state' of integration in this community, as well as where successes have been realized and challenges lie.

The following briefly examines findings from the community consultation with regards to integration from the perspective of the hubs, parents, and the Best Start Network.

#### **Integration experience from the hub perspective**

The level of system integration differs at each hub / OEYC site. It is dependent upon:

- how long the location or a particular program has been operating in a particular community / neighbourhood
- how long the service provider / program partnerships have been in place
- type of service, the sector and history of working with community partners

Across the city there are examples of locations that are at the cooperation or even collaboration stage of integration and examples of locations that are at the very early stages of integration (awareness and communication).

- Coordination examples: Early Words and Infant Hearing Program are planning together and going to see families at OEYCs; child development screening clinics are being held clinics at OEYC sites and offer screening for speech, hearing, vision, dental, nutrition, healthy development, etc.
- Collaboration examples: inter-professional development team is hosting joint training and networking events for teachers and ECEs and talking about how to move into joint planning activities.

#### **Integration experience from the parent perspective**

The integration experience from the parent perspective is impacted by the level of integration at a hub. It also depends upon the parents' existing awareness of services in their community and their level of engagement pre-Best Start.

### **Integration experience from the Network perspective**

There are examples of Best Start Network members engaged at all stages of the integration continuum depend upon each members' experience in the service system (and their organization's history) and level of engagement in the initiative.

### **ii) Where do we want to be? Our integration goals for the next year and beyond**

Integration is an organic process and with different programs, providers, and sectors at different points along the continuum based on past experience, age, depth of existing partnerships, etc, setting uniform goals across the community is problematic. The end point (for example, where we want to be next year) will differ by location, program, sector and provider because they are all starting at different points along the integration continuum.

However, at the end of the year we should be seeing progress, as measured by movement along the integration continuum at all locations and amongst all partners regardless of their starting point.

One principal area of focus is parent and family engagement. In many respects, this is the area with the most potential for moving forward on integration as Best Start activities over the past year have been focused on the rapid service expansion and the internal workings and foundations of the service provider teams (such as, identification of programs and locations, development of partnerships, recruitment of staff, etc.). Many involved in the consultation indicated that now time to turn the focus to engaging parents and families.

Yet, different starting parts and shifting areas of focus do not mean that there is not a longer-term desired outcome in terms of integration. Most simply stated, this outcome would be a unitary system that allows resources and professionals to follow a child across service sectors – from prenatal to birth to OEYC and child care to school – and across any geographic shifts (for example, moves) that might take place as well!

### **ii) Strategies for moving forward with system integration**

Key strategies for moving forward with the vision for system integration are outlined below.

#### **Establish and support neighbourhood service provider teams**

Neighbourhood service provider teams in each of the seven Best Start neighbourhoods / areas are a crucial mechanism for moving forward with system integration. Issues to be addressed will include: membership (core and linked), team skills and expertise, coordination requirements (agenda planning, chairing meetings, etc.), staff resources, communication, continuity.

A key Integrating Committee strategy for the next year is to support the development and functioning of the neighbourhood service provider teams through:

- Developing a flexible service delivery model including the role of case coordination / management
- Identifying in-service training and inter-professional development needs
- Identifying neighbourhood-specific information requirements (for assessing neighbourhood needs, strengths and context)
- Development of a business case for a directory of early years services that would list local services and programs for children ages 0-6 and their families
- Building on the success of the primary care strategy's referral flow chart for family physicians and considering the development of a similar tool for the service provider teams

### **Utilize strengths and expertise found at parent advisory committees**

Key actions steps for the next year include:

- Nurture existing centre parent advisory committees
- Identify new or outstanding training and orientation needs
- Establish lines of communication between parent advisory committees, service provider teams, the Integrating Committee and the Parent and Family Engagement Committee
- Explore opportunities to forge linkages between neighbourhood advisory committees and other parent groups from the neighbourhood (for example, local school parent groups, child care board of directors and parent advisory groups, etc.)

Key roles for the parent advisory committees over the next year include:

- Ensuring what is offered at each centre reflects the unique neighbourhood needs and circumstances
- Identifying and understanding the barriers to accessing the full spectrum of services (see strategies in Section 3, page 21, for details)
- Identifying the families that are not currently connected to the early years system and understanding why (see strategies in Section 3, page 21, for details)
- Identifying the kinds of information and supports required to make the above assessments

### **Assess options regarding local implementation of the Early Learning Framework**

The recent release of the Early Learning Framework represents an opportunity to further promote the value and benefit of working together. Key action steps over the next year include:

- Disseminate the Early Learning Framework to Best Start Network members
- Review options regarding the development of a local implementation plan

*“As a community, we are ready! We think the Early Learning Framework will be the catalyst that moves us into the next phase of our collaboration, and that it will give us a focus to guide our work together in the years ahead.” -- Community stakeholder, Best Start Network member*

### **Support school – community linkages**

The Best Start Network will continue to work with its school board representatives to improve awareness and encourage further commitment and buy-in at all levels. Specific mechanisms consider include:

- General presentations to further awareness and demonstrate value / importance of working with community partners
- Inter-professional development and training opportunities (see below, page 29, for details)
- Encouraging and supporting principals and/or teachers to attend the local parent advisory committee meetings

Colleges and universities have a role to play in terms of changing the culture. For example, they are well positioned to enhance ECEs’ and teachers’ level of understanding about the importance of the early years and working with community partners.

### **Integrated Services Coordinator**

- Continue to build on the positive impact of the Integrated Services Coordinator’s work with OEYCs, child care and schools.
- Identify further opportunities for partnerships and integration (for example, expanding reach to additional service providers including mental health and private sector).

### **Build on existing partnership with Hamilton's Roundtable on Poverty Reduction**

Continue to build and enhance the relationship with the Hamilton Roundtable for Poverty Reduction, recognizing the potential impact these two initiatives can have in terms of shifting cultures and profoundly impacting the lives of children and families in Hamilton. Please see Section 2 (page 15) of this Plan for further details.

### **Build on the success of the primary care strategy**

The primary care strategy is making good progress in terms of raising the level of awareness of the 18 month well baby assessment and the importance of the early years. The strategy will now include in its area of focus actual uptake and practice changes. Key next steps for the primary care strategy include:

- Continue to utilize and build the initiative on the skills and expertise of nurses
- Explore opportunities to connect with paediatricians in the community
- Continue with the development and implementation of a public service announcement to promote the use of the Nipissing screen
- Develop and test the Aboriginal pictorial Nipissing tool
- Participate in the development of an electronic Rourke Baby Record
- Continue on-going evaluation work

### **Continue implementation of post-partum mood disorders initiative**

Over the next year the post-partum mood disorders initiative will continue to build on the primary care partnerships and linkages. Some specific activities for the next year include:

- Expand the use of the Edinburgh tool with Family Health Teams (session planned for June 2007)
- Disseminate resources to a broader provider network including hospitals, community physicians, etc.

### **Learn from Best Start demonstration area experiences for benefit of wider community**

Over the next year the Research and Evaluation Committee will continue their important evaluation and dissemination work. Key activities include:

- Disseminate implementation evaluation findings when available from MCYS
- Continue with the implementation of the process evaluation for the demonstration area; this will involve data collection tool development, seeking ethics approval, conduct focus groups and surveys, and continuous feedback to the Network's committees.
- Develop a strategy to implement the Province's integration indicators tool once it is made available by the MCYS. This data will complement the primarily qualitative data captured during process evaluation and contribute towards a greater understanding of the process of system integration within the demonstration area and beyond.

### **Build on the early success of inter-professional development events; provide more opportunities for joint training and planning**

The Best Start Network will continue to support the work of the Joint Professional Development Committee and build on the success of the two inter-professional development sessions held to date (see Section 1, page 7, for details). Over the next several months the Committee will shift its attention to identifying specific training needs and priorities for the neighbourhood service delivery teams while continuing to offer broader sessions aimed at developing a common understanding and shared respect between early learning and education professionals.

### **Identify and implement knowledge mobilization priorities for the year**

Key Research and Evaluation Committee activities for the next year include:

- Explore opportunities to improve data management infrastructure across the early years service system. To start this will involve presenting the database recommendations to the Network or the most relevant committee.
- Engage neighbourhood service provider teams and neighbourhood parent advisory committees in identifying and utilizing neighbourhood-level data / information to guide planning decisions (for example, EDI, census, service utilization, etc.)
- EDI analysis and dissemination activities including:
  - Create an analysis and dissemination work group with broad representation
  - Continue to develop linkages with key groups for dissemination including ECEs, Kindergarten teachers, Mohawk ECE faculty, etc.
  - Identify opportunities to overlay neighbourhood specific data / information to help with interpretation (for example, library program utilization and evaluation data)
  - Use above process and model for on-going analysis and dissemination activities (beyond EDI) to ensure evidence-based planning

### **Build on the work of the best practices workgroup; implement the self-assessment and monitoring tool for integration**

The Best Practices Workgroup has developed a framework to guide the development of integration best practices, including a tool for self-assessment and monitoring of integration efforts to be used by service providers, agencies or parents. Key next steps include:

- Disseminate to Integrating Committee members with training / orientation sessions
- Support each OEYC site to implement the tool; this will involve identifying program/site specific indicators as well as accompanying data sources

### **Establish common vocabulary and terminology among service providers**

Key action steps for the next year include:

- Disseminate the Best Start glossary to Network members and neighbourhood service provider teams
- Maintain and update glossary as the system becomes more integrated (Best Practices Workgroup as the lead)

### **Move from tactical to strategic communications**

A key area of focus for communications over the next year will be to work with the Network's committees to support a shift from tactical, short-term strategies to more strategic communications strategies.

### **iii) Challenges and obstacles to moving forward with system integration**

Identifying challenges within an initiative like Best Start is itself a challenge. As with any large and significant community undertaking, there are always conditions and factors that will impact how processes are developed, decisions are made and accomplishments are realized. Overcoming challenges 'on the fly' as it were, through relationships, trust-building and communication is to a large degree a very strong measure of how successful any initiative will be. Articulating the challenges faced and to be faced, therefore, is actually helpful to the process and mapping out where a community is and where it wants to be. The risk in identifying the challenges, however, is that they provide an excuse for limiting what it is that can be achieved.

Hamilton identifies the following as some of the challenges it has faced – and continues to face – in moving forward with system integration. However, as a community it also knows that it has made tremendous strides and that these challenges – if given appropriate support and attention

– will not limit the community’s commitment or effort in attempting to fully integrate its early years service system .

### **Funding - Integration on fixed budgets**

Integration places demands on resources in two ways:

- Human resources: freeing up staff to participate in integration planning and implementation activities results in the need to back-fill for staff to fulfill day-to-day operational responsibilities.
- Service demands: expansion and integration of services achieved through Best Start to date has resulted in increased service demands. It must be acknowledged that if successful, Best Start and service integration necessitate more resources.

### **Funding – risk of losing positions dedicated to facilitating integration**

The positions dedicated to facilitating integration (for example, the Integrating Services Coordinator and project management support) are funded through the Best Start initiative. These positions are key to facilitating and supporting the Best Start Vision and system integration. Yet sustainability of these positions beyond the three year Best Start funding window is uncertain.

### **Funding silos – working across ministerial lines**

Local integration efforts are impacted by inconsistencies (funding protocols, mandates, training expectations, remuneration for staff, etc.) across the various provincial ministries (Ministry of Education, MCYS, Ministry of Health, and Ministry of Health Promotion). Examining and acting upon opportunities for integration at the ministry level would facilitate system integration at the local level.

The Best Start Network will continue to advocate for funding re-alignments which reflect the coordinated and integrating nature of the system. This includes the Network’s request to have the OEYCs’ funding flowed through the Municipality.

### **Information system challenges**

The Research and Evaluation Committee’s database sub-committee has outlined the community’s data management needs and identified a preferred database / data management option. It is clear that significant investments in the early years system’s data management and database infrastructure are required in order to fully implement the evaluation framework and move towards an integrated system.

### **Hubs as a Venue for System Integration**

The following section explores the hub as a venue for system integration and will describe the following:

- Existing hubs – Hamilton’s Ontario Early Years Centres
- Planning for new OEYCs
- Meeting the needs of diverse populations including linkages with existing services
- Strategies to facilitate collaborative service delivery
- Addressing implementation challenges and barriers

### **i) Existing hubs – Hamilton’s Ontario Early Years Centres**

In building on the OEYC infrastructure in the demonstration site, there are seven Best Start hubs locations. Two of these locations are fully functioning OEYCs that had their services enhanced through Best Start and five are newly created Best Start neighbourhood sites.

Five hubs are located in schools (St David School, Hillcrest School, École Notre Dame, Elizabeth Bagshaw School, Holy Name of Jesus School) and two hubs are located in community sites (Hamilton East Kiwanis Boys’ and Girls’ Club and the Aboriginal-led hub at Pinky Lewis).

In keeping with the commitment to build on the early years’ infrastructure which already existed within Hamilton, the two Ontario Early Years Centres located in the demonstration site are responsible for administrating, coordinating and integrating the services provided at each of the Hubs.

See [Appendix 6](#) for a more detailed description of Hamilton’s OEYCs.

### **ii) Planning for new Ontario Early Years Centres**

Recently Hamilton has made the decision that all of these hubs will be referred to as OEYCs. This decision was based on the fact the OEYCs have a reputation in our community with parents and children for access to many important services. The Best Start initiative has built on the name recognition of OEYCs and will continue to provide the services to families that includes speech and language service, public health services, post partum services, support for the 18 month well baby check up and a number of other options reflective of the communities they serve.

Hamilton is currently in the process of opening of an additional site that will be exclusive to the aboriginal community that is building on the half-day Niwasa Head Start Preschool child care program. The opening is planned for September 2007.

On May 3 2007, representatives from the Hamilton Best Start Network, the Integrating Committee, the CMSM, MCYS, the Boards of education and representatives from OEYCs and Child Care attended a session to discuss the development of a process for the planning of new OEYCs in Hamilton.

As a result of that session a decision was made that endorsed Integrating Committee as the logical venue / table for early learning and care centre planning. At present a small working group is being struck under the Integrating Committee to develop a planning protocol based on the findings described in [Appendix 7](#).

Full details of this decision, the context and its impact can be found in [Appendix 7](#).

### **iii) Meeting the needs of diverse populations (Aboriginal, French-speaking, special needs, cultural/linguistic, etc.) including linkages with existing services**

#### **Integrated Planning**

- These key stakeholder groups have representation at the Integrating Committee
- Francophone and Aboriginal planning is also taking place at their respective provincial and regional networks

- French-speaking and Aboriginal representatives participate in the former OEYC ‘coordinator’s table’ – this is a venue for coordinating services offered at OEYCs and ensuring linkages with community services/programs serving Aboriginal and French-speaking families
- Diverse communities and newcomer linkages –some OEYCs have considerable experience in working with diverse communities

### **Meeting Needs**

- Early Words (preschool speech and language) and the Infant Hearing Program have space at each main OEYC site and the Hamilton East demonstration area hubs thus making screening services more accessible to families. These two programs are looking to expand services to OEYC satellite sites on a rotating basis.
- Child development screening clinics are providing a range of early identification services in a coordinated fashion
- McMaster Children’s Hospital (Chedoke) therapists are starting incorporating visits to local OEYCs in their autism therapy program
- Aboriginal and French-speaking community representatives sit on the Early Literacy Hamilton Committee
- Public Health Nurses are now visiting most OEYC sites across the city

### **iv) Strategies to facilitate collaborative service delivery**

#### **Mechanisms that have been successful in facilitating collaborative service delivery between programs and services within the hubs**

- Building on existing infrastructure and relationships (such as, OEYC system) at all levels from front-line to decision-makers
- Services were already existing in a collaborative system - relationships existed and there was a good level of awareness of each other’s business
- Integrating Services Coordinator position has facilitated the identification and implementation of integration opportunities
- Co-location – providing one easy access point for multiple services and supports within a neighbourhood
- Importance of acknowledging that everyone is at a different stage of integration; support those at the early stages and share experiences of those at later stages of integration

#### **Success factors**

- Building strong relationships with all four school boards
- Inclusive approaches – purposefully sought out a wide range of partners and tried to engage all early years service providers
- Neighbourhood parent advisory committees
- Strong community commitment
- Hubs/OEYCs were developed ‘where it made sense’ for the community

#### **New mechanisms to be developed to prepare for future hub**

- Expansion planning process should give careful consideration to the existing neighbourhood meeting spaces – take time to reflect on what is already successful in each neighbourhood and what is already naturally happening
- Take time to come to a common vision for each neighbourhood
- Support a process to engage and involve community members (via Parent and Family Engagement Committee and neighbourhood parent advisory committees)
- Take time to promote joint training / in-servicing among all service providers

- Develop cultural model – create inclusion and integration for all groups (culturally and needs specific)
- Develop mechanisms to ensure high quality programming and space
- Develop mechanisms to ensure that integration is taking place / moving forward in all levels of system (front-line, management, etc.)

## **v) Addressing challenges and barriers to hub implementation**

### **Challenges or barriers to hub implementation over the past year**

Many of the challenges or barriers faced with regards to hub implementation over the past year are outlined in Section 1 (page 10). Key challenges described in this section include:

- Recognizing that Best Start is not a program; seeing it as an approach to serving families / an initiative
- It takes time to develop and implement new services and the Best Start timelines were very tight
- Finding physical space to provide programming/supports
- Transient communities – high rates of mobility means it takes time to build trust with families
- Communicating to the general community (What is Best Start? What services are available?); to date the focus has been on communicating to providers
- Site branding
- Staff recruitment and retention
- Developing a common understanding of the community/neighbourhood being served
- Financial challenges – OEYCs are operating on a fixed budget while costs increase due to inflation (staff salaries, rent increases, repairs, increase in number of locations, etc.)

### **Anticipated challenges or barriers as new hubs are developed**

Many of the challenges or barriers faced with regards to hub implementation over the past year are outlined in Section 3 (page 24) and Section 4-Part A (page 30). Key challenges described in this section include:

- Human resource challenges: recruitment and retention; freeing up staff for integration work
- Funding - Integration on fixed budgets; risk of losing positions dedicated to facilitating integration; working across ministerial lines
- Information system challenges
- Working with mobile populations and families with complex needs
- Communication
- Time and resource requirements for community development processes
- Program mandates and competing demands
- Municipal by-laws

## **Integrated Planning and Service Delivery Amongst Best Start Network partners**

### **i) Integration of child care in schools**

See Sections 3 (page 20), 4A (page 27) and 5 (Child Care Services Plan, page 56) for a more detailed description of integration strategies. Key points to consider include:

- There are opportunities for further sharing of programming information between child care, OEYCs, special needs therapist
- Opportunities for further improving continuity for child and family re: special needs (building on the strong progress to date)

- Working at the principal level – this is where things can happen, therefore getting them on board is key
- Early Learning Framework – reviewing option regarding local implementation
- Opportunities to meet, dialogue and mobilize knowledge between Kindergarten teachers and ECEs

#### **Outcomes for 2007/2008**

- Increased joint dialogue and planning activities between child care ECEs and JK/SK teachers; moving towards a seamless approach to educating children and transitioning from child care to school
- More integrated program delivery and planning in the special needs area

#### **Outcomes for long-term**

- Common understanding and shared respect between early learning and education professionals (for example, movement towards Toronto First Duty model)
- Unitary system that allows resources and professionals to follow a child from preschool to school (for example, preschool speech and language therapist assigned to a 3 year old and works with them in child care centre and follows child into the school; same therapist moves across 'systems' not disjointed)

#### **Challenges and obstacles**

Challenges and obstacles to the integration of child care in schools are described in more detail in Section 3 (page 24), Section 4A (page 30) and Section 5 (Child Care Services Plan, page 54). Key challenges include:

- Funding uncertainties – human resources:
  - Sustainability of dedicating staffing resources to integration work
  - Challenge for staff of meeting day-to-day responsibilities while carving off time for integration work
- Funding uncertainties – capital and operating expenses for child care
- City's zoning by-laws are a challenge to offering child care in schools; parking space requirements can limit the number of children a program can accept
- Quality of the physical space available for hubs
- Time / availability to participate in the integration dialogue and planning; being part of the discussions requires a significant time commitment; staff and management are already stretched across numerous initiatives while front-line staff are often struggling to meet day-to-day responsibilities

#### **ii) Preschool speech and language and infant hearing program**

**Preschool speech and language (PSL) enhancements and supporting Best Start Vision Early Words/1ers mots Service Enhancement Plans:**

##### Improved Access

- Initial referral assessments at 7 OEYC sites: Schedule will be expanded according to proven need this past year and OEYC space availability
- Expansion of 1ers mots services to an additional francophone school-based site

### Enhanced Kindergarten Services

- Service to CCAC fluency waitlist continues
- CCAC articulation/phonology interventions begin fall 2007. This is estimated to be 80 additional Kindergarten referrals

### Enhanced Childcare-based Services

- Embedded range of SLP/CDA services within the child care pilot project site. Expansion of this pilot project through ECD Integrating Committee to another high needs childcare center.

### Enhanced Core Early Words/1ers mots Services

- Early literacy projects: University of Toronto research site, Phonological Awareness child group intervention, and Early Literacy Hamilton projects
- Expansion of Level 1 and Level 2 parent group interventions
- Enhanced auditory oral training for SLPs to improve support to children with permanent hearing impairment

The enhancements to PSL services support our community's vision of Best Start in a number of ways. Early Words will continue to support our primary care early identification strategy through physician and nurse education and OEYC drop-in speech and language assessments as part of a community screening initiative. Initial assessments at our OEYCs also promote the use of these valued parenting resource center across our community. Access to community based speech and language services will be made easier for more families. In particular, families who have traditionally found it difficult to access Early Words services at our hospital partners will receive more of their services from OEYC and childcare locations. Children and their parents can also receive more flexibly scheduled services. Communication services for children attending JK and SK with severe needs will be augmented significantly through a number of integration strategies and wait times reduced across all EW services. Language and literacy services for a broader range of children with speech and language impairments and universal parent education options regarding language and literacy development will be enhanced. Selected Early Words service providers will become members of integrated service provider teams across our community, providing coordinated family-centered care.

### **Infant hearing program (IHP) enhancements and supporting Best Start Vision**

IHP funding enhancements are resulting (or will result) in:

Providing IHP services to children aged 2.5 to 6 years

Consider expansion of IHP community screening beyond 5 main OEYC sites as warranted by use

This year Family Support Worker (FSW) time was increased from 0.2 FTE to 0.4 FTE to enable redesign of family support services within the IHP. This has allowed:

The option of an initial home visit for newly identified children

Enhanced integration of team services through a child and family centered team model

Further development of transition to school processes in our region specific to children with permanent hearing impairment and integrated with existing transition to school board processes

### **Blind-low vision early intervention program**

The Blind-Low Vision Early Intervention Program for Hamilton, Niagara, Brant and Haldimand Norfolk is a new program to support the healthy development of young children born blind or with low vision. Services will include family support and counselling, family centered parent training, childcare consultation and specialized interventions. An implementation plan was

submitted to MCYS on May 31 and implementation is expected by August, 2007. Planning for this submission was developed through the four regional Best Start Networks.

### iii) Integration amongst Network partners – streamlining planning and delivery processes

#### Areas of work include:

- Increasing the awareness of the work of the Best Start Network and its various committees; this could help to avoid duplication across the community
- Streamlining the number of integration tables and committees and/or identify a more sustainable representative system
- Seek out opportunities to improve linkages with other planning tables such as, Contact, LHINs, etc.
- Investigate opportunities for cross-collaboration and service integration of City and community initiatives including:
  - Homelessness and Housing
  - OW – Voice/Utility/Special Supports/Child Care Subsidy
  - National Child Benefit
  - Recreation (Public Use Study)

The community has had some success in streamlining the planning and delivery of early years services. For example, OEYC Directors no longer meet as a distinct group, choosing in stead to meet as part of the larger Integrating Committee.

While the previous example does reflect the beginning of integration amongst Network partners and means of streamlining planning and delivery processes, to a very large extent this is work that the Hamilton Best Start Network is asking its members, as well as its community partners to engage in, over the next 12 months. As such, the Network has developed a document and a process whereby Network members and the broader early years community were asked to ‘sign-on’ to this document and make a commitment to:

*“...strengthening the alignment of my organization’s planning processes and the delivery models of the organizations, networks or groups of individuals that I represent, in an effort to move closer to achieving the Best Start Vision of improved access of services for children and families. This means seeking and supporting opportunities to engage in collaborative service delivery while ensuring links to Early Years Centres are developed and sustained and developing the mechanisms and tools that will facilitate collaborative service delivery and highlighting, describing and communicating with Hamilton early years community partners any of the implementation challenges or barriers that might be encountered in moving forward with the Best Start Vision, so that we can work together in developing strategies that overcome these...”*

See [Appendix 8](#) for the complete ‘sign-on’ document.

### Addressing challenges and obstacles to streamlined planning and delivery

#### Extent of integration within governments

The level of integration at government levels is a challenge. For example, local and provincial governments have separate departments for public health, child care, education, etc. These government silos (and resulting legislative / mandate silos) can challenge integration efforts at the local level. Additionally, Best Start initiative has the challenge of working across different ministries - MCYS and Education primarily but also the Ministry of Health and Ministry of Health

Promotion. A potential role for government (both local and provincial) is to show leadership and pilot integration efforts within their large organizations.

#### Planning cycle

The one-year timeframe for Best Start / Child Care / OEYC service plans has advantages: it is easier to forecast needs and identify appropriate and feasible strategies within a one-year timeframe. However, it also has significant disadvantages: resource intensive to do required consultation, data gathering and report writing. Many Best Start strategies will take more than one-year to implement and show results. Consideration and discussion is required to ensure appropriateness of future planning cycles.

#### **iv) Integration amongst primary care partners and programs**

The Primary Care initiative will continue to work with family physicians, nurses and nurse practitioners as well as Family Health Teams to ensure their participation and integration of the initiatives of Best Start's Primary Care strategy. This will include:

- Development and dissemination of a public service announcement on the use of the Nippising
- Development of Aboriginal pictorial Nippising tool in partnership with Niwasa
- Working with Family Health Teams to develop and pilot Electronic Rourke Baby Record
- As awareness has increased, the challenge becomes developing strategies to shift practice and change behaviour

## Chapter 2 – 2007-2008 Child Care Service Plan

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### Section 1: Progress Towards Achieving the Long-term Vision for Best Start

Hamilton's child care Supervisors' Network and the CMSM Child Care Working Group were consulted to help inform the overall development of this community plan. As noted, these groups have provided their invaluable input in all aspects of this community plan, however, their experience in and on-going commitment to the provision of child care in this community is reflected significantly in the following section of this document.

#### Accomplishments and progress

In striving to achieve the long-term vision of Best Start in Hamilton the following accomplishments have been realized:

*"My child has been very comfortable at his new Centre and has become better at sharing, making things like art and has also improved talking, too. All thanks to the staff members who have been there from the start for him. He really likes them – and so do I!" -- Parent of Child in Centre-based care within the Best Start demonstration site area*

#### Increased access to services and supports

- Increase in number of child care spaces across the city due to Best Start
- Increased accessibility to child care within the demo area where new locations have provided local spaces, which relieve transportation issues, reducing barriers to access
- New demo hubs have increased accessibility to services for families; offering a range of services in a consistent manner being delivered where the parents live
- Implementation of universal early learning and preschool program in demonstration area; strong uptake on the preschool universal child care program in some areas

#### Strengthening linkages with schools and other early years partners

- Communication amongst all partners has improved including with school boards
- Linkages have seen great improvement in the demonstration site – but there have also been inroads outside of the demo site
- Level of trust between sectors and professions is increasing as relationships strengthen, especially between schools, child care and OEYCs; open communication occurring – this is taking place in the demo area, where it is an expectation, but there are also examples of this happening outside of demo area; need to continue to share success stories from demo area to encourage similar activities across the entire city
- Increased recognition among boards/schools (especially teachers and principals) of the importance of early learning, the importance of community linkages and of the local system of early years services/programs
  - Boards are completing information sessions with principals on the importance of community partnerships and working within broader community context
  - Starting to see the payoff from the above sessions; very positive impact in some neighbourhoods
  - There are some examples of shared curriculum and using common themes for teaching
  - Principals are key link and engagement point

### **Working towards a seamless transition to school**

- High expectation for the pre-school universal child care component regarding Kindergarten readiness; anecdotal evidence from Early Childhood Educators is that they are already seeing improvements in school readiness and gains throughout the year
- Transition to school for special needs children program is working well; a coordinated team approach to transition is receiving very positive feedback
  - schedule now in place to hold meetings with families and key professionals (therapists, teacher, principal, support facilitators, etc.)
  - seeing stronger linkages and communication between Board/teacher, parents, therapists (and sometimes child care provider)
  - this provides more continuity for the child and their parents

Please refer to Section 1 (pages 5 to 10) of the Best Start Plan for more details on child care accomplishments and progress made to date that support the community Best Start Vision.

### **Closing the gaps and meeting the needs**

During the past year, the number of French language child care spaces increased by 21 and discussions are currently underway to expand a full day Aboriginal specific child care program by year end. The CMSM will work with key stakeholders so expanded services to meet the needs of culturally diverse families in our community can be implemented. Recent connections have been made with the newly opened Hamilton Centre for Civic Inclusion to assist with meeting this need.

### **Creating new licensed spaces**

Between January and September 2006, the CMSM provided capital and operational start up funding to child care agencies through a capital call out process. This resulted in 937 new child care spaces being created in the 0 – 6 age group, the primary focus for Best Start. A total of 427 were created in the demonstration area and 510 across the broader community.

It is important to note that there was also an increase to child care spaces that provide services to children aged 6 – 12 years. Through January – December 2006, an additional 172 spaces were created across the community.

Although the majority of spaces were created within a school setting, all child care expansion demonstrated links to the neighbourhood schools for which the child care agency is operating.

### **Implementation of universal early learning and preschool program in the Best Start demonstration area**

- Thirteen child care centres within the demonstration area are providing an early learning and preschool half day program serving a maximum of 288 children.

See Section 1c (below) for further description of the universal early learning and preschool program

Please also see Section 1 (pages 8 to 9) of the Best Start Plan for more information.

### **Wage subsidies and wage improvements**

- The CMSM continues to work with the child care community regarding the distribution of wage subsidies.

- There were 1050 Early Learning professionals who received approximately \$230.00 in wage improvement funding in 2006.
- There was an increase in wage subsidy funding in 2006, where an additional \$759,256 was distributed.
- See Section 1c (below) for further description of wage subsidy and wage improvements.

#### **Continuing to invest in special needs / individualized supports**

- Increased accessibility to child care for children with special needs
- Increase in funding to support an additional 4 Full time equivalent staff
- Children with special needs are being identified earlier due to interaction with peers and providers at demo sites
- Improved access to speech and language services by locating these program staff within the hubs and OEYCs city-wide; parents coming to centres can now access screening and referral services in-person rather than over the phone.

#### **Increased opportunities for professional development and networking**

Hamilton has a rich history of collaboration and partnership amongst early years professionals and therefore sets a strong foundation for increased opportunities such as:

- Increased mentoring, networking and professional development opportunities across the city
- Joint professional development opportunities for both Kindergarten teachers and ECEs; these have been great networking opportunities; already held two very successful events with an average attendance of 350 individuals. (for example, Early Literacy workshop for early childhood and care professionals was a huge success)
- School boards have provided professional development for Kindergarten teachers and included ECEs in the presentations
- Many events are seeing broader participation such as, Public Health, OEYCs, Library – growing beyond child care centres
- ECE and Kindergarten teachers have started to meet to share information and discuss planning; have also been inviting each other to do site visits (this is starting to take place across the city – not just in the demo area)
- Increased and improved professional development opportunities has a large impact on ECE retention

*“The staff at our centre is the best part about it. They have ensured that our children are nurtured, instructed and cared for by the best of the best.” -- Parent of child in child care*

#### **Addressing ECE recruitment and retention challenges**

- Mohawk has surveyed graduating ECEs to learn more about recruitment and retention
- A recruitment and retention for Early Childhood Educators committee has been established to create city-wide strategies. This committee has representation from the Hamilton Branch of the A.E.C.E.O, ASCY, OEYC, PHDC, Mohawk College Faculty including a Student Success Advisor and ECE Apprenticeship Program, Supervisors Network and the City of Hamilton. The committee is in process of developing both a work plan and expansion of membership to include appropriate school board representation
- Continued recognition of Early Childhood Educators as part of the Raising the Bar Quality initiative. ECEs receive platinum recognition awards when they participate in 20 plus hours of professional development activities, approximately 400 individuals received recognition for participation in 2006
- Increased media coverage of the importance of the early years (including child care) has led to shifting public perception of ECEs – the importance of their role and skills; shifting perception of the ECE role from babysitters to professionals/teachers.

### **Using evidence-based approaches to system-wide planning**

- A needs assessment is required for the expansion of child care including a survey to establish need, examining existing early year services to build relations and/or to avoid the duplication of services
- Ongoing participation and support to existing initiatives implemented by the Best Start and Healthy Early Learning and Partners for Best practice Research and Evaluation committees

### **Building on community efforts to tie funding to measures of quality**

Raising the Bar on Quality is a community standard that promotes best practice within the system. It has been expanded beyond child care settings to include special needs resourcing and licensed private home child care agencies. The recommendations from its evaluation are being implemented and as such the CMSM has developed local policies where all new child care centres participate in Raising the Bar with the expectation that they remain in good standing.

### **Description of service levels**

#### **Fee subsidies**

The CMSM has observed a steady increase in fee subsidies since the expansion of spaces under the Best Start initiative. Although the focus for Best Start is on the 0 to 6 age group, expansion of school age child care has also increased. There are more children accessing monthly service since September 2006 when the majority of new spaces opened throughout the City. Trends show an additional increase of 447 children receiving child care through fee subsidies.

The CMSM expects this increase to continue as a result of the Provincial changes for eligibility introduced in January 2007. Prior to that time, families accessing fee subsidies completed a financial needs test to determine eligibility. With the introduction of income test, financial eligibility is now based solely on net family income, as determined by the Canadian Revenue Agency. The CMSM immediately initiated an Income Test Implementation workgroup as these changes will ultimately affect local policies. The additional funding this year will assist with the growth while the CMSM continues to monitor utilization, impact and spending throughout 2007.

To date, the CMSM estimates an additional 250 child care spaces being created throughout the City by September 2007. The CMSM will continue to negotiate with MCYS to quantify additional funding pressures and that change to local policies continues to meet the needs of families requiring service.

#### **Universal early learning and preschool program**

Thirteen child care centres within the demonstration area are providing an early learning and preschool half day program serving a maximum of 288 children. The program operates from September to June with an estimated cost of \$932,480. Ongoing implementation meetings are occurring with child care operators which have school boards and CMSM representation.

With the work of the implementation committee enrolment has been standardized through a central point of contact with the City to ensure consistent messaging and seamless access for families. Referring families to other programs also occurs which demonstrates strong working relations amongst the various operators. It is the expectation that all children attend on a full

time five half-day basis to ensure maximum child development in preparation for their junior Kindergarten experience.

Numerous strategies have been developed to promote the range of quality child care provided within the demonstration area as expansion occurred within a short time frame and without a clear identified need. Promotional materials have been mailed to neighbouring homes, posted in school newsletters and Kindergarten registration packages, information is shared during school board open houses and special events and promoted within larger community events. All child care operators within the demonstration area have provided flexibility in the levels and types of care being provided. There is an estimated 76% utilization rate. These operators continue ongoing discussions with the CMSM to meet both organizational commitments regarding sustainability and the needs of families accessing their programs and services.

### **Ontario Works formal and informal subsidies**

The funding for Ontario Works formal and informal subsidies does not meet the current demand for this type of subsidy. Ontario Works recipients engaged in approved activities such as employment support programs, educational institutions and work are eligible to access this form of child care supports. The CMSM has mitigated this pressure in the past through excess fee subsidies however given the increased utilization of regular fee subsidies is not sure whether this can occur during 2007. The CMSM is currently working with its departmental Ontario Works colleagues and MCYS to develop strategies for Ontario works recipients to ensure successful transition to independence.

### **Wage subsidy**

The CMSM continues to work with the child care community regarding the distribution of wage subsidies. There are historical pressures in wage subsidy funding that cannot meet the appropriate funding level for distribution. For the child care centres that submitted 2006 Wage Subsidy Funding Submissions the wage subsidy funding ranges from 23.3% for some child care operators up to 100% for others. For all child care operators to receive their full entitlement, the CMSM requires approximately \$1.8 million in additional funding.

There are approximately 1105 eligible positions that receive wage subsidy. Child care operators are dependant on wage subsidies to ensure they maintain high quality Early Childhood Educators in their programs. An infusion of funding is required to assist operators with paying appropriate salaries and retaining ECEs which will assist with stabilizing the child care system. The CMSM will use a portion of the new funding to meet the growing pressures and will continue to make it a priority to re-distribute any unspent dollars to offset the pressures in this funding envelope.

### **Wage improvement**

There were approximately 1050 Early Learning professionals who received approximately \$230.00 in wage improvement funding in 2006. The CMSM will work with the community so recommendations can be made in how wage improvement funding is to be distributed in 2007. The CMSM acknowledges there are huge gaps in salaries across the community; in fact some Early Childhood Educators are living below Hamilton's Low Income Cut Off (LICO), a threshold below which a family will likely be spending a larger share of income on necessities such as food, shelter and clothing than average. As of 2005, this equates to an annual salary of \$20,778 for a one person household and \$25,867 for two before taxes.

The CMSM has convened a working group to address the staffing crisis, which low wages have contributed to creating, within our community. There is a definite shortage of qualified staff to

work in our child care community. One focus of the working group will be to develop strategies for recruiting, retaining, and retraining ECEs within the City of Hamilton to help ease the crisis. The community also eagerly awaits the release of the Provincial Expert Panel Quality and Human Resources Report and its plan for the implementation of a strategy that will aim to address many of these issues.

### **Special needs resourcing**

There is an effective, efficient and coordinated management of Special Needs Resourcing supports across the City of Hamilton through Integrated Resources Hub and its five service provider partners; Community Living Hamilton, Chedoke Child and Family Services, Hamilton and District Council of Cooperative Preschools Corporation, St Matthew's House Early Childhood Integration Support Services, and Red Hill Family Centre. Funding was increased in 2006 to support an additional 4 full time equivalent staff to support the increase in child care spaces. Historically, 3 of 10 children require some level of special needs supports such as consultation, support facilitation or resource teacher support.

Integration and service coordination includes a coordinated intake process, joint data collection and reporting, a successful transition to school model and continued participation and contribution to all working groups/committees of Best Start. Quality assurance measures include annual stakeholder surveys of families, Child Care Centre Supervisors and classroom ECEs as well as staff of all Hub agencies, and participation in Raising the Bar of Quality: Special Needs Resourcing Edition.

There has been an increased demand for Support Facilitators and Resource Teacher supports as a result of the child care expansion and because children are being identified in need of supports earlier in age. The CMSM is closely monitoring impacts as a result of families required to complete an income test and will work with key stakeholders to minimize all barriers identified.

The CMSM will also continue its work with Integration Resources Hub to advance more seamless experiences and transition for children and their families within and across service systems including strengthening the capacity of the ECE community both in child care centres and OEYCs to respond to the needs of children with special needs and their families.

### **Resource centres**

Affiliated Services for Children and Youth (ASCY) – ASCY is a multi-service organization providing a broad range of services to early childhood educators, home child care practitioners, parents, students and other community professionals to promote the healthy development of children in our community. ASCY has over 1200 library members and completed 615 training sessions in 2006 servicing 7384 professionals.

ASCY plays a pivotal role in bringing the early years community together to move forward key initiatives such as Raising the Bar on Quality, a community standard promoting best practice; For Goodness Sake, an interactive CD created as a teacher resource to facilitate prompt and effective behavioural intervention planning in the early childhood classroom; Hanen Language; Early Literacy; peer mentoring and network connections between supervisors, front line, cooks, infant / toddler, preschool and school age care.

Professional development services include planning, coordination and facilitation of seminars, workshops and consultations. Individualized training programs are offered on site or on an outreach basis, in response to community requests and needs.

### Child Care Information Line

The CCIL is a partner of Co-ordinated Access for Child Care which manages a database to provide current information on Early Learning and Child Care service provided in Hamilton. Enhancements to the data base should be completed during 2007 to reflect the licensed private home day care information which will simplify access at a neighbourhood level for families.

### Administration

Administrative costs have been under funded since transition took place from the Province to the City of Hamilton in 1999. Approximately 6% of the total child care funding is for the costs of administration. The CMSM will continue to advocate to the province for the appropriate level of funding for managing the child care system. The CMSM will use a percentage of the 2007 increased funding to achieve the ongoing planning and targets associated with the Best Start initiative.

### 2006 Over/under expended services

Category of Spending	MCYS Budget (\$)	Actuals (\$)
Administration	1,165,909.00	1,394,131.00
DNA Fee Subsidy	10,527,625.00	9,103,359.00
DNA Ontario Works Formal Fee Subsidy	2,272,355.00	3,373,229.00
DNA Ontario Works Informal Fee Subsidy	342,645.00	666,037.00
DNA Regular Special Needs Resourcing	3,060,339.00	3,060,339.00
DNA Resource Centres	804,290.00	804,290.00
DNA Wage Subsidy Non-Profit	5,214,645	5,351,615.00
DNA Wage Subsidy Commercial	246,328.00	246,328.00
ELCC Administration	276,200.00	276,200.00
ELCC Fee Subsidy (DNA)	2,178,625.00	2,178,625.00
ELCC Special Needs Resourcing	119,999.00	119,999.00
ELCC Wage Subsidy Non-Profit	400,000.00	400,000.00
**Best Start Operating	4,790,444.00	4,790,444.00
Best Start Wage Improvement Non-Profit	193,087.00	193,087.00
Best Start Wage Improvement Commercial	49,913.00	49,913.00
Best Start Planning	852,593.00	852,593.00
<b>Total Spending</b>	<b>32,494,997.00</b>	<b>32,860,189.00</b>

### Progress on wait list management strategy

The development of a child care waitlist policy will address the Consolidated Municipal Service Manager (CMSM)'s requirement to develop and implement a wait list management strategy by January 1, 2008, as outlined in the Ministry of Children and Youth Services' (MCYS) 2006 Ontario Child Care Service Management Fee Subsidy Guidelines. The child care waitlist policy

is under development and linked to a Business Process Review of Child Care that is also currently underway in the City of Hamilton. The development of the child care wait list policy will be informed not only by the business process review work which includes an environmental scan of peer communities (London, Windsor and Ottawa), but a community consultation process as well. Furthermore, this policy work will be aligned with broader policy frameworks within the City of Hamilton such as A Social Vision for the New City of Hamilton, the framework behind the City's proposed social inclusion policy and the Hamilton Roundtable for Poverty Reduction's Starting Point Strategies in order to situate this work within a broader policy framework and identify areas for strategic alignment.

### **Context**

2006 Ontario Child Care Service Management Fee Subsidy Guidelines:

- Effective January 1, 2007, the Province of Ontario introduced amendments to the Day Nurseries Act that change the way that eligibility for child care fee subsidies is determined.
- One of the intended outcomes of this policy change is that is that more families, across a broader range of income levels, will now be eligible to receive child care fee subsidies.
- It is anticipated that the increase in the number of eligible applicants will result in a fee subsidy wait list in Hamilton, where there previously was not one. While the City does have a strategy for managing demand in place, it is dated (having not been needed in recent years) and, as a result, may no longer be reflective of the needs and preferences of the Hamilton community.
- MCYS has established that a 'modified first come/ first served' approach should be used to manage wait lists across the province. However, while each CMSM is expected to implement a strategy that is consistent with this approach, they are also required to undertake a local planning process to develop a strategy that is based on some measure of socio-demographics and/ or geography that best meets the needs of their community.

### **Policy development**

The CMSM is in a strong position to develop a preliminary policy framework that can be used to gather community input. To develop this preliminary framework, the CMSM will draw on its understanding of the composition of the current caseload, and its past experience in managing demand in the system. The CMSM has also been part of the process to develop a joint plan for child care, Ontario Early Years Centres and Best Start. This intelligence added to the business process review and existing policy work within the department provides a solid basis for the development of a preliminary policy on managing the wait list for child care fee subsidies. The preliminary policy on the wait list will be enriched through community consultation which is envisioned to include both in-depth qualitative methods (for example, interviews or focus groups) and more broad-based survey methods. The broad target groups for the community consultation are service providers/ managers and child care users/ non-users and other key stakeholders. Participants in the consultation will be asked to comment on the impact of the draft policy on users and providers of the system and on how the policy responds to some of the accessibility issues that currently exist within the system. Feedback from the consultation will be incorporated into a subsequent draft of the policy, communicated to community partners and recommended to City Council for adoption. The timeline envisioned for this work will be from April to December, 2007.

## **Section 2: Activities and Community Engagement Process**

### **Parent and family engagement**

Parent and family engagement as identified within Section 2 (page 17) of this Community Plan is a critical piece of the Best Start initiative. This is reflected in the fact that child care operators throughout the community routinely gather feedback from parents via surveys, regular meetings or other mechanisms. It is through these existing, on-going feedback mechanisms that the stories and voices as presented throughout this document have been collected. A marketing strategy for parents is currently under development for the promotion of Raising the Bar. Other examples of engaging parents in child care settings include:

- The supervisor of the program meets with families prior to enrolment, and sets up a play visit so that the parent and child can come and participate in the program, before making a decision about enrolment. This play visit also gives staff members the opportunity to observe the child with same-age peers, and begin to establish a connection with him/her.
- Parent surveys are conducted annually, and are discussed at staff meetings to create a plan of action for the centre. Using the Brigance Inventory for Early Development, staff members record observations of children's development, and use this information to create 'Observation Summaries' which are distributed to families twice per year. This tool is also used to identify equipment, materials and activities that will support children in learning.
- Child Care programs have begun to work with parents at the point of enrolment where parents complete the Nipissing screening tool which is discussed with child care staff.

### **Engaging child care operators and other early years partners**

Within the demonstration site area, several initiatives are underway which aim to further engage community partners and the child care community. It is recognized that these initiatives have in part been adopted by providers outside of the demonstration site area and will continue to be increasingly expanded across the community as their successes are shared. They include:

#### **Establishing relationships / partnerships amongst ECE, OEYC and school staff**

- Child care provider is sharing the Kindergarten classroom and natural partnerships are emerging for example: joint planning for toys, equipment and activities take place staff members work alongside OEYC staff members to support the needs of children and their families.
- Child care supervisor is a community rep on school council and also attends neighbourhood advisory committee meetings. The child care program staff members participate in school activities, such as Open House, Meet the Teacher night, etc. In the future, it will be important to build connections between ECE and JK/SK staff members.
- Each morning, School staff and students attend an assembly in the gymnasium, in which childcare children also participate. Since the physical space is shared, Kindergarten and early childhood staff have an opportunity to discuss room set-up, curriculum, etc
- Strategy is based on the belief that successful service to all of our families means not working in isolation
- Planning/hosting joint events with neighbourhood schools and staff teams.
- OEYCs have Parent Advisory groups which includes community partners.
- Some further examples of collaboration are:
  - face to face introduction of on-site community partners with opportunities for interaction with ELCC staff

- Planning for our 'wall of fame' for parents which will include photos of our family faces including community partners

**Staff members have the opportunity to attend PD events with coordination and cooperation of staff from an OEYC**

- In-service training for both OEYC & ELCC is provided by the agency to enhance the learning of all staff. This provides strengthening of service delivery provided to families with children of all ages attending both programs
- As relationships form, Child Care and OEYC staff, from different organizations, share resources on an on-going basis

**Promote emergent curriculum**

- Children learn from having “hands on” experiences in a warm nurturing positive environment.

**Resource Teachers and Support Facilitators attend staff meetings as part of the team**

**Early Learning and Child Care Centre has a standard agenda item “issues and opportunities” which generate the identification/solving of service issues.**

- Issues may be directly related to program schedules or program content but more often are related to specific family / child needs
- Enables the team to benefit the families because the service delivery is based on a consistent collective approach.
- Focus is on building and maintaining strong relationships

**Engaging key stakeholders and service providers**

There is French language and Aboriginal representation, as well as service providers who work with children with special needs, on the CMSM Child Care Working group committee which helps inform local policy development. The CMSM attends the French language Supervisors network to discuss specific issues relating to French-speaking child care services.

Building stronger relations with the Hamilton Centre for Civic Inclusion is planned for 2007.

Please see Section 2 (pages 16 to 19) of the Best Start Plan for further details regarding the engagement of these groups and communities.

## Section 3: 2007-08 Strategies to Move Forward with the Community Vision for Best Start

### Emergent needs or gaps

The needs and gaps for child care are monitored using a variety of tools and mechanisms and include both quantitative and qualitative key data sources. Examples include the CMSM Child Care Working Group, Supervisor's Network, the Healthy Early Learning and Partners for Best Practice committee and service plan consultation. Other data sources include the Ontario Child Care Management System – OCCMS, Child Care Information Line, monitoring population trends, Ontario Municipal Benchmarking (OMBI) indicators, City of Hamilton GIS system.

### On-going unmet needs

The following unmet needs have been identified in previous service plans and, in consultation with child care providers and the system manager, were re-validated as on-going unmet needs / gaps in the child care system at the present time:

- Infant spaces are in high demand – especially 12-18 months; difficult to invest in these spaces because of ratios and short time frame to transition to toddler program; some programs offer “tweens” or “walking infant” categories of care but space requirements can be challenging
- Flexible child care services including:
  - Shift care, extended hours
  - Escorting to and from schools
  - Respite care
  - Emergency child care
- Special needs resources for school aged children
  - Health and safety funding to meet licensing standards

The unmet child care needs reports are monitored and submitted by the Child Care Information Line on a quarterly basis. Although they have been decreasing over previous years, the following examples confirm that extended hours and escorts to and from school continue to be an unmet need.

*Parent wanted subsidized, licensed, centre-based care for her 6 month old and her 3, 5 and 11 year old children. Infant care, senior Kindergarten-age after-school care, and school age after school care were required. No escort was required from the child's school if within walking distance. There were no licensed centre-based programs, with space available, for the infant, and none that fit the criteria for after school care. The parent was informed of other subsidized child care options.*

*Parent wanted subsidized, licensed, centre-based care for her 4 year old child. Senior Kindergarten age care (alternate days), with early extended hours, was required with an escort to and from school. There were no licensed centre-based programs that fit the criteria. The parent was informed of other subsidized child care options.*

### **Newly emerging child care needs and gaps**

The following have been identified as newer or emerging unmet needs or community service gaps.

### **Responsive child care**

- Toddler spaces are in high demand; the Best Start emphasis has been on increasing the capacity of the system for JK/SK aged children
- Parents with children requiring different types of care (for children of different ages) face barriers in cost and transportation.
- School aged children (including ages 7-12 years) also have unmet needs; early release days or PD days are challenging for parents to find appropriate programming or child care options; this is especially the case if the child has special needs – difficult to get support facilitator to be available outside of school hours

### **Planning and physical space challenges**

- Timely information for planning purposes for example, JK / SK schedules are not available until late summer or even Sept – this makes it very difficult to plan for appropriate child care for parents (for example, before/after school, half-day or alternate day care arrangements) and for child care operators as well and can result in families deciding to not enrol their children in JK – especially among the more vulnerable populations
- More opportunities, appropriate physical space / locations and resources for child care ECE, OEYC staff, and JK / SK teachers to meet for joint planning purposes or joint events (for example, professional development)
- Availability of space in schools for community programs is limited

### **Special needs**

- Support for staff who work with special needs children as well as ‘grey area’ children (such as, not identified as having special needs but requiring additional supports) – need to support the staff, program and the child
- More on-site resource teachers to work with special needs children

### **Human resources**

- Early Childhood Education supply pool – with trained ECEs
- Retention of students coming into ECE programs is becoming a concern

### **Parental supports**

- Availability of parent supports and resources (for example, information to provide parents regarding issues such as head lice, mental health concerns, etc.)

### **Access**

- All children should have unencumbered access to the full-spectrum of early years

### **Strategies to close the gaps**

The following are potential strategies identified via the consultation of this plan.

#### **Infant and toddler spaces**

Child Care agencies report that it is operationally expensive to provide centre base infant care and that the costs associated with offering this type of care is typically off set by preschool and school age child care being offered within their programs. Although there continues to be a shortage of centre based infant care, this unmet need can be met through the licensed home

based child care. More community discussion is required to explore opportunities for centre based care to expand infant spaces to meet the need of parental choice.

#### **Advocating for improvements to special needs resourcing**

- Increase financial support to Chedoke's Intensive Community Children's 0-6 (rapid response team) so they can respond to the growing needs
- Increase funding for special needs children in child care, especially for school age children

#### **Flexible care: respite / emergency care spaces**

- Develop a system to identify and manage emergency care spaces in licensed home child care provider programs (for example, use empty spaces for emergency situations)

#### **Outreach strategy for immigrants and refugees**

- Building on the work identified in Section 2 of the Best Start Community Plan (pages 18 to 19), child care providers will also aim to raise awareness of the child care system and available resources for newly arrived immigrant and refugee families
- Develop culturally diverse centre based child care building on success to date from the licensed home based child care where there are 150 culturally diverse caregivers who speak 23 different languages.

Please see Section 3 (page 20 to 24) of the Best Start Plan for more information on strategies to close service gaps.

#### **Aboriginal child care**

- Aboriginal specific child care spaces are currently in process

#### **School aged children**

- Support transportation / escorting of children from child care to school and back to child care; is it possible to group children from same child care centre in the same classroom? This would enable child care staff to pick-up and escort children from school to child care and provide parents with one drop-off and pick-up location
- Support the provision of more before / after school programs in or nearby schools

#### **ECE recruitment and retention**

- Work more closely with high school guidance; increase accuracy of information on required skills for ECE and realistic expectations of the field; this could be done via the 'Student Success' meetings within the public Board (monthly) and similar initiatives across other boards
- Work within provincial initiatives to promote importance of high school guidance role and need for accurate information
- College applicant review process: use of portfolios, site visits, panel interviews, etc.
- Wage subsidy – many ECE earn an income which places them below poverty line
- Meet with Mohawk college representatives to discuss the challenges of recruiting high quality ECE applicants and identify potential responses to these challenges (for example, curriculum review, acceptance criteria, etc.)
- Specialized staff supports beyond the general professional development opportunities. For example, working with children with behavioural and mental health issues; invest in training more expert support facilitators who can provide on-site consultations / support.

#### **Formalize peer support mechanisms**

- So that the specific expertise and knowledge of ‘peer mentors’ in the community with can be accessed by others.
- Build on informal peer support mechanisms already in place (for example, via ASCY)
- This might involve identifying current or retired ECE staff with unique or specialized skills who are willing to provide on-site mentoring. Some financial supports would be required to free-up mentors from their home positions, to cover costs of resources, training and overall coordination, most likely by ASCY. Anticipated outcomes – increase staff supports, improve program consistency / quality across system, and possibly help with retention issues.
- This resource would assist with ECE retention (recognition of skills, support for new or overwhelmed staff, professional development, etc.)
- Could have broader application outside of ECE/child care sector (for example, OEYCs)

### **Address zoning obstacles**

- Parking space requirements can limit the number of licensed child care spaces at in-school child care programs (despite the fact that many parents are not driving to/from the program)

### **Communication / information sharing**

- This area was also identified as a key strategy for 200708
- Develop points of access for information / networking that are as streamlined and simplified as possible; minimize demands on staff time but keep everyone in the loop
- Consider use of new technologies such as, blog for sharing info / networking by topic or by neighbourhood; would allow information sharing without email overload
- On-line networking should not replace face-to-face opportunities (such as, area supervisor network meetings) – they should enhance /supplement

### **Obstacles and challenges**

#### **Funding**

- Sustaining of on-going child care system investments

#### **Human resource constraints**

- ECE recruitment and retention
- Freeing up staff for integration work

#### **Zoning by-laws**

- By-laws (especially parking space requirements) limit the number of children that a particular child care program can service despite having sufficient space and staff / resources

Please see Section 3 (page 24 to 25) of the Best Start Plan for a more detailed description of the above challenges.

#### **Transportation**

- Both the child care operators and families receiving service have identified transportation as a barrier to attending child care programs on a consistent basis. Families have reported trouble walking their children to programs, each situation is looked at individually to seek solutions and reduce barriers for families.

### **Process to sustain child care spaces created under Best Start**

*"Hope this daycare remains open for other families who move into the area. The do help us out a lot, time wise and financially. We need to get this program out there to notify more families. I am positive everyone will enjoy the facility." -- Parent of child in child care*

### **Joint demonstration group**

The executive directors of organizations providing child care within the demonstration site area and their most senior staff have been meeting with the City, MCYS and Boards of Education on a monthly basis to create strategies in order to sustain new spaces under the Best Start Initiative in the demonstration area. Throughout the last year barriers were identified and solutions created. These are outlined below.

### **Physical space**

In order to maintain high quality child care programs and to meet the needs of families, child care programs in the demonstration area are in process of re-evaluating the level and types of services provided within the existing space and continued negotiations are occurring with the CMSM for implementation in September 2007.

### **Neighbourhood composition**

Child Care operators within the demonstration area have reported that some neighbourhood families accessing service have high mobility rates. Further study is required to better understand neighbourhood structure in order to maximize the required services that will meet the needs of children and their families.

Determining how to effectively provide services to mobile populations is an issue that extends beyond the demonstration site area and is one that is explored in Section 3 (pages 21, 22 and 24) of the Best Start Plan.

### **Experienced ECE / new graduates**

Child Care Operators reported that the programs were more than likely to have success when a more experienced Early Childhood Educator worked with newly hired staff within the expanded child care programs. This resulted in front-line learning and mentoring amongst team members. Program sustainability is enhanced with increased staff knowledge and satisfaction.

### **Out of catchment area - families wanting the same services**

Parents are excited by the Early Learning Preschool Universal child care and numerous inquiries have been received from parents requesting service. Due to the limited funding, expansion will not take place in 2007 however discussions and strategies are occurring to ensure the allocated spaces are maximized.

### **Marketing**

Numerous communication strategies have been developed and implemented to promote child care programs and services. Materials highlighting programs and services have been mailed and dropped off to neighbouring homes, posted in school newsletters and Kindergarten registration packages. In addition, a successful post card campaign increased enrolment in the child care programs.

### **Recruiting Early Childhood Educators**

Due to the massive expansion of child care, a crisis is occurring within the community where it is challenging to find qualified Early Childhood Educators to work in newly developed programs both in the demonstration area and broader community. It is anticipated that this can be partially mitigated through the strategies developed by the Recruitment and Retention workgroup.

### **ECE recruitment and retention plan**

Sustainability of child care spaces under the Best Start expansion is partially dependent on the recruitment and retention of ECE professionals in our community. A committee has been put together to develop a work plan and implement strategies.

A survey was completed with the full time Mohawk College ECE graduates and low wages and poor benefits within the ECE profession were identified as factors that contribute to high turnover of staff and impact the retention of child care professionals in our community. Furthermore, It was acknowledged that some wages are below the Low Income Cut-Off which represents a threshold below which a family will likely be spending a larger share of income on necessities such as food, shelter and clothing than average. The community has identified that this is unacceptable. Through a community consultation process, the committee will recommend how wage improvement funding should be spent by the CMSM.

It was recognized that poor practicum field placements in the first year contributed to the exit of students to other professions. This has been brought to the Supervisor's Network to be shared with the child care community and there was agreement that this was something that could be restored through proper mentoring.

It is positive and hopeful news that on March 22, 2007 the AECEO, working as the professional body representing Early Childhood Educators has been successful in the establishment of a College of Early Childhood Educators. The College will aim to assure quality measures such as public accountability, training and practice standards and a legislated voice for ECE professionals.

## **Section 4: Strategies for System Integration**

### **Integration amongst Best Start Network partners**

While to a large extent the community acknowledges that integration is a process that requires time and nurturing, it was unequivocally identified as a key area of focus for the upcoming year.

Specifically, child care providers and others in the community have identified the following as some of the important steps to be taken in support of the Best Start Vision and integration of early years services throughout the community:

- Partnerships to move beyond schools and child care – broaden focus to wider community and linking with the natural hubs and meeting places within the neighbourhood
- The Early Learning Framework will give focus to the work of integration / partnerships:
  - Joint PD Committee to lead in-service with all sectors; will need multiple sessions at all levels (front-line staff up to senior management)
  - Opportunity for key stakeholders to pool their resources and develop an implementation plan (City, Boards, College, etc.)
  - Framework implementation plan could provide long term basis for ongoing collaboration
  - Should be rolled into ECE curriculum at college
- Centre advisory teams / front-line staff teams – this are key to facilitating integration and seamlessness of services; support on-going development of these teams at demo sites and the establishment of teams across city; address resource requirements b/c they are key to integration

- Sharing success stories and results from demo area; this will encourage similar work and partnerships across the city

Some of the specific opportunities and strategies to move forward with system integration identified by the child care community include:

- Provide more support facilitators and resource teachers to support child care programs with special needs children
- Increase availability of early identification and intervention programs/services (for example, PSL, IHP, IDP). Providing these screening services on-site at hubs has been hugely successful. There is increasing demand therefore more resources are required to keep up.
- Physical space for provider and community members to network
- Bringing smaller organizations and programs that are not directly linked to OEYCs into the process – it has been difficult for smaller programs to access the service enhancements resulting from Best Start.
- Ensuring sites / integrated services are accessible to all parents – must be user friendly, family-focused and supportive.
- Focus on reaching the unengaged families – those who are not currently coming through the hub / OEYC doors.

Please see Section 4 (page 37) of the Best Start Plan for further details on the commitment members of the Best Start Network, as well as others in the community, have made to ensure the strategies for system integration identified are implemented.

## **Specific integration initiatives**

### **i) Integration initiatives between child care services and schools**

The integration of services between early learning and child care programs and the schools they service is beginning to flourish throughout the City Of Hamilton as agencies reflect on the stories, experiences and connections taking place within the school setting:

- Principals and Kindergarten teachers invite the child care program to participate in school assemblies, evening school events such as Meet the Teacher Night, School Open Houses registration nights
- Child care program coordinators are invited to participate in Professional Activity and Community Learning Days
- Child care staff works with the Kindergarten teacher to support children in their learning
- Children are invited to use the library as well as the gymnasium in some schools where child exists
- Staff from the local Ontario Early Years Centre visit the child care program and provide outreach services on a weekly basis
- Parents or caregivers from the OEYC come with their children and join the child care centre program to learn about the emergent curriculum

These anecdotes reflect the possibilities for children and families when provided with seamless care. Further, they reflect the goals and vision of the Best Start initiative. Much work is still required by the community to bring all programs and services to this level of integration.

Please see Section 4 (pages 34 to 35) of the Best Start Plan for further details.

## **ii) Integration initiatives between child care services and other children's service providers**

In late 2006, an inter professional development working group including representation from the Francophone School Board, HWDSB, HWCDSB, City of Hamilton, MCYS and ASCY was created to provide a link between OEYC staff, Kindergarten teachers and early learning child care professionals who provide services in child care centres, home child care, school age programs, special needs programs throughout the City.

The main objective of this committee is to develop relationships and to have each profession share an understanding of how services can integrate program and curriculum to support quality learning experiences for children and to support families.

The plan began by bringing front line professionals together in early 2007 with the support of the child care community and the school boards. This event showcased the Best Start Vision and introduced the idea of cooperation, collaboration and partnerships. A survey was filled out by participants to develop a plan toward guiding future events.

The next event was an equal success with 400 people attending. The theme was "Making a Difference with Attitude" and showcased topics on the impact of attitude on our personal well-being, our families, our colleagues and the children that we care for each day. This session was free to all community service partners due to the continued professional development funding support from both ASCY and the AECEO.

On August 21, 2007 there will be a full day of training held at Mohawk College to educate the participants on the various aspects of the Best Start initiative, integration and the implications of working together on behalf of the children that early years service providers and programs serve throughout the city. This will be an opportunity for frontline staff to learn more about the other services that are available to support families in this community.

It is also understood that neighbourhoods are unique in terms of the way that services interact. This means that working with community partners is an important part of the expansion of Joint Professional Development. Ongoing planning is underway with regards to developing strategies to encourage, mentor and support service providers that require more time to embrace the culture of the integration with a family-centered focus.

The long term vision is to develop partnerships between all services to enhance and support life long learning for children into adulthood.

The Hamilton Early Learning Partners for Best Practice committee (H.E.L.P– BP) has evolved over time and in 2004 expanded its membership to be more inclusive. The purpose of the committee is to make a difference in the outcomes of children through knowledge transfer and promoting best practice. H.E.L.P's vision is "an integrated, community system will support healthy early learning and child care environments"

The principles are as follows:

A community systems approach is an effective strategy – by working together, we can ensure the well-being of all children.

- The community system builds on existing strengths of individuals / organizations.

- Initiatives and projects are evaluated to support efficacy, sustainability and so that others can benefit from our experience and lessons learned.
- We embrace diversity and inclusion.
- It is essential to demonstrate that we value all children
- All child development and child care endeavours must be accessible, adaptable and flexible and based on research and best practices.

A single point of access is in place through the Child Care Information Line to provide current information on early learning and child care services provided in Hamilton. The purpose is to simplify access at a neighbourhood level for families. Through integration activities convenient and simplified points of access will be created for children and their families.

## **Section 5: Service Targets for 2007/2008**

Please see [Appendix 9](#) for 2007/2008 service targets.

## **Chapter 3 – 2007-2008 Ontario Early Years Centre Service Plan**

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*Joint Submission from the Coordinated OEYC Services System in Hamilton*

### **Section 1: Progress Towards Achieving the Long-term Vision for Best Start**

Section 1 provides an overview of the progress made by the Hamilton OEYC system in supporting the community in achieving the community's vision for Best Start. It also outlines progress towards the joint OEYC goals and objectives as well as key accomplishments for 2006-07.

OEYCs continue to evolve in their systems level planning and delivery of services, understanding that this assists in creating seamless access for families and supporting the goal of healthy child development and learning.

OEYCs continue to strengthen partnerships that enhance integration of community supports for children and families. In turn, children and families benefit from system integration through outcomes such as: healthier child development, and improved learning and school readiness, all of which contribute to creating a strong foundation for a child's future success (Building on the Foundation Moving Forward, pg 3).

As a reflection of the integrated nature of the planning and delivery of OEYC and all early years services in this community, this section the community plan reflects the collective accomplishments, challenges and strategies of Hamilton's OEYC system. Individual OEYC service planning documents will be appended to this document.

To a large extent, the accomplishments that follow and the progress that has been made over the past 12 months, have occurred as a result of a concerted and dedicated effort amongst OEYC and their early years services colleagues to community collaboration and strengthening partnerships.

#### **Accomplishments and progress**

##### ***Accomplishments with child care community***

- Partnership with child care has progressed including OEYC links to community child care and representation at Supervisor's Network and Area Child Care Networks
- Child care supervisors have been engaged to sit at OEYC neighbourhood Advisory groups
- Reciprocal referral process developed between OEYCs and child care
- Professional development continues to move towards joint planning

##### ***Accomplishments with school boards***

- Expansion of OEYCs and child care within schools is a demonstration of the relationship with the school boards at multiple levels
- There has been an increased awareness about the importance of the early years throughout the community including at all levels of the school boards as well as the development of a common sense that partnerships amongst OEYCs, early years service providers, child care and the Boards of Education ultimately improve outcomes for children and families
- Engagement of school professionals in joint professional development events has created momentum and commitment towards collaboration

- Partnership and recognition that each partner plays a vital role in preparing children for school entry
- OEYC promotion of programs within the school system
- Reciprocal referrals between OEYCs and schools
- Cooperative sharing of resources and staff expertise and placing increased value on each others' roles

#### ***French-speaking community***

- OEYCs continue to support French Language programming, including outreach to OEYCs and their neighbourhood sites as well as programming from the Centre de Santé
- The partnership has created increased awareness of the unique needs of the French-speaking community
- Francophone representation at the Early Years Coordinating Table helps to bring to the forefront issues of the French-speaking community, while improving linkages and information sharing
- Creation of mutual professional development opportunities and sharing of best practices for staff
- Preparation and implementation of the French Family Math Program through the Best Start Hub at Notre Dame School

#### ***Aboriginal community***

- OEYCs continue to support Aboriginal programming, including outreach to OEYCs and their neighbourhood sites as well as programming from Niwasa Head Start Preschool Program
- Partnership has resulted in linking families to mainstream OEYC services
- Aboriginal representation at the Early Years Coordinating Table helps to bring to the forefront issues of the Aboriginal community, while improving linkages and information sharing
- Creation of mutual professional development opportunities and sharing of best practices for staff
- Cross-cultural exchanges have resulted in positive learning outcomes for both staff and families

#### ***Ethnically diverse populations***

- All programs represent cultural diversity and are reflective of their surrounding neighbourhoods
- Community partners are engaged to provide staff with cultural sensitivity training and to further their knowledge of the unique needs of this population
- Public Health nurses and Family Home visitors have been instrumental in linking ethnically diverse families to their local OEYC programs

#### ***Special needs children and their families***

- Often times OEYCs are the entry point to the system for families with special needs children
- Consistent tools are utilized for early identification
- OEYCs are the host sites for the expanded child development screening clinics which bring together multiple disciplines creating a single point access for families
- Representation at the primary care engagement table (18-month well-baby strategy)
- Central phone number to all OEYCs to support single point access
- Intense Behavioural Intervention hosted at OEYC sites
- Development of pictorial screening tool

#### ***Additional accomplishments***

- Beginning to strengthen linkages with child welfare:
  - making OEYC sites accessible to foster families
  - have identified a point person within child welfare organizations
  - positive outcomes being observed by OEYCs and child welfare

See Section 1 of the Best Start Plan (pages 5 to 10) and the individual OEYC service plans ([Appendix 10](#)) for additional accomplishments.

### **Addressing challenges**

See Section 1 of the Best Start Plan (pages 10 to 12) for a description of implementation challenges.

### **Service level achievements**

See individual OEYC service plans ([Appendix 10](#)) for service level achievements.

### **Closing the gaps**

See accomplishments and progress section (above) for examples of how the needs of children and families are currently being addressed.

### **Working with Early Literacy Specialists**

#### **Accomplishments**

- Continual support and partnership strengthened with Early Literacy Specialist through ELS representation on OEYC committees and OEYC representation on Early Literacy planning tables
- Each OEYC has monthly meetings with Literacy Liaison to support further integrated literacy activities in Hamilton i.e. train the trainer
- Joint planning of early literacy events i.e. Conference and Family Literacy Day
- Evidence-based planning utilized for the planning of workshops and programs for children

#### **Gaps**

- The rapid expansion of child care and the OEYC programs has placed increased pressures on the Early Literacy Specialists since there have been no increases in funding to support the expansion

#### **Goals**

- To continue to support the Early Years system with existing resources available. i.e. professional development on the Early Literacy checklist
- To attend the Early Years Coordinating Table quarterly

### **Working with the Data Analysis Co-ordinator**

#### **Accomplishments**

- Development and production of quarterly service reports using EYSIS information
- Development and implementation of a new parent survey that is consistent with the FRP Canada survey, while integrating Hamilton-specific content
- Improved data collection capacity and data quality practices ( i.e. new registration form, strengthened EYSIS database support, data base cleaning project)

- Strengthened linkages and relationship with the DAC (i.e. inclusion on Early Years Coordinating Table and other affiliated Best Start committees)
- Continue to improve communication through representation at the various committees linked to Best Start (for example, Integrating Committee, Best Practices and Early Years Coordinating Table)

### **Goals for next year**

- Implementation of a scannable parent survey to improve the timelines with which results can be disseminated back to providers
- Explore the possibility of translating the parent survey into other languages that reflect the diversity of the populations that are served
- Enhance the utility and quality of the service reports by continuing to support improved data collections capacity, as well as integrate parent surveys into the reports
- Strengthened relationship around the dissemination of 2006 census profile information and Best Start demonstration site evaluation findings

## **Section 2: Activities and Community Engagement Process**

Section 2 provides an overview of OEYC core and unique/centre specific services as well as a description of how the community has been engaged to provide input on OEYC programs and services.

### **Community engagement**

The introduction of the Best Start Initiative in Hamilton has resulted in creating pathways to an integrated system while recognizing the importance of building upon the existing framework of the Hamilton Early Years system.

Best Start is about organizing resources across a community so that young children are offered the opportunity for healthy development and the best start in life. In moving forward to achieve these results Hamilton has created the Early Child Development Integrating Committee. This committee has broad representation of community stakeholders that understand the importance of community planning and capacity building. This committee has been working to integrate services at a systems level. The role of the OEYCs is integral in achieving this vision. The work of this committee has been a catalyst in developing the beginning stages of a seamless family-centred system. Some examples of successes to date include:

- The hiring of the Integrating Services Coordinator
- Linkages with Public Health expanded to the most OEYC programs
- Infant hearing program, speech and language services being delivered in OEYC programs (preventative and intervention)
- Intensive Behavioural Intervention services offered to families who have been formally identified to receive treatment
- Central phone line for OEYCs
- Hamilton's McMaster Children's Hospital moving towards offering clinical services for families
- Child welfare linkages strengthened
- Community partners and OEYC staff co-facilitating adult education
- Programs and services sharing best practices and offer evidence-based programs

- Embracing community initiatives such as The Hamilton Roundtable for Poverty reduction
- Building on the existing Early Years Co-ordinating Table to include Aboriginal, French-speaking, DAC, and Early Literacy Specialist, Public Health, Speech and Language, Integrating Services Coordinator representation
- Communication and public awareness strategies continuing to build upon the integrated vision
- Representation at the Integrating Table from the City of Hamilton research and evaluation team ensures that findings and data are utilized when planning programs for children and families

### **Gaps/Emerging Needs**

- Continuing to ensure inclusiveness in system-wide decision making
- The development of a process / protocol for the expansion of OEYC programs in the City of Hamilton

While the above gaps have been identified by OEYC and others in the community through this consultation process, it must also be said that solutions to these challenges have been identified by these same groups. Please see Section 4B of the Community Plan (page 32), where a new process for decision-making for OEYCs is presented. It builds on the work and membership of the Integrating Committee, and is inclusive, comprehensive and responsive to the needs of neighbourhoods, families and children that these organizations serve.

*"I recently had an opportunity to meet with a group of Somali women to discuss a strategy to connect their families with young children to early years programs. The elder woman spoke on behalf of the group. She acknowledged that her community didn't know a lot about services that might be helpful. She then explained to me that they all come from villages. She went on to tell me, "In a village there is a cow, we all know what to do with a cow." She continued, by telling me that they now are in a large city and don't know what to do – that they are out of their element. She felt the solution to this is someone showing them how to navigate the city and the system but not just anybody: this person should look like them and speak their language.*

*As a result of this conversation, we will be working this group of women to identify individuals in their community who can speak English with whom we will work to help mobilize families." – Provider and OEYC operator*

### **Parent and Family Engagement**

- Parent and family engagement had been a sub-committee of the Integrating Committee, reporting directly to it. This has changed, however, so that the Committee now 'stands alone' and reports directly to the Best Start Network
- The parent and family engagement committee is focusing on developing strategies for engagement at all levels
- Central phone for OEYCs allows for improved parent access to services
- Standard parent survey tool being utilized across all OEYCs
- Community Education flyer is recognized as a main strategy to reach parents
- Program Advisory committees at each OEYC will include parent representation in the Centres' planning and decision making
- OEYC programs are responsive to parent participation
- Parent and family engagement occurs at all levels in the community
- Parents are our best referral source and support in creating a comfort level for new families; building on their word of mouth is one of the most effective tools we have

Please see Section 2 of the Best Start Plan (pages 16 to 19) for more details on engagement activities.

### **OEYC activities**

See [Appendix 10](#) for individual OEYC activities.

### **Information sharing and communication**

Accomplishments with OEYC Database and Public Access statistics

- The OEYC inventory is accessed regularly. It had 142,511 total hits for the 2006-2007 years of public service indexing in OEYC view. It is one of the top 50 most viewed records.

Please see Section 1 of the Best Start Community Plan (pages 5 to 10) as well as Individual OEYC Service Plans ([Appendix 10](#)) for information sharing and communications accomplishments.

## **Section 3: 2007-2008 Strategies to Move Forward with the Community Vision for Best Start**

Section 3 provides a forecast of 2007-08 service priorities and how these priorities support the community vision for Best Start. This section also outlines emergent needs and gaps within the community. Strategies to further close these gaps are described in Section 3 of the Best Start Plan (pages 20 to 24). Challenges and obstacles to closing existing OEYC service gaps and moving forward with the Best Start Vision are also outlined in Section 3 of the Best Start Plan (pages 24 to 25).

### **2007-08 OEYC service priorities**

- 1) Public awareness and communication – while building on and linking with public awareness and communications tasks, goals and strategies throughout this Community Plan, the OEYCs will endeavour to:
  - Participate in the development of PSA and video in partnership with the 18<sup>th</sup> month strategy
  - Plan and delivery of ‘Collaborative Conference’ in Hamilton
  - Consider utilizing the Central phone line to include city wide OEYC program registrations
  - Strengthen communication to all special populations to ensure program planning and decision making is inclusive
- 2) Focus on integration at a system level – as highlighted in Sections 3 and 4 of this Community Plan, OEYCs will ensure that:
  - The future expansion of OEYCs is based on needs identified through community consultation at the Integrating Committee
  - Reach to and focus on unique populations is enhanced
  - Resources and expertise are shared

- Proper representation at advisory committees and service delivery teams is ensured and a common understanding of roles and responsibilities is developed
- 3) Creative expansion – as highlighted in Section 4 (page 32) of this Community Plan, OEYCs will:
- Support the development of a community-wide process for all future expansion utilizing the Integrating Committee
  - Seek opportunities that allow expansion with minimum investment
  - Undertake ongoing dialogue to ensure inclusiveness in all future planning

### **Emergent needs or gaps**

#### ***Child care community***

- More opportunities and time for joint program planning, information sharing and professional development
- Need to plan professional development at a mutually convenient time
- Need to bridge the gap on wages to promote equity across the system
- Continued increasing recognition of the importance of the on-going efforts towards relationship building
- Difficulty in recruiting and retaining ECE staff

#### ***School boards***

- Continue to build upon the joint professional development activities and recognition of the important value of each profession
- To adopt the Early Learning Framework in both environments
- Consistent availability of space and sharing of space in schools

#### ***French-speaking community***

- Challenge to access materials in French to operate evidenced based OEYC programs
- Funding constraints
- Difficulty in recruiting and retaining French Language staff
- Decision making process needs to be inclusive
- Expansion of services to other sites
- Challenge for part-time staff to participate at trainings (cost- and time-wise).

#### ***Aboriginal community***

- Budget pressures which compromise sustainability
- Need equitable access to professional development and other supports
- Service level requirements exceed human resources funding
- Organizational capacity within existing budget is beyond their limit but feel a strong obligation to provide services
- Cut backs to Aboriginal Health Team and loss of Resource Teacher services
- Decision making process needs to be inclusive

#### ***Ethnically diverse populations***

- The continual settlement of new populations in the City of Hamilton proposes many challenges and pressures on the community service providers including OEYCs
- Budget pressures impede delivery of some unique or specialized care and service elements that might otherwise benefit this population
- Representation from and linkages to service providers for this population need strengthening

### ***Special needs children and their families***

- Lack of resources to provide consultation and supports to the OEYC system
- Wait lists for specialized services creates additional pressures, further stress and overload on the OEYC system

## **Section 4: Strategies for System Integration**

Please see Section 4 of the Best Start Plan (pages 27 to 30) for a description of the strategies OEYCs will employ (with their Network partners) to support the early years system in moving further along the continuum of integration. As key partners at the Best Start Network table, OEYCs have an integral role in this process.

## **Section 5: Service Targets for 2007/2008**

City-wide OEYC service targets for 2007/2008 are provided below.

### **I – Service Provision Targets**

Number of Children Served	<b>15,079</b>
Number of Visits Made by Children	<b>100,189</b>
Number of Parents/Caregivers Served	<b>13,884</b>
Number of Visits Made by Parents/Caregivers	<b>79,109</b>

### **II – Service Specific Targets**

Parent/caregiver education - Number of Parents/Caregivers in Workshops/Seminars	<b>7,904</b>
Number of Professionals in Workshops/Seminars	<b>1,800</b>
Information on other early years services – Number of Referrals	<b>8,965</b>
Linkages to the Community and Other Service Providers - Number of Protocols/Official Linkages	<b>330</b>

### **III – Staff Component**

Number of Full-time Equivalent Staff	<b>45.5</b>
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## **Section 6: Process for the OEYC Service Plan Development**

As noted throughout this document, there was a single process that led to the development of Hamilton's integrated Best Start, Child Care and Ontario Early Years Centre Community Plan, including the OEYC joint service plan. This process centred on consultation with stakeholders across the spectrum of early years services, including Hamilton's Best Start Network and sub-committees, the chair of the Regional French-Language Network Central-South-West Region Best Start Initiative, representatives from the four (English and French, Public and Catholic)

school boards, as well as child care, OEYC and other early years services providers. These groups and individuals were engaged in conversations that spanned any and all aspects of Hamilton's early years systems, including Ontario Early Years Centres.

On May 25th a presentation was made by the consultants to community stakeholders from across the early years system. The presentation was an opportunity to highlight findings from the consultation and provide attendees with a preview of Hamilton's Community Plan. The session also featured 'voices from the community'; that is, individuals were asked to share stories, anecdotes and observations at various times throughout the presentation relating to the findings that were being discussed.

OEYCs were critical to the success of the presentation to the community. More generally, they were instrumental in the consultation process providing support and resources where needed, and, more broadly they were active, engage partners in the overall development of this plan.

For more information please see the Introduction to the Community Plan, which highlights the process by which Hamilton's Best Start Network, Regional French-Language Network Central-South-West Region Best Start Initiative, the child care community, OEYCs and all the early years system partners were engaged, consulted and active contributors to the development of Hamilton's Community Plan.

# Appendices

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## Appendix 1 – Consultation Key Informant Groups and Organizations

### Key Informant Interviews

Individuals from the following organizations and groups were interviewed to inform the development of the community plan.

- Affiliated Services for Children and Youth
- Centre de santé communautaire Hamilton/Niagara
- Centre for Civic Inclusion
- Community Action Program for Children (CAPC) in Hamilton
- Community Living Hamilton
- Conseil scolaire de district catholique Centre-Sud
- Conseil scolaire de district de Centre–Sud-Quest
- Early Words/1ers mots - Hamilton Preschool Speech and Language Service and Central South Regional Infant Hearing Program
- Hamilton East Kiwanis Boys' and Girls' Club
- Hamilton Ontario Early Years Centres
- Hamilton Public Library
- Hamilton-Wentworth Catholic Child Care Centres Inc.
- Hamilton-Wentworth Catholic District School Board
- Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board
- Family Health, Public Health Services, City of Hamilton
- McMaster University / McMaster Children's Hospital
- Niwasa Headstart Preschool
- Parent representative on the Best Start Network
- Primary Care Initiative (Best Start Network)
- Settlement and Integration Services Organization
- Social Development and Early Childhood Services, Community Services Department, City of Hamilton
- Social Planning and Research Council
- Strategic Services, Community Services Department, City of Hamilton
- Today's Family
- Wesley Urban Ministries

### Group Consultation Sessions

Focused discussions were held with the following groups to inform the development of the community plan.

- Best Start Network
- CMSM Child Care Working Group
- Coordinating Committee (Best Start Network)
- Early Child Development Integrating Committee (Best Start Network)
- OEYC Directors and Coordinators
- Supervisor's Network

### Project Team

The community planning process was supported by a Project Team comprised of the following individuals.

- Brenda Bax, Child Care Systems Management, Social Development and Early Childhood Services, Community Services Department, City of Hamilton

- Karen Calligan, Ministry of Children and Youth Services
- Daljit Garry, Wesley Urban Ministries
- Carrie Horn, Hamilton East Kiwanis Boys and Girls Club
- Paul Johnson, Chair, Best Start Network
- Grace Mater, Social Development and Early Childhood Services, Community Services Department, City of Hamilton
- Barb Powell, Social Development and Early Childhood Services Community Services Department, City of Hamilton
- Corinne Radake, Strategic Services, Community Services Department, City of Hamilton
- Wanda St. Francois, Affiliated Services for Children and Youth

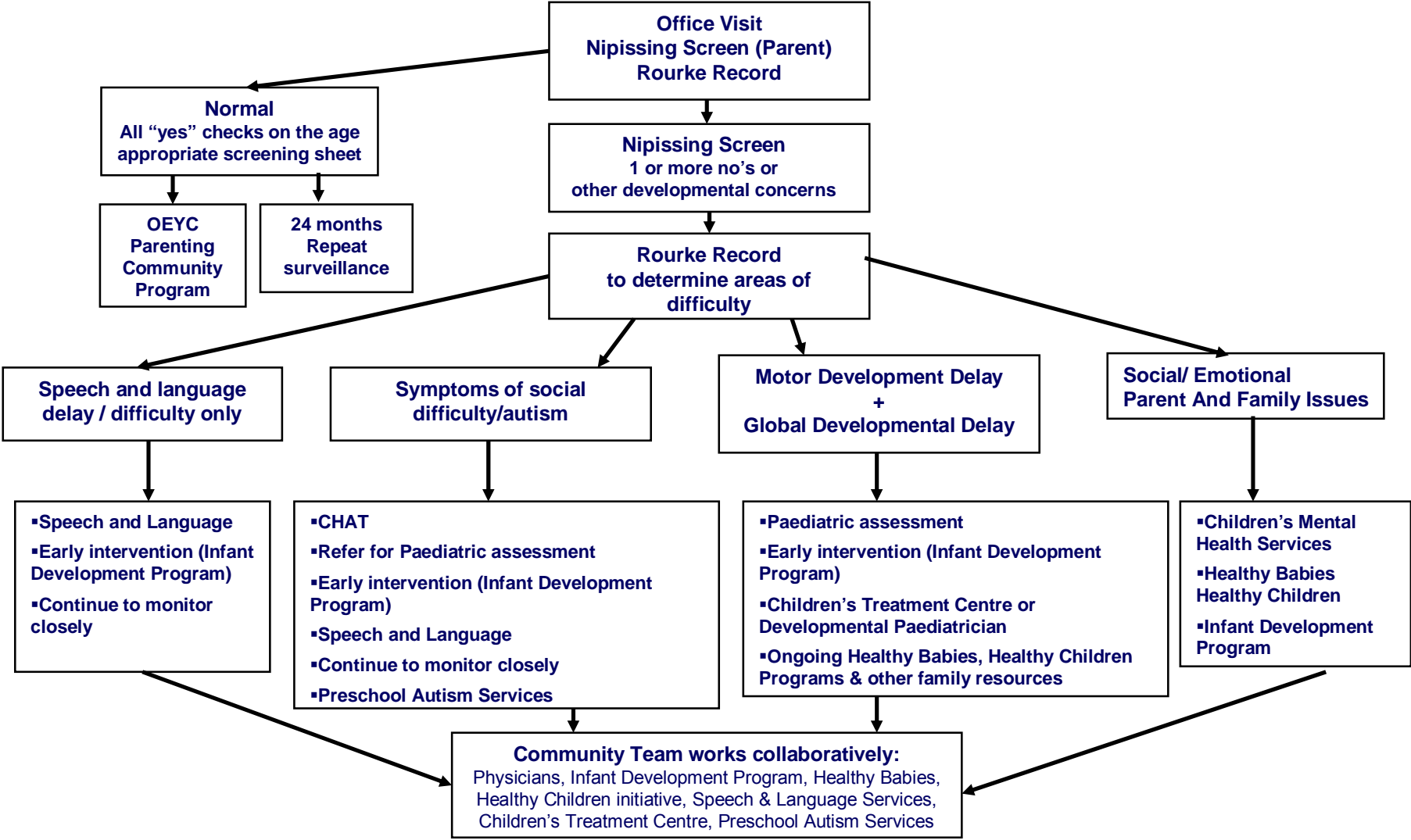
### **Parent, Grandparent and Caregiver Feedback**

While a wide caregiver consultation was not a pre-requisite of this year's planning process existing methods of gathering parent feedback at OEYC and child care organizations (e.g., parent surveys, parent evaluations, etc.) were used to ensure their voices and their stories were reflected in this community plan. We thank the parents, grandparents and caregivers who took the time to provide feedback and stories. We also thank the organizations that took the time to collate and submit this feedback on behalf of their parents, families and caregivers.

## **Appendix 2 – Participating Organizations and Groups at the May 25<sup>th</sup> Presentation to the Best Start, Child Care and OEYC Community**

Affiliated Services for Children and Youth  
Catholic Family Services  
Central Day Care  
Centre de sante communautaire Hamilton/Niagara  
Community Access to Child Health  
Community Information Hamilton  
Community Living Hamilton  
Community Services Department, City of Hamilton  
Early Words  
Hamilton and District Council of Cooperative Preschools Corp.  
Hamilton East Kiwanis Boys and Girls Club  
Hamilton Roundtable for Poverty Reduction  
Hamilton-Wentworth Catholic District School Board  
Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board  
Highland YMCA Early Childhood Education Centre  
Lucky Day Nursery  
OEYC Ancaster-Dundas-Flamborough  
OEYC Hamilton East  
OEYC Hamilton West  
OEYC Mountain  
OEYC Stoney Creek  
Niwasa Headstart Preschool  
McMaster Children's Centre  
McMaster University School of Nursing  
Ministry of Children and Youth Services (Hamilton/Niagara Regional Office)  
Ministry of Education (London Regional Office)  
Mountain YMCA Child Care Centre  
Pathways Child Care Centre  
Pavillon de la jeunesse, Conseil scolaire de district du Centre Sud-Ouest  
Public Health Services, City of Hamilton  
St. Matthew's House  
Stoney Creek YMCA Child Care  
Red Hill Family Centre, City of Hamilton  
Tapawingo Day Care  
Today's Family  
Umbrella Family and Child Care Centres  
Wesley Child Care Centre  
Wesley Urban Ministries  
Wraparound / Lynwood Hall  
YMCA of Hamilton/Burlington - Wellington

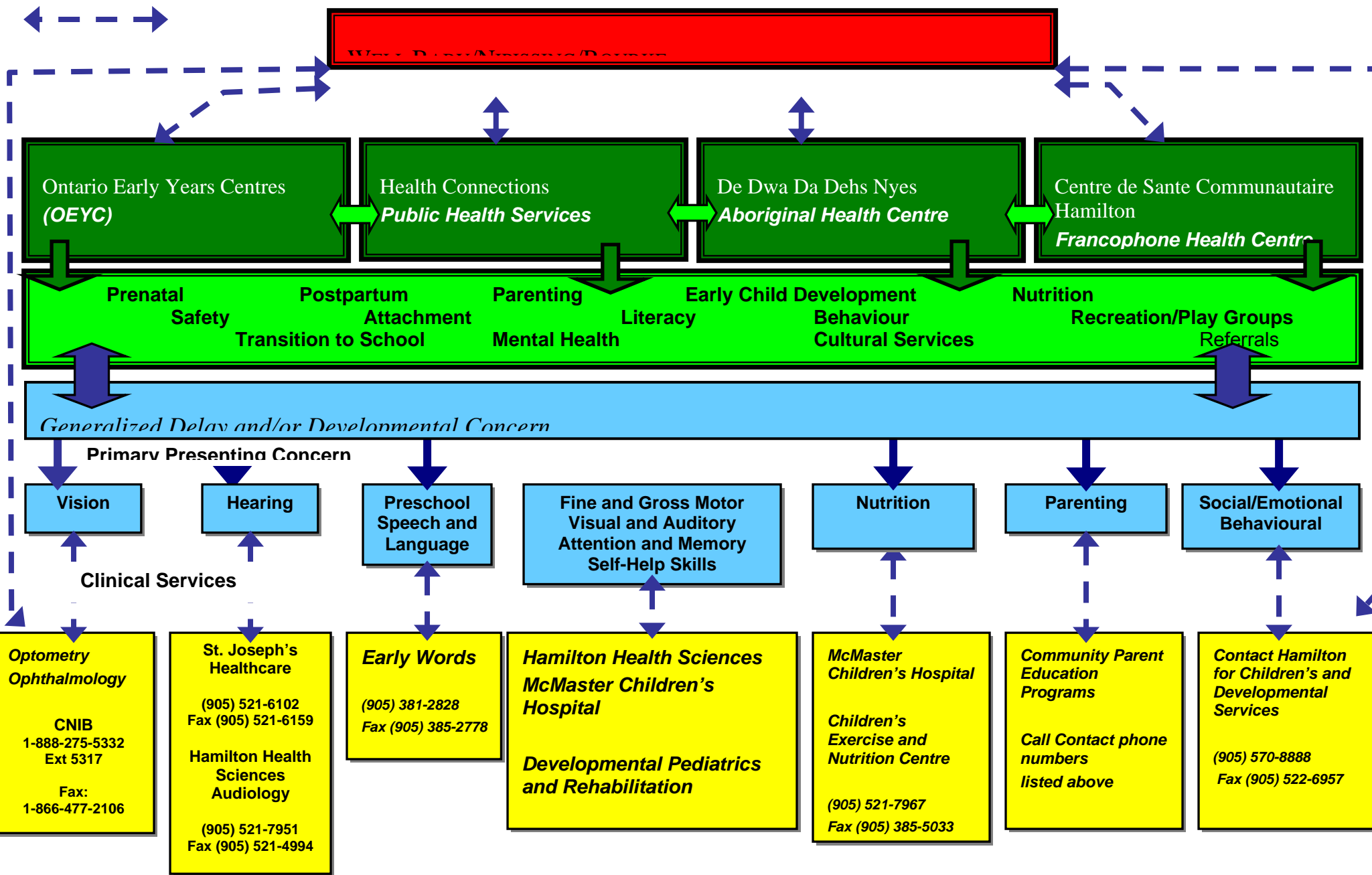
# 18 Month Visit Developmental Flow Chart



Prepared by: Elizabeth Thompson, Tara Kennedy, Wendy Roberts, Nadia Hall, Steven Cohen and Rhonda Schwartz

# CITY OF HAMILTON

Direct Referral AND PARENTING RESOURCES



## Appendix 4 – Hamilton Best Start Network Membership

Name	Agency
Patricia Amos	Hamilton-Wentworth Catholic District School Board
Brenda Bax	City of Hamilton, Community Services Department
Helen Benoit	Hamilton Public Library
Jean-Luc Bernard	Conseil scolaire de district de Centre-Sud-Ouest
Judith Bishop	Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board
Don Buchanan	Hamilton Health Sciences
Karyn Callaghan	Mohawk College ECE/Artists at the Centre
Karen Calligan	Ministry of Community and Social Services & Ministry of Children and Youth Services
Marcel Castronguay	Centre de sante communautaire Hamilton/Niagara
Rhonda Clarke-Bruyn	Ministry of Community and Social Services & Ministry of Children and Youth Services
Jean Clinton	Child Psychiatrist
Arlene Coons	Hamilton-Wentworth Catholic District School Board
Debbie Crickmore	McMaster Children's Centre / Supervisors' Network
Krys Croxall	Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board
Linda Dayler	Catholic Family Services
Andrew Debicki	Wraparound, Lynwood /Woodview / Hamilton Children's Aid Society
Francine Denomme	Conseil scolaire de district Catholique Centre-Sud
Elke El Farsi	Centre de sante communautaire Hamilton/Niagara
Sandra Emery	Hamilton-Wentworth Elementary Teachers' Local
Paul Evans	Hamilton Police Services
Oksana Fisher	Contact Hamilton
Paula Forbes	Catholic Family Services
Sam Gardner	Offord Centre for Child Studies
Lindsey George	Adult Psychiatrist / St. Joseph's Hospital
Sue Honeyman	Early Words/1ers mots
Julie Horning	Catholic Children's Aid Society
Morteza Jafarpour	Settlement Integration Services Organization
Cathy Jenkins	Ministry of Education
Paul Johnson (Chair)	Wesley Urban Ministries
Mary Lachapelle	Teacher's Federation
Taunya Laslo/Monique Lavalley	Niwasa Head Start Preschool
Daniel Lefebvre	Conseil scolaire de district de Centre-Sud-Ouest
Cynthia Lokker	Parent representative
Laura Martindale	Supervisors' Network
Grace Mater	City of Hamilton, Community Services Department
Glenda McArthur	City of Hamilton, Public Health Services
Shirley McCoy	Supervisors' Network
Heather McGavin	McMaster Children's Hospital
Marnie Mercanti	Supervisors' Network
Mary Meyer	Children's Aid Society

### Hamilton Best Start Network Membership (cont'd)

<b>Name</b>	<b>Agency</b>
Jean Mullens	Family Physician
Deborah Myers	Hamilton-Wentworth Catholic Child Care Centres Inc. / representative for Ontario Early Years Centres
Florence Ngenzebuhoro	Ministry of Community and Social Services & Ministry of Children and Youth Services
Michele Petsche	Parent representative
Dina Phillips	Supervisors' Network
Barbara Powell	City of Hamilton, Community Services Department
Jennifer Powell-Fralick	Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board
Lorraine Robinson	Supervisors' Network
Lesley Russell	Community Information Hamilton/Child Care Information Line
Pat Senft	Community Living Hamilton
Barbara Shearer	Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care
Debbie Sheehan	City of Hamilton, Public Health Services
Sandy Shaw	Community Action Plan for Children (CAP-C)
Jane Soldera	City of Hamilton, Community Services Department
Wanda St. Francois	Affiliated Services for Children and Youth (ASCY)
Cheryl Velenosi	City of Hamilton, Community Services Department
Madina Wasuge	Centre for Civic Inclusion
Liz Weaver	Hamilton Roundtable for Poverty Reduction
<b>Corresponding Members</b>	
Kate Breznik	Mohawk College
Marcel Castura	Hamilton-Wentworth Catholic District School Board
Joe-Anne Priel	City of Hamilton, Community Services Department
Chris Spence	Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board

*Revised June 15, 2007*

## Appendix 5 – Hamilton Best Start Network’s Work Plan 2006/2007

### Our Vision

#### **Best Start is about Children**

- Best Start is about providing the supports to bring out the best in young children.

#### **Best Start is about Families**

- Best Start is about supporting parents and families, and collaborating with them to enable them to provide children with the best possible opportunities early in their lives.

#### **Best Start is about Community**

- Best Start is about strengthening partnerships and enhancing the integration of all community supports for children and their families.

#### **Best Start is about Our Future**

- Best Start is about doing what is best for our children and our future.

The following table outlines goals, key milestones and timelines for the Best Start demonstration site initiative.

Title	Goal	Outcome	Key Tasks	Lead	Accountability	Milestones	Timeline	% Complete
Best Start Network	Strengthening the BSN	A well functioning BSN completing its objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ongoing development of the BSN including network building , education and review of membership to ensure appropriate representation at the table</li> <li>Ensure Terms of Reference and logic model correspond with meeting the goals of the BSN.</li> </ul>	Chairs of BSN	BSN and The City of Hamilton		September 2006 – June 2007	
		Alignment of committee work with the BSN	Ensure committee Terms of Reference, logic models and annual work –plans of various committees are approved					
		An approved Best Start Plan for 2007/2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Prepare and update for submission</li> <li>Prepare financial breakdown</li> </ul>	City of Hamilton & BSN	City of Hamilton & BSN	Submission of Approved Plan to MCYS	June 2007	0%

Title	Goal	Outcome	Key Tasks	Lead	Accountability	Milestones	Timeline	% Complete
Integration	Implementation of integrated programs in Early Years Centres and broader community	An implementation plan for Best Start program enhancements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assign lead organizations and groups to develop the overall approach</li> </ul>	BSN	City of Hamilton and BSN	Approval by BSN, City of Hamilton, School Boards and other organizations	October 2006	100%
		Enhanced 18 Month Well Baby Visit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop a Primary Care Strategy</li> </ul>	Dr Jean Clinton	City of Hamilton and BSN	Overview was presented September 19, 2006	Approved Plan submitted June 2006	100%
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implementation of Services</li> </ul>			Approval of plan shared with BSN		
Preschool speech and Language Services (PPSSL)/ Infant Hearing Program (IHP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop a plan for the expansion of existing services</li> <li>Develop a plan to reach children not in publicly funded schools up to the end of Senior kindergarten</li> </ul>	Early Words – Sue Honeyman	City of Hamilton and BSN	Approval of plan shared with BSN	Approved Plan submitted June 2006	100%		

Title	Goal	Outcome	Key Tasks	Lead	Accountability	Milestones	Timeline	% Complete
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implementation of Services</li> </ul>			Report back to the BSN	Jan 2007	
		Post Partum Mood Disorder (PPMD)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop community awareness strategies</li> </ul>	City of Hamilton – Public Health – Diane Busser	City of Hamilton and BSN	Approval of plan shared with BSN	Approved Plan submitted June 2006	100%
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implementation of Services</li> </ul>			Report back to the BSN	Jan 2007	
	Develop Screening and Early Identification Activities	Identify at-risk children early	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide referrals and linkages to other service systems and specialized services</li> <li>Provide screening and assessment tools to identify communication and social/emotional issues</li> </ul>	Integration Committee	Project Mgmt Working Group	Approval of Protocols shared with BSN	September 2006 – June 2007	

Title	Goal	Outcome	Key Tasks	Lead	Accountability	Milestones	Timeline	% Complete
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase funding to support integration of R.T. resources in Early Years Centres</li> </ul>	City of Hamilton	City of Hamilton			
	Integration of Early Childhood Educators with Board of Ed Teachers	Collaborative Partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Events held to focus on educating the participants about Best Start Initiative and associated implications of working together on behalf of children</li> </ul>	City of Hamilton, Boards of Education, ASCY	Boards of Education staff and Child Care Agency staff	JK/SK Teachers & E.C.E's sharing information & resources	January 2007	
	Parent Advisory	Neighbourhood advisory committees to support specific planning and accountability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop generic TOR</li> <li>Develop training/education sessions for staff and parents</li> <li>Volunteer leadership training</li> <li>Provide input on the above as it relates to a particular Early Years Centre site</li> </ul>	Integration Committee & Family Engagement Sub-Committee	Project Mgmt Working Group	Delivery of plan	September 2006- June 2007	

Title	Goal	Outcome	Key Tasks	Lead	Accountability	Milestones	Timeline	% Complete
	Develop a plan to Sustain Early Years Centre Services in the demonstration sites	Build on strategies around Early Years Centre services to ensure longevity to programming	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop a plan for sustainability of programs in the demonstration sites</li> </ul>	City of Hamilton and Community Partners	Project Mgmt Working Group	Approval of Plan	June 2007	
	Develop a plan to expand Early Years Centre services city wide		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop a plan for sustainability of programs throughout the City of Hamilton</li> </ul>				June 2007	
Expansion of Early Learning & Care in the demonstration area	Planning and Implementing child care preschool universal programs; seamless day for JK/SK; Best Start Fee Subsidy; Best Start Wage Subsidy; Best Start Wage Improvement, Resource Centre Funding Allocation, Special Needs Resourcing	Implementation of the Child care plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review and approval of child care plan</li> </ul>	City Of Hamilton	City Of Hamilton	Overall approval of the Child Care Plan	Complete	100%
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review and Approve Request for expansions of child care spaces</li> </ul>	City Of Hamilton	City Of Hamilton	Approval of agencies providing services to the community	Complete	100%
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Co-ordination of services</li> </ul>	Integrating Committee	Project Mgmt Working Group	Implementation of Services	September 2006 – June 2007	
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop overall child care and preschool approach</li> </ul>	City of Hamilton CMSM Working Group	City of Hamilton	Approval of the overall approach to developing the Child Care Plan	Completed September 2006	
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support to increase average wages and professional development of Early Childhood Educators</li> </ul>	City of Hamilton, CMSM Working Group	City of Hamilton, MCYS		September 2006 – June 2007	

Title	Goal	Outcome	Key Tasks	Lead	Accountability	Milestones	Timeline	% Complete
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop recruitment and retention strategies for Early Childhood Educators</li> </ul>	City Of Hamilton, CMSM, Supervisors Network	City Of Hamilton	Accepted Strategies for implementation.	September 2006 – June 2007	
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase funding for the provision of Professional Development</li> </ul>	City Of Hamilton	City Of Hamilton		September 2006 – June 2007	
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop strategies with agencies in the demonstration sites to meet the needs of the community</li> </ul>	City Of Hamilton	City Of Hamilton	Implementation of Universal Preschool And JK/SK Seamless day	Continuous	
	Sustain existing and newly created spaces	Monitor 'uptake' and develop recruitment strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work with operators to promote programs</li> </ul>	City Of Hamilton	City Of Hamilton	Integrated care	September 2006 – June 2007	
Construction	Increase child care spaces for children 0 – 6 years of age in the demonstration area.	Early Learning and Child Care creation built onto existing child care centres or build new space to accommodate child care services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Funding provided by the City of Hamilton for Construction and/or retrofit of existing space</li> <li>Signed contract with providers and/or Boards of Education</li> </ul>	City of Hamilton	City of Hamilton & School Boards	Occupancy Permit and sign off for completion	December 2005 - October 2006	99%
	Early Years Centre	Space to accommodate families and services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Funding for construction provided to build or update existing space for Early</li> </ul>	City of Hamilton	City of Hamilton & School Boards	Occupancy Permit and sign off for completion	May 2006 - October 2006	85%

Title	Goal	Outcome	Key Tasks	Lead	Accountability	Milestones	Timeline	% Complete
			Years Centre's within the demonstration community <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contract signed between Boards of Education and City of Hamilton</li> </ul>					
Communication	Planning and Implementing Stakeholder Communication  (Stakeholders in this instance consisted of Child Care operators in the demo clusters, parents, MCYS and City of Hamilton Child Care Systems Management, BSN)	Development and implementation of a formal written plan to educate professionals and their colleagues on this initiative.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Complete a needs assessment</li> <li>Design a communication strategy</li> <li>Design a communication mechanism (flyer, bookmark etc)</li> <li>Design a method for stakeholders to access information in a timely manner</li> <li>Implement the communications strategy</li> <li>Implement communication mechanism ( mail out etc)</li> <li>Implement stakeholders ability to access information in a timely manner</li> </ul>	Strategic Services, City Of Hamilton	Project Mgmt Working Group	Implementation of communication strategy to be shared with BSN	November 2006	75%
		Development and implementation of public awareness, education and communication strategies						
		Implementation of a long term strategic plan that meets the needs of the stakeholders		Strategic Services, City Of Hamilton	Project Mgmt Working Group	Identify Communication Strategies	TBD	100%
		Develop a plan to communicate criteria for the Preschool Universal free 2.5 hours in the cluster areas.				Implementation of communication strategy	October 2006	100%

Title	Goal	Outcome	Key Tasks	Lead	Accountability	Milestones	Timeline	% Complete
		Distribution of information to the cluster neighbourhoods in a timely manner				Approved plan shared with BSN	October 2006	100%
Sustainability of Services	Create an integrated system	Development of a plan that ensures that services are delivered in an integrated manner	Set priorities to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure resources</li> <li>• Allocate equitably across the City</li> <li>• Collection of information and data</li> <li>• Professional Development</li> </ul>	Integration Committee	City of Hamilton	Approval of plan shared with BSN	TBD	
	Quality Assessment and Control	Measurable High Quality Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop approaches to ensure quality programs</li> <li>• Professional Development</li> </ul>	ASCY	City Of Hamilton	Raising the Bar on Quality shared with BSN	TBD	
Evaluation	To inform the development of service plans through the dissemination and evaluation of best practices and to enhance local knowledge of what Early Learning and Care practices are effective in Hamilton.	Assessment tool to determine children's readiness to learn at school and identify area neighbourhoods in high need	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop, Implement and disseminate research and evaluation that supports the Best Start Plan</li> <li>• Develop, Implement and disseminate a Hamilton – specific research and evaluation plan.</li> </ul>	Early Year Research & Evaluation	Project Mgmt Working Group	Data Collection Shared Vision on Boundaries Integration of database Shared with BSN	September 2006 – June 2007	

Title	Goal	Outcome	Key Tasks	Lead	Accountability	Milestones	Timeline	% Complete
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide input to the provincial evaluation tools and methodology (implementation evaluation, parent survey, impact evaluation measures)</li> <li>• Adjust evaluation tools to be culturally sensitive.</li> <li>• Identify and disseminate best practice in quality early learning and care.</li> <li>• Develop a strategy for linking child and family databases</li> <li>• Assess quality of early learning and care programming.</li> <li>• Develop neighbourhood specific profiles (data, mapping, EDI) to support planning.</li> </ul>					
	Evaluation and Research	Develop a plan to capture data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collection of information data prior to the expansion to</li> </ul>	City of Hamilton	City of Hamilton	Report generated with data progress report	December 2006 June 2007	

Title	Goal	Outcome	Key Tasks	Lead	Accountability	Milestones	Timeline	% Complete
			compare over the next three years					
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Compare the impact of additional child care spaces on the system by doing a comparison of natural expansion vs. Initiative planned expansion (without a needs assessment)</li> </ul>	City of Hamilton, Child Care Systems Management	City of Hamilton	Detailed information	October 2006 – June 2007	
Financial		Capture all expenditures incurred to December 31, 2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Creation of a template and collection of data to rollup all costs for each program and report to MCYS</li> </ul>	City of Hamilton	City of Hamilton	Completed document	January 2007	
		Develop a plan to capture all expenditures associated with the planning and implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Collection of actual and in-kind support from community partners.</li> </ul>	City of Hamilton and Community Partners	City of Hamilton	Detailed information	October 2006 Ongoing	100%
		Capture all expenditures to operate programs March 31, 2007	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Creation of a template and collection of data to rollup all costs for each program</li> </ul>	City of Hamilton	City of Hamilton	Completed document	April 2007	

Title	Goal	Outcome	Key Tasks	Lead	Accountability	Milestones	Timeline	% Complete
			and report to MCYS					
		Build on strategies around child care to ensure longevity to support programming	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop a financial plan for sustainability of Early Learning Preschool programs throughout the City of Hamilton</li> </ul>	City of Hamilton	City of Hamilton	Developed plan	January – April 2007	
Administrative Close out	Documentation of Sept 2006-June 2007	Lessons learned	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Documentation of changes to the plan during implementation along with lessons learned</li> </ul>	City Of Hamilton	Project Mgmt Working Group	Acceptance of Project Wrap up for this school term to be shared with BSN	September 2007	

## Appendix 6 – 2006-07 Best Start Hubs

### Aboriginal-led OEYC

Operator/Lead Agency: Niwasa Head Start Preschool

Name & Address: Niwasa Early Learning Centre 192 Wentworth St. N. in Pinky Lewis Rec Centre

Hours of Operation: Tuesdays and Thursdays 9:30 am -12:00noon and 12:30pm-2:30pm

Opening Date: July 2006

Location of Hub*		Type of Hub	
Non-school (y/n)	School (y/n)	Francophone Specific (y/n)	Aboriginal Specific (y/n)
yes			yes

**For hubs not located within schools, please provide a description of how programmatic linkages to a school, or a family of schools, will be developed and sustained.** Programmatic linkages and partnerships with schools are facilitated through the Aboriginal Early Years Advisory Committee which is comprised of parents, caregivers and community partners that include principals from Sanford and Cathy Wever Schools, the Child Care Programme Leader from the Hamilton Wentworth District School Board, and our Director who is the Aboriginal liaison for the Hamilton Wentworth District School Board. This committee meets monthly and will continue to develop services that meet the needs of families in the Sanford area.

#### Hub Services

Services to be provided in the Hub
Early Learning activities that reflect the Aboriginal culture on a drop in basis.
Exploring Native Art
Native Drum and Dance
Native Parenting
Aboriginal Toy Lending and Resource Library
Links to Aboriginal and mainstream service providers
Literacy Workshops
Parent Information Sessions

Service(s) to be linked with the Hub
Public Health Nurse
Public Health Dietician
Speech and Language Pathologist
Aboriginal Healthy Babies Worker
Aboriginal Family Support Worker

## Francophone-led OEYC

Operator/Lead Agency: Centre de sante communautaire Hamilton Niagara

Name & Address: Ecole elementaire catholique Notre Dame,  
400 Cumberland, Hamilton, ON, L8N

Hours of Operation: Tuesdays and Thursdays: 11h30 to 15h00  
Saturdays: 10h30 to 12h30

Opening Date: Open since September 18, 2006

Location of Hub*		Type of Hub	
Non-school (y/n)	School (y/n)	Francophone Specific (y/n)	Aboriginal Specific (y/n)
no	yes	yes	no

### Hub Services

Services to be provided in the Hub
French speaking staff to provide the following services in French: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ learning experiences (Activities and songs in French)</li> <li>▪ information about child development and activities</li> <li>▪ parenting support</li> <li>▪ and linkages to community resources (Library, Parks and recreation programs)</li> </ul>
French speaking Public Health Nurse offers and information and workshops about: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Child development</li> <li>▪ Safety</li> <li>▪ Community resources in French</li> </ul>
Specific Programs for children and their parents were offered in French: Mother Goose (6 sessions), Family Math (6 sessions)
Speech and Language Services are offered weekly at the Centre de santé and once per month at the French HUB allow easy access to services
Nutritional Workshop
Evidenced-based Parenting workshops and programs
Information sharing and collaboration with daycare centre and school principle

Service(s) to be linked with the Hub
Mental Health Services / Social Services
Family Home Visiting Services
Dental Hygiene Services
Increased nutritional services (refer to dietician for individual follow up)
Increased public health services (Immunization, Well Baby Clinic, Car Seat Safety, etc.)
Perinatal Services (Healthy Nutrition and living during pregnancy, Development of the baby, child birth preparation, breastfeeding etc.)
Medical Services

Community Services

- Accessing French daycare centres and French schools
- Financial Support,
- Child Care Subsidy,
- Assistance regarding camps and children's activities, etc.)

Access to specialized services:

- Hearing and Vision impairment
- Accessing services and supports for PDD and ADHD as for Developmental or Behavioural Issues
- Relief support for parents

## Hamilton East OEYC

### Hamilton East OEYC – Main Site

Operator/Lead Agency: Hamilton East Kiwanis Boys' & Girls' Club

Name & Address: Hamilton East Ontario Early Years Centre, 45 Ellis Avenue,  
Hamilton ON L8H 4L8

Hours of Operation: Mon., Wed. 9:00 am - 3:30 pm, 5:30 – 7:30 pm, Tues., Thurs. 9:00  
am – 3:30 pm, Fri.9:00 am – 12:00 and Sat.10:00 am – 2:00 pm.

Opening Date: Program has been in operation since October 2003, expanded  
services with the Best Start initiative started November 2005

Location of Hub*		Type of Hub	
Non-school (y/n)	School (y/n)	Francophone Specific (y/n)	Aboriginal Specific (y/n)
<b>Recreation Centre</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>No</b>

### Hub Services

#### Services provided in the Hub:

Below is a list of services that are **currently provided** within our HUB:

- **Early Learning & Care Centre** provides childcare for families with children 2.5 – 5 years – this program is available a mix of mornings, afternoons and full days. We provide a Preschool Universal Program for children 2.8-3.8 years of age for 16 children in the morning and afternoon. Children who will attend Holy Family or Queen Mary Schools for JK qualify for this free program (centre capacity is 32 children).
- **JK/SK** children are escorted to and from Queen Mary and Holy Family Schools
- **Aboriginal Parent Program** is offered weekly in partnership with the Regional Indian Centre and Healthy Babies/Healthy Children.
- **Native Family Gathering Time** is provided one time per month by Niwasa Head Start preschool to promote traditional Aboriginal customs.
- **French Family Time** is provided in partnership with Centre de Sante and provides families with French activities as well as French resources on parenting, referrals...
- **Home Management Program** operates one time per week to offer support for parents/caregivers to overcome challenges on a family or individual basis.
- **Public Health Nurse** support is available one time per week to provide support /information on pregnancy, breast feeding, parenting, family health, nutrition, meal planning and referrals to community services. Many workshops are provided on regular basis by PHN's such as, Ask a Dietician, Home Safety Presentations, Car Seat Clinics, Picky Eaters...
- **Exploring Art in the Early Years** provides children and parents the opportunity to explore different art medias with the support of an artist
- **Baby's Best Start** a pre/post natal program offers two session a week
- **Community Health Bus** is located in front of our building one day per week and provides dental services, Public health nursing services, immunizations ...

- **Gym & Swim** programs are available for families on a daily and weekly basis with an emphasis on physical activity
- **Intergenerational** programming happens on a regular basis between our Adult Day Program, our Early Learning and Care Centre and Early Years Centre
- **Speech and Language/Infant Hearing** is available one time per week for screens as well for parents/caregivers who have questions about their child's language development
- **Neighbourhood Advisory** has been expanded with the Best Start Initiative- this group is comprised of Early Years Centre staff, parents & caregivers, Child Care Supervisors & parents, neighbourhood school principals, board of education representatives and community partners
- **Lunch & Learn** program is provided daily – families are able to access a free nutritional lunch, parents/caregivers assist the cook with prep, menu planning and have opportunities to attend work shops on nutrition, budgeting...
- **School Readiness** program is offered in partnership with school boards, library, CAPC, public health and OEYCs
- **Dental Screening** is a pilot program sponsored by Public Health that is being offered in Hamilton east OEYCs
- **Early Identification Clinic** offers support and referrals for families around development, behavior, vision, hearing, speech, nutrition, dental ...
- **ROCK** – is a support group for grandparents raising their grandchildren – we provide free space for their weekly meetings
- **Parent Education** programs are offered based on the needs of the families and neighbourhood. Families are surveyed on a quarterly basis. Here is a sample of programs being offered during our 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter: Infant Massage, Early Bird Literacy, Kids Have Stress Too, Busy Babies in the Gym, How to Talk so Kids Will Listen and Listen so Kids Will Talk, Coping with Toddler Behaviour, Handwriting Without Tears, Literacy Make & Take, Woman Alive, Puppetry, Family Cooking Time, Rhyme Time

Please note we have many partnerships/relationships with multiple community partners and offer a wide range of parent/children programming based on the feedback of families. This is a small sample of those partners & programs:

- YWCA – Woman Alive
- McMaster Children's Hospital (Chedoke) – COPE, Coping with Toddler Behaviour, Right from the Start
- CAS/CCAS – Beyond the Basics
- Public Health – Incredible Years, Ask a Dietician, Welcome Baby
- School Boards – Roots of Empathy, School Readiness Programs

#### **Service(s) to be linked with the Hub**

- 18 month well baby check
- postpartum mood disorder
- early learning framework
- primary care, family physicians, nurse practitioner
- IBI – Autism
- low vision initiative

#### **Program Linkages to local Schools**

- Staffs communicate with JK/SK teachers on a regular basis during drop off and pick up of shared students

- Local school principals sit on our Neighbourhood Advisory Committee (our hope is to secure funding and have a JK/SK teacher rep)
- Staff attend parent nights, open houses, JK registration ...
- Information is sent home in school newsletters
- Networking at city wide staff training for ECE and JK/SK teachers
- Communication around children that may need extra support during the summer – teachers refer children & families to our services
- Preschool Universal children along with children enrolled in the school readiness program will spend time in their new school, visiting the classroom, library, gym, playground ...

**Francophone, Aboriginal, Special Needs & Diverse Communities:**

Francophone and Aboriginal children and families currently access services we provide. Due to our strong partnership and purchase of service agreement with Niwasa and Centre de Sante we are able to bring services into our location, provide materials and referrals. Families are referred to both the Aboriginal and Francophone Hubs & OEYCs on a regular basis. We have a neighbourhood OEYC in a French Immersion School that is well utilized. Our partnerships with the Regional Indian Centre, Niwasa and Centre de Sante have strengthened since the conception of OEYCs in Hamilton.

Hamilton east has a large population of new comers. We meet the needs of specific neighbourhoods by providing ESL classes, interpreters, multi-cultural parent education programs, community kitchen ... We have strong links to Family Home Visitors/PHNs/SISO who refer clients to our services.

Special Needs services and supports sometimes are provided by an outside agency in our program and referrals are made on a regular basis. Agencies that have provided services are McMaster Children's Hospital – Infant Parent Program & Intensive Community Children's Services 0-6, CNIB, Early Childhood Integration Support Services, Early Words ... Referrals are made with or on behalf of families on a regular basis.

## Hamilton East OEYC - Bagshaw Neighbourhood Site

Operator/Lead Agency: Hamilton East Kiwanis Boys' & Girls' Club

Name & Address: Bagshaw Neighbourhood Site – located inside Bagshaw School  
350 Albright Road, Hamilton ON L8K 5H 7

Hours of Operation: Mon., Wed. & Fri. 9:00 am – 1:00pm

Opening Date: Program initially started in temporary space inside the school in October 2006 and moved into permanent space in December 2006.

Location of Hub*		Type of Hub	
Non-school (y/n)	School (y/n)	Francophone Specific (y/n)	Aboriginal Specific (y/n)
no	Yes	No	No

### Hub Services

#### **Services provided in the Hub:**

Below is a list of services that are **currently** provided within our HUB:

- **Early Learning & Care Centre** is located next door and is operated by Umbrella Family & Child centre of Hamilton. The centre provides childcare for families with children 2.5 – 5 years – this program is available a mix of mornings, afternoons and full days. The Preschool Universal Program is for children 2.8-3.8 years who will attend St. Luke's or Elizabeth Bagshaw Schools
- **JK/SK** children are escorted within the school and to St. Luke's across the street.
- **Home Management Program** operates one time per week to offer support for parents/caregivers to overcome challenges on a family or individual basis.
- **Public Health Nurse** support is available one time per week to provide support /information on pregnancy, breast feeding, parenting, family health, nutrition, meal planning and referrals to community services. Many workshops are provided on regular basis by PHN's such as, Home Safety Presentations, Car Seat Clinics, Picky Eaters...
- **Exploring Art in the Early Years** provides children and parents the opportunity to explore different art medias with the support of an artist
- **Neighbourhood Advisory** has been expanded with the Best Start Initiative- this group is comprised of Early Years Centre staff, parents & caregivers, Child Care Supervisors & parents, neighbourhood school principals, board of education representatives and community partners
- **School Readiness program** is offered in partnership with school boards, library, CAPC, public health and OEYCs
- **Dental Screening** is a pilot being offered in Hamilton East OEYCs
- **Aboriginal Drum & Dance**

#### **Service(s) to be linked with the Hub**

- 18 month well baby check
- postpartum mood disorder

- early learning framework
- primary care, family physicians, nurse practitioner
- IBI – Autism
- low vision initiative

#### **Program Linkages to local Schools**

- Staffs communicate with JK/SK teachers on a regular basis during drop off and pick up of shared students
- Local school principals sit on our Neighbourhood Advisory Committee (our hope is to secure funding and have a JK/SK teacher rep)
- Staff attend parent nights, open houses, JK registration ...
- Information is sent home in school newsletters
- Networking at city wide staff training for ECE and JK/SK teachers
- Communication around children that may need extra support during the summer – teachers refer children & families to our services
- Preschool Universal children along with children enrolled in the school readiness program will spend time in their new school, visiting the classroom, library, gym, playground ...

#### **Francophone, Aboriginal, Special Needs & Diverse Communities:**

Francophone and Aboriginal children and families currently access services we provide. Due to our strong partnership and purchase of service agreement with Niwasa and Centre de Sante we are able to bring services into our location, provide materials and referrals. Families are referred to both the Aboriginal and Francophone Hubs & OEYCs on a regular basis. We have a neighbourhood OEYC in a French Immersion School that is well utilized. Our partnerships with the Regional Indian Centre, Niwasa and Centre de Sante have strengthened since the conception of OEYCs in Hamilton.

Hamilton east has a large population of new comers. We meet the needs of specific neighbourhoods by providing ESL classes, interpreters, multi-cultural parent education programs, community kitchen ... We have strong links to Family Home Visitors/PHNs/SISO who refer clients to our services.

Special Needs services and supports sometimes are provided by an outside agency in our program and referrals are made on a regular basis. Agencies that have provided services are McMaster Children's Hospital – Infant Parent Program & Intensive Community Children's Services 0-6, CNIB, Early Childhood Integration Support Services, Early Words ... Referrals are made with or on behalf of families on a regular basis.

## Hamilton East OEYC - Hillcrest Neighbourhood Site

Operator/Lead Agency: Hamilton East Kiwanis Boys' & Girls' Club

Name & Address: Hillcrest Neighbourhood Site – located inside Hillcrest School  
460 Melvin Avenue, Hamilton ON L8H 6R7

Hours of Operation: Tues. & Thurs. 8:45 am – 3:15 pm, Wed 12:45 – 3:15 and Fri.  
8:45 am -12:00.

Opening Date: Program opened in November 2006

Location of Hub*		Type of Hub	
Non-school (y/n)	School (y/n)	Francophone Specific (y/n)	Aboriginal Specific (y/n)
	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>No</b>

### Hub Services

#### **Services provided in the Hub:**

Below is a list of services that are **currently** provided within our HUB:

- **Early Learning & Care Centre** is located next door and is operated by Umbrella Family & Child Centres of Hamilton. The centre provides childcare for families with children 2.5 – 5 years – this program is available a mix of mornings, afternoons and full days. The Preschool Universal Program is for children 2.8-3.8 years who will attend Hillcrest Schools
- **JK/SK** children are escorted within the school
- **Public Health Nurse** support is available one time per week to provide support /information on pregnancy, breast feeding, parenting, family health, nutrition, meal planning and referrals to community services. Many workshops are provided on regular basis by PHN's such as, Ask a Dietician, Home Safety Presentations, Car Seat Clinics, Picky Eaters...
- **Exploring Art in the Early Years** provides children and parents the opportunity to explore different art medias with the support of an artist
- **Neighbourhood Advisory** has been expanded with the Best Start Initiative- this group is comprised of Early Years Centre staff, parents& caregivers, Child Care Supervisors & parents, neighbourhood school principals, board of education representatives and community partners
- **School Readiness program** is offered in partnership with school boards, library, CAPC, public health and OEYCs
- **Dental Screening** is being piloted in Hamilton east OEYCs
- **Lunch Program** is available on Tuesday & Thursdays
- **Aboriginal Drum & Dance**
- **Parents Providing Care**
- **Beyond the Basics**

#### **Service(s) to be linked with the Hub**

- 18 month well baby check

- postpartum mood disorder
- early learning framework
- primary care, family physicians, nurse practitioner
- IBI – Autism
- low vision initiative

#### **Program Linkages to local Schools**

- Staffs communicate with JK/SK teachers on a regular basis during drop off and pick up of shared students
- Local school principals sit on our Neighbourhood Advisory Committee (our hope is to secure funding and have a JK/SK teacher rep)
- Staff attend parent nights, open houses, JK registration ...
- Information is sent home in school newsletters
- Networking at city wide staff training for ECE and JK/SK teachers
- Communication around children that may need extra support during the summer – teachers refer children & families to our services
- Preschool Universal children along with children enrolled in the school readiness program will spend time in their new school, visiting the classroom, library, gym, playground ...

#### **Francophone, Aboriginal, Special Needs & Diverse Communities:**

Francophone and Aboriginal children and families currently access services we provide. Due to our strong partnership and purchase of service agreement with Niwasa and Centre de Sante we are able to bring services into our location, provide materials and referrals. Families are referred to both the Aboriginal and Francophone Hubs & OEYCs on a regular basis. We have a neighbourhood OEYC in a French Immersion School that is well utilized. Our partnerships with the Regional Indian Centre, Niwasa and Centre de Sante have strengthened since the conception of OEYCs in Hamilton.

Hamilton east has a large population of new comers. We meet the needs of specific neighbourhoods by providing ESL classes, interpreters, multi-cultural parent education programs, community kitchen ... We have strong links to Family Home Visitors/PHNs/SISO who refer clients to our services.

Special Needs services and supports sometimes are provided by an outside agency in our program and referrals are made on a regular basis. Agencies that have provided services are McMaster Children's Hospital – Infant Parent Program & Intensive Community Children's Services 0-6, CNIB, Early Childhood Integration Support Services, Early Words ... Referrals are made with or on behalf of families on a regular basis.

## Stoney Creek OEYC

### Stoney Creek OEYC - St. David Site

Operator/Lead Agency: Hamilton-Wentworth Catholic Child Care Centres Inc.

Name & Address: St. David Catholic School,  
33 Cromwell Crescent, Hamilton L8G 2E9

Hours of Operation: Ontario Early Years Centre Main Site Hub service hours-  
Monday 9:00am-7:30pm,  
Tuesday to Thursday 9:00am-3:30pm,  
Friday and Saturday 9:00am-12:00noon,  
Community Rooms available for use by community partners  
9:00am-9:00pm Monday to Friday,  
9:00am – 3:00 pm Saturday,  
Early Learning and Care Centre with Universal Component  
7:00am – 6:00 pm, Monday to Friday

Opening Date: September 2006

Location of Hub*		Type of Hub	
Non-school (y/n)	School (y/n)	Francophone Specific (y/n)	Aboriginal Specific (y/n)
	yes	no	no

### Hub Services

#### Services to be provided in the Hub

Public Health Nurse and Public Health Dietitian,  
Prenatal Classes,  
Communicative Disorders Assistant for Infant Hearing Screening,  
Speech Pathologist,  
Car Seat Clinics,  
Screening and Referral Clinics

#### Service(s) linked with the Hub

Programs facilitated by staff from Centre de Sante and Niwasa Preschool Headstart Program

#### Francophone services:

Facilitation of programs by staff from Centre de Sante monthly along with funding to support the services at their Centre de Sante.

#### Aboriginal children and families:

Facilitation of programs by staff from Niwasa Headstart Preschool Program weekly. Funding to support programs at their Niwasa Site.

### Stoney Creek OEYC - Holy Name of Jesus Neighbourhood Site

Operator/Lead Agency: Hamilton-Wentworth Catholic Child Care Centres Inc.

Name & Address: Holy Name of Jesus Catholic School,  
181 Belmont Avenue North, Hamilton, L8L 7M5

Hours of Operation: Ontario Early Years Centre Service hours  
Wednesday 1:00-4:00pm, Thursday 9:00am-11:30am, Friday  
9:00am-11:30am,  
Community Room available for use by community partners  
9:00am-6:00pm Monday to Friday  
Early Learning and Care Centre with Pre-school Universal  
Component  
7:00am – 6:00 pm Monday to Friday

Opening Date: September, 2006

Location of Hub*		Type of Hub	
Non-school (y/n)	School (y/n)	Francophone Specific (y/n)	Aboriginal Specific (y/n)
	yes	no	no

#### Hub Services

Services provided in the Hub
OEYC programming
Child Care
Community services

Service(s) linked with the Hub
Programs facilitated by staff from Niwasa Preschool Headstart Program

**Stoney Creek OEYC - St. Francis Xavier Neighbourhood Site**

Operator/Lead Agency: Hamilton-Wentworth Catholic Child Care Centres Inc.

Name & Address: St. Francis Xavier Catholic School,  
298 Highway #8, Stoney Creek

Hours of Operation: Ontario Early Years Centre Service hours  
Wednesday 1:00-4:00pm, Thursday 9:00am-11:30am, Friday  
9:00am-11:30am  
Community Room available for use by community partners -  
9:00am-6:00pm Monday to Friday  
Early Learning and Care Centre –  
7:00am – 6:00 pm Monday to Friday

Opening Date: September, 2006

Location of Hub*		Type of Hub	
Non-school (y/n)	School (y/n)	Francophone Specific (y/n)	Aboriginal Specific (y/n)
	yes	no	no

**Hub Services**

Services provided in the Hub
OEYC programming
Child Care for children 3.8 to 12 years
Community services – speech-lang. pathologist, public health nurse, nutritionist

Service(s) linked with the Hub
Programs facilitated by staff from Niwasa Preschool Headstart Program

## Stoney Creek OEYC - Billy Green Elementary School Neighbourhood Site

Operator/Lead Agency: Hamilton-Wentworth Catholic Child Care Centres Inc.

Name & Address: Billy Green Elementary School,  
1105 Paramount Drive, Stoney Creek

Hours of Operation: Ontario Early Years Centre Service hours  
Wednesday 1:00-4:00pm, Thursday 9:00am-11:30am, Friday  
9:00am-11:30am  
Community Room available for use by community partners  
9:00am-6:00pm Monday to Friday,  
Early Learning and Care Centre – operated by YMCA  
7:00am – 6:00 pm Monday to Friday

Opening Date: September, 2006

Location of Hub*		Type of Hub	
Non-school (y/n)	School (y/n)	Francophone Specific (y/n)	Aboriginal Specific (y/n)
	yes	no	no

### Hub Services

Services provided in the Hub
OEYC programming
Child Care for children 3.8 to 12 years of age
Community services- speech-language pathologist, public health nurse and nutritionist

Service(s) linked with the Hub
Services provided by staff from Niwasa Pre-school Headstart program

## Hamilton West OEYC

### Hamilton West OEYC - Queen Street Site

Operator/Lead Agency: Wesley Urban Ministries

Name and Address: 155 Queen St N; Hamilton, ON

Hours of Operation: Monday to Friday: 9-12 noon, Monday to Thursday: 1-4 pm, Tuesdays 4-7 pm, Saturday and Sunday 9-1 pm

Location of Hub	Type of Hub
<b>Non School</b> : Yes <b>School</b> : No	<b>Francophone Specific</b> : N <b>Aboriginal Specific</b> : N

This is the main site for the riding of Hamilton West and is situated in a community centre. The community centre is located across the street from the elementary public school (Hess Street School). The school and the program have had a close relationship since the inception of the Ontario Early Years Centre in 2003. The staff has regular communication both written and verbal with the school principal and JK/SK teachers. In addition, the program operates its School Readiness program from the school over the summer months. The OEYC staff also provide outreach programming at the School location. Children from the neighbourhood attending the separate school attend by school bus due to distance. We have promoted our centre's programs through this school's newsletter and have communication with the school principal.

#### Services to be provided in the Hub:

- Parent support and education services
- Interactive parent-child programs
- Linkages and referrals to other community services
- Nutrition Programs
- Family literacy services/programs
- Screening and Assessment (organized through Public Health to include speech and language, hearing, vision, social/emotional and general development)
- Access to public health services i.e. prenatal programs, breastfeeding clinic, Healthy Babies, Healthy Children Program, etc
- School Readiness
- Infant Hearing Clinic
- French and Bilingual children's programs

#### Services to be linked with the Hub:

- Children's Mental Health
- Child Welfare
- Children's Treatment Centres
- Recreation Programs
- Developmental Services
- Child Care
- Area schools

**Meeting needs of Francophone children & families:**

We have a French speaking staff member who provides French language programming on a weekly basis. She is also available to families by phone to provide referral and linkage to the Centre de Sante Communautaire Hamilton/Niagara Inc. As well, we have the Centre de Sante provide French language programming at this site. This agency is a key partner with the Hamilton Ontario Early Years Centres. Each of the OEYC's provides funding to support French specific programming at Centre de Sante.

**Meeting needs of Aboriginal children & families:**

This location provides aboriginal programming once a month, for a morning. The session is facilitated by staff from Niwasa Headstart Preschool Program. The intent of this linkage is to promote traditional aboriginal culture to existing clients of the centre and also as an attempt to connect aboriginal families in the community as means to connect them to services. Please note a funding arrangement exists with the OEYC's and the Niwasa Headstart Preschool Program, to offer aboriginal specific services from their location.

## Hamilton West OEYC - Church of the Resurrection Neighbourhood Site

Operator/Lead Agency: Wesley Urban Ministries

Name and Address: Church of the Resurrection, 435 Mohawk Road West

Hours of Operation: Monday, Wednesday 9:30 – 11:30, Tuesday 9:30 – 11:30 and 1 to 3 pm

Location of Hub	Type of Hub
<b>Non School : Yes School: No</b>	<b>Francophone Specific: N Aboriginal Specific: N</b>

### Programmatic linkages to school:

Staff from this location participate in area school open houses and other special events to promote linkages with the school as well as link families to the services offered at the neighbourhood site. In addition, we attempt to promote to families through the school newsletter.

### Services to be provided in the Hub:

- Parent support and education services
- Interactive parent-child programs
- Linkages and referrals to other community services
- Nutrition Programs
- Family literacy services/programs
- Screening and Assessment (organized through Public Health to include speech and language, hearing, vision , social/emotional and general development)
- Access to public health services i.e. prenatal programs, breastfeeding clinic, Healthy Babies, Healthy Children Program, etc
- Public Health nurse on site weekly
- Prenatal and post natal program
- French and Bilingual children's programs
- A Coop child care program also operates from this location

### Services to be linked with the Hub:

- Children's Mental Health
- Child Welfare
- Children's Treatment Centres
- Recreation Programs
- Developmental Services
- Area schools

### Meeting needs of Francophone children & families:

We have a French speaking staff member who provides French language programming on a weekly basis. She is also available to families by phone to provide referral and linkage to the Centre de Sante Communautaire Hamilton/Niagara Inc. As well, we have the Centre de Sante provide French language programming at this site. This agency is a key partner with the Hamilton Ontario Early Years Centres. Each of the OEYC's provides funding to support French specific programming at Centre de Sante.

**Meeting needs of Aboriginal children & families:**

This location provides aboriginal programming a few times a year. The session is facilitated by staff from Niwasa Headstart Preschool Program. The intent of this linkage is to promote traditional aboriginal culture to existing clients of the centre and also as an attempt to connect aboriginal families in the community as means to connect them to services. Please note a funding arrangement exists with the OEYC's and the Niwasa Headstart Preschool Program, to offer aboriginal specific services from their location.

## Hamilton West OEYC - Jamesville Neighbourhood Site

Operator/Lead Agency: Wesley Urban Ministries

Name and Address: St Mary's School (Jamesville Community Centre), 209 MacNab St N.

Hours of Operation: Monday 1 to 3:30 pm and Wednesday 8:30 to 11:30 a.m.

Location of Hub	Type of Hub
<b>Non School : no School: Yes</b>	<b>Francophone Specific: N Aboriginal Specific: N</b>

### Services to be provided in the Hub:

- Parent support and education services
- Interactive parent-child programs
- Linkages and referrals to other community services
- Family literacy services/programs
- School Readiness

### Services to be linked with the Hub:

- Children's Mental Health
- Child Welfare
- Children's Treatment Centres
- Recreation Programs
- Developmental Services

### Meeting needs of Francophone children & families:

We have a French speaking staff member at our main site available to families by phone to provide referral and linkage to the Centre de Sante Communautaire Hamilton/Niagara Inc. This agency is a key partner with the Hamilton Ontario Early Years Centres. Each of the OEYC's provides funding to support French specific programming at Centre de Sante.

### Meeting needs of Aboriginal children & families:

There is no aboriginal programming at this site. Families would be linked to the services offered at Niwasa Headstart Preschool Program, through the OEYC purchase of service agreement.

## Hamilton West OEYC - Prince Philip School Neighbourhood Site

Operator/Lead Agency: Wesley Urban Ministries

Name and Address: Prince Philip School, 125 Rifle Range Rd

Hours of Operation: Monday and Wednesday 1 to 3:30 pm

Location of Hub	Type of Hub
<b>Non School</b> : no <b>School</b> : Yes	<b>Francophone Specific</b> : N <b>Aboriginal Specific</b> : N

### Services to be provided in the Hub:

- Parent support and education services
- Interactive parent-child programs
- Linkages and referrals to other community services
- Family literacy services/programs
- Screening and Assessment (organized through Public Health to include speech and language, hearing, vision , social/emotional and general development)
- School Readiness
- French and Bilingual children's programs
- Wrap around JK/SK child care currently provided by YMCA in the same space

### Services to be linked with the Hub:

- Children's Mental Health
- Child Welfare
- Children's Treatment Centres
- Recreation Programs
- Developmental Services

### Meeting needs of Francophone children & families:

We have a French speaking staff member who provides French language programming on a weekly basis. She is also available to families by phone to provide referral and linkage to the Centre de Sante Communautaire Hamilton/Niagara Inc. This agency is a key partner with the Hamilton Ontario Early Years Centres. Each of the OEYC's provides funding to support French specific programming at Centre de Sante.

### Meeting needs of Aboriginal children & families:

This location provides aboriginal programming a few times a year. The session is facilitated by staff from Niwasa Headstart Preschool Program. The intent of this linkage is to promote traditional aboriginal culture to existing clients of the centre and also as an attempt to connect aboriginal families in the community as means to connect them to services. Please note a funding arrangement exists with the OEYC'

## Hamilton West OEYC - Westdale Library Neighbourhood Site

Operator/Lead Agency: Wesley Urban Ministries  
 Name and Address: Westdale Library  
 Hours of Operation: Thursday 10 – 12:30 pm and 4 – 7:30 pm

Location of Hub	Type of Hub
<b>Non School</b> : Yes <b>School</b> : No	<b>Francophone Specific</b> : N <b>Aboriginal Specific</b> : N

### School linkages:

Staff from this location participate in area school open houses and other special events to promote linkages with the school as well as link families to the services offered at the neighbourhood site. In addition, we attempt to promote to families through the school newsletter. The neighbourhood school is French Immersion, so OEYC bilingual programming is emphasized.

### Services to be provided in the Hub:

- Interactive parent-child programs
- Linkages and referrals to other community services
- Family literacy services/programs
- Screening and Assessment (organized through Public Health to include speech and language, hearing, vision , social/emotional and general development)
- Public Health nurse on site weekly
- French and Bilingual children’s programs

### Services to be linked with the Hub:

- Children’s Mental Health
- Child Welfare
- Children’s Treatment Centres
- Recreation Programs
- Developmental Services
- Area schools

### Meeting needs of Francophone children & families:

We have a French speaking staff member who provides French language programming on a weekly basis. She is also available to families by phone to provide referral and linkage to the Centre de Sante Communautaire Hamilton/Niagara Inc. As well, we have the Centre de Sante provide French language programming at this site. This agency is a key partner with the Hamilton Ontario Early Years Centres. Each of the OEYC’s provides funding to support French specific programming at Centre de Sante.

### Meeting needs of Aboriginal children & families:

This location provides aboriginal programming a few times a year. The session is facilitated by staff from Niwasa Headstart Preschool Program. The intent of this linkage is to promote traditional aboriginal culture to existing clients of the centre and also as an attempt to connect aboriginal families in the community as means to connect them to services. Please note a funding arrangement exists with the OEYC’s and the Niwasa Headstart Preschool Program, to offer aboriginal specific services from their location.

## Hamilton West OEYC - Grace Haven Site

Operator/Lead Agency: Wesley Urban Ministries/Operator: Salvation Army Grace Haven

Name and Address: 138 Herkimer St.

Hours of Operation: Monday 3 to 6 pm and Wednesday 5 to 8 pm

Location of Hub	Type of Hub
<b>Non School</b> : Yes <b>School</b> : No	<b>Francophone Specific</b> : N <b>Aboriginal Specific</b> : N

**School linkages:** This is a residential facility for pregnant and parenting teens. The residence has an onsite classroom for residents.

### Services to be provided in the Hub:

- Parent support and education services
- Pre and Post natal services
- Interactive parent-child programs
- Linkages and referrals to other community services
- Public Health nurse on site weekly

### Services to be linked with the Hub:

- Children's Mental Health
- Child Welfare
- Children's Treatment Centres
- Recreation Programs
- Developmental Services
- Area schools

**Meeting needs of Francophone children & families:** There are no Francophone services at this site staff would refer families to the Centre de Sante Communautaire Hamilton/Niagara Inc.

**Meeting needs of Aboriginal children & families:** This location does not provided aboriginal specific programming. Staff would connect families to the Niwasa Headstart Preschool Program.

## Hamilton West OEYC - Ryerson Recreation Centre Neighbourhood Site

Operator/Lead Agency: Wesley Urban Ministries/Operator: Today's Family

Name and Address: Ryerson Recreation Centre; Duke St.

Hours of Operation: Tuesday to Friday 9:30 – 11:30 am

Location of Hub	Type of Hub
<b>Non School</b> : Yes <b>School</b> : No	<b>Francophone Specific</b> : N <b>Aboriginal Specific</b> : N

**School linkages:** Staff from this location participate in area school open houses and other special events to promote linkages with the school as well as link families to the services offered at the neighbourhood site. In addition, we attempt to promote to families through the school newsletter.

### Services to be provided in the Hub:

- Parent support and education services
- Interactive parent-child programs
- Linkages and referrals to other community services
- Family literacy services/programs
- Screening and Assessment (organized through Public Health to include speech and language, hearing, vision , social/emotional and general development)
- Public Health nurse on site weekly

### Services to be linked with the Hub:

- Children's Mental Health
- Child Welfare
- Children's Treatment Centres
- Recreation Programs
- Developmental Services
- Area schools

**Meeting needs of Francophone children & families:** There are no Francophone services at this site staff would refer families to the Centre de Sante Communautaire Hamilton/Niagara Inc.

**Meeting needs of Aboriginal children & families** This location does not provided aboriginal specific programming. Staff would connect families to the Niwasa Headstart Preschool Program.

**Ancaster-Dundas-Flamborough OEYC**

**Waterdown Site**

Operator/Lead Agency: Today’s Family – Caring For Your Child OEYC

Name & Address: 315 Dundas Street East  
Waterdown, ON

Hours of Operation: Monday: 8:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.  
Tuesday: 8:30 a.m. – 7:30 p.m.  
Wednesday: 8:30 a.m. – 8:00 p.m.  
Thursday: 8:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.  
Friday: 8:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.  
Saturday: 9:30 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

Projected Opening Date: It is already a hub

Location of Hub*		Type of Hub	
Non-school <b>Yes</b>	School	Francophone <b>Link to services provided by Centre de Sante</b>	Aboriginal Specific <b>Link to Services provided by Niwasa</b>

**\*For hubs that are not located within a physical structure, please describe:**

- How families will be supported with a simplified point of access:**  
Families will be introduced to the Early Learning and Child Care programs and Early Years services during their initial visit at the neighborhood hub. Best Start Hub phone number will be the single point of access.
- Explicit mechanisms to facilitate system integration (e.g. MOUs, communication/service protocols, etc.)**  
An orientation with all School Principals and Early Learning and Child Care Supervisors located in the neighborhood geographical area will be help to increase awareness to Principals/Supervisors of the Best Start Hub and affiliated early years services that are available and how to access the services. At the orientation session there will be a presentation describing all of the early years services at the Best Start Hub and in the community. School Principals, Supervisors and Early Years Facilitators will then disseminate information about the services. Caregivers affiliated with a licensed agency and independent caregivers will be able to access information about early years services at their local Best Start Hubs.

School Principals and or a designate/Supervisors will call the Best Start Hub point of access number to request any early years services. E.g. Esso Family Math

## **Hub Services**

### **Services to be provided in the Hub**

The Waterdown Hub is located in a Victorian home in the downtown core of the town of Waterdown. It is centrally located for easy accessibility.

Early Learning Activities –Family/Child Centered- programs that are responsive to the ever-changing cycle of the family.

Emergent Curriculum is the philosophy/approach that will be implemented in all Best Start Hub programs. This approach focuses on building relationships with the child and family and planning activities that reflect their background and current happenings in their lives and surrounding community. Activities will follow the children’s lead- the adults will encourage the child to gather more information, test their theories, and expand on their knowledge while understanding the child’s stage of development. The children’s thinking will be made visible through documentation.

Referrals – provides a link to a variety of community resources for families to support all the transitions and situations that can arise in family life.

Parent and Caregiver Education- Information sessions that enhance knowledge on a variety of topics relating to children and families: The Incredible Years, Right from the Start, COPEing with Toddler Behaviour, COPEing with Oppositional 3-12 Year Olds, Beyond the Basics, Siblings without Rivalry, Kids Have Stress Too! Development Through Play,

Interactive Parent/Caregiver & child workshop sessions ex Mother Goose, ESSO Family Math, Early Bird Literacy, Lullabies to Literacy, Kindergarten Readiness, Infant Massage, Roots of Empathy. These programs are offered on an outreach basis.

Caregiver/Professional workshops – provides information sessions to caregivers, foster families, child care staff, students and all other related professionals on a variety of topics which focus on healthy child development and learning. The majority of information presented is evidenced based.

Information on Local Community Services – Community information sessions enlightening the importance of the Early Years and family life.

Early Literacy - all programs enhance and develop children’s literacy skills through books, reading, writing, songs and finger plays in all areas of the learning centres.

Outreach Services- On the Move Mobile Early Years program provides outreach services at neighborhood locations. Outreach is also provided to Guy B. Brown School for their annual Parent Workshop evening in which 4 workshops are provided to families with a focus on children 0 – 6 years old. We also provide workshop to the Parent Link in Waterdown.

Roots of Empathy – An Early Years Facilitator facilitates the Roots of Empathy program at the local school to the grade 4 class on a weekly basis.

Toy and Resource Lending Services: Parents and caregivers can access the toy and resource lending services in the hub.

Volunteer Coordination- Parents, students, caregivers volunteer by leading groups, providing information sessions and participating on the parent advisory. Their participation is instrumental in helping us plan for the future.  
Program Effectiveness/ Family/Child measurable outcomes- We measure outcomes via parent surveys, anecdotal experiences, statistics and the success of integration and community development.

Speakers Bureau- professionals in the community offer to speak on a wide range of topics, which include Family Fitness, and Health & Wellbeing.

We will continue our linkages with other children and family agencies, Associations, neighbourhood schools, Early Learning and Child Care programs, Recreation Centres, Libraries, Colleges, Universities, Public Health, Niwasa, Centre de Sante, Kiwanis Boys and Girls Club, Wesley Urban Ministries, Chedoke Child and Family Centre, Co-op Council preschool, Early Literacy Consultants, Early Words, Affiliated Services For Children and Youth, Mother Craft, Community Information Hamilton, Contact Hamilton, Women Shelters, , Canadian Hearing society, Canadian National Institute for the Blind, Early Childhood Best Start Network, Early Childhood Integration Support Services, Hamilton Fire and Police Services, Good Beginnings VON.

Public Health- Public health nurse/ dietitian provides families with health, nutrition, physical education, pre-natal and post-natal sessions and information.

Early Identification Screening and Referral Clinics: [Parents and caregivers that have questions about their child's development, behaviour, vision, nutritional needs, dental health or speech and language development can come to our Screening and Referral Clinics for children newborn – 6 years old. Clinics are free and no appointment is needed.](#)

Speech –language pathologist from Early Words – screening, assessment and goal setting.

Infant Hearing Program – therapy to children with identified hearing loss.

Chedoke McMaster Community Education Flyer- provides families across the City of Hamilton with a listing of available workshops to address a wide range of topics to support families.

Francophone services- provides children, parent/caregiver programs in French and a direct link to services offered at Centre de Santee.

Aboriginal services – provides children, parent/caregiver programs with an aboriginal influence and a direct link to services at Nowise.

Healthy Babies/Healthy Children Family Home visitors – welcome their families into the Hubs to learn about services and programs available in their neighborhood.

Home Child Care Coordinators – welcome their caregivers and families to the Hubs to learn about services, children's programs and care givers workshops.

Artist at The Centre – The “Artist at the Centre” project invites children and adults to work

together with a professional artist to explore a variety of art media. The children’s thinking is made visible through painting, drawing and moulding. Children’s projects begin with their ideas. Documentation of their process of thinking and visual representation becomes a tool that allows us to think together about the children’s theories and responses. [www.artistsatthecentre.ca](http://www.artistsatthecentre.ca)

Physical Education – An interactive and participatory physical play time for children and adults - “Have A Ball” interactive play, “Jigga Jump”

Car seat clinics – provides families with a certified staff person to install children’s car seats safely and information about Car Seat Safety regulations.

Outreach parent workshops- Early Years Facilitators provide community groups such as Parent Link with information sessions.

Community Awareness information sessions- participating in Resource Fairs, Mall Displays, orientations at high schools, elementary schools, recreation centers, local Church Board meetings, school councils, YWCA, libraries etc.

Affiliations & Associations: AECEO, ASCY, Provincial OEYC Network, Home Child Care Association, Hamilton Chamber of Commerce

<b>Service(s) to be linked with the Hub Stronger linkages to:</b>
Early Learning and Child Care programs in the neighborhood
Business’ in neighborhood i.e. Real Estate agencies, Other service Dentists, Physicians, Walk in Clinics,
Music program – Philharmonic, Music Schools Art program- Art and Dance Schools Recreation programs – swimming, yoga etc YWCA/YMCA - fitness trainer (train the trainer model)

**Please describe how Francophone children and families will access hub services and how these services will meet the needs of Francophone children and families (for non-Francophone hubs only):**

Francophone families are linked to Centre de Sante for support and programs such as French public health nurse, French dietitian, family support programs and interactive parent/child play sessions. Centre de Sante also provides outreach programs to the Best Start Hub locations; Family gathering time, resources and books for both adults and children.

**Please describe how aboriginal children and families access hub services and how these services will meet the needs of Aboriginal children and families (for non-Aboriginal hubs only):**

Aboriginal families are linked to Niwasa for support and programs such as interactive parent/child play sessions and information sessions. Niwasa also provides outreach programs to the Best Start Hubs main locations and neighbourhood locations; Native Family Gathering Time, and special guests for the Traditional Aboriginal Dancing, community resources and books for both adults and children.

**Ancaster-Dundas-Flamborough OEYC - Dundas Site**

Operator/Lead Agency: Today’s Family – Caring For Your Child OEYC

Name & Address: Knox Presbyterian Church  
23 Melville Street  
Dundas, ON

Hours of Operation: Monday – Thursday 9:00 – 11:30 a.m.  
Gym Program Friday 9:30 – 11:30 a.m.

Projected Opening Date: It is already a hub

Location of Hub*		Type of Hub	
Non-school - Church - Partnership with Dundas Central Public School and St. Augustine’s Separate School	School	Francophone Link to services provided by Centre de Sante	Aboriginal Specific Link to Services provided by Niwasa

**\*For hubs that are not located within a physical structure, please describe:**

- How families will be supported with a simplified point of access:**  
Families will be introduced to the Early Learning and Child Care programs and Early Years services during their initial visit at the neighborhood hub. Best Start Hub phone number will be the single point of access.
- Explicit mechanisms to facilitate system integration (e.g. MOUs, communication/service protocols, etc.):**  
An orientation with all School Principals and Early Learning and Child Care Supervisors located in the neighborhood geographical area will be help to increase awareness to Principals/Supervisors of the Best Start Hub and affiliated early years services that are available and how to access the services. At the orientation session there will be a presentation describing all of the early years services at the Best Start Hub and in the community. School Principals, Supervisors and Early Years Facilitators will then disseminate information about the services. Caregivers affiliated with a licensed agency and independent caregivers will be able to access information about early years services at their local Best Start Hubs.

School Principals and or a designate/Supervisors will call the Best Start Hub point of access number to request any early years services. E.g. Esso Family Math

### **Services to be provided in the Hub**

The Dundas Hub is located in a church which has an Early Learning and Child Care Centre. The Early Learning and Child Care Centre provides care for children 18 months – 12 years old.

Early Learning Activities –Family/Child Centered- programs that are responsive to the ever-changing cycle of the family.

Emergent Curriculum is the philosophy/approach that is implemented in the Best Start Hub program. This approach focuses on building relationships with the child and family and planning activities that reflect their background and current happenings in their lives and surrounding community. Activities will follow the children’s lead- the adults will encourage the child to gather more information, test their theories, and expand on their knowledge while understanding the child’s stage of development. The children’s thinking will be made visible through documentation.

Referrals – provides a link to a variety of community resources for families to support all the transitions and situations that can arise in family life.

Parent and Caregiver Education- Information sessions that enhance knowledge on a variety of topics relating to children and families: The Incredible Years, Right from the Start, COPEing with Toddler Behaviour, COPEing with Oppositional 3-12 Year Olds, Beyond the Basics, Siblings without Rivalry, Kids Have Stress Too! Development Through Play.

Interactive Parent/Caregiver & child workshop sessions ex Mother Goose, ESSO Family Math, Early Bird Literacy, Lullabies to Literacy, Kindergarten Readiness, Infant Massage.

Caregiver/Professional workshops – provides information sessions to caregivers, early learning and child care staff, students and all other related professionals on a variety of topics which focus on healthy child development and learning. The majority of information presented is evidenced based.

Information on Local Community Services – Community information sessions enlightening the importance of the Early Years and family life.

Early Literacy - all programs enhance and develop children’s literacy skills through books, reading, writing, songs and finger plays in all areas of the learning centres.

Outreach Services- Provides outreach services to Dundas Public Library on a weekly basis by facilitating interactive parent/caregiver and child workshop sessions such as Mother Goose, Shake and Stomp, Toddler Tales and Tunes, and Infant Massage. In addition, we provide parenting/caregiver workshops on topics such as Infant Brain Development, Toilet Readiness, etc.

Volunteer Coordination- Parents, students, caregivers volunteer by leading groups, providing information sessions and participating on the parent advisory. Their participation is instrumental in helping us plan for the future.

Program Effectiveness/ Family/Child measurable outcomes- We measure outcomes via parent surveys, anecdotal experiences, statistics and the success of integration and

community development.

Speakers Bureau- professionals in the community offer to speak on a wide range of topics, which include Family Fitness, and Health & Wellbeing.

We will continue our linkages with other children and family agencies, Associations, neighbourhood schools, Early Learning and Child Care programs, Recreation Centres, Libraries, Colleges, Universities, Public Health, Niwasa, Centre de Sante, Kiwanis Boys and Girls Club, Wesley Urban Ministries, Chedoke Child and Family Centre, Co-op Council preschool, Early Literacy Consultants, Early Words, Affiliated Services For Children and Youth, Mother Craft, Community Information Hamilton, Contact Hamilton, Women Shelters, , Canadian Hearing society, Canadian National Institute for the Blind, Early Childhood Best Start Network, Early Childhood Integration Support Services, Hamilton Fire and Police Services, Good Beginnings VON.

Public Health- Public Health Nurse/ dietitian provides families with health, nutrition, physical education, pre-natal and post-natal sessions and information.

Parent Link (Public Health) – Public Health Nurse facilitates a weekly 2-hour program for the parents/caregivers for children 0 – 12 months old. These sessions have a one-hour workshop component on topics such as breastfeeding, weaning your children, introducing solids to your infant, nutrition, etc. The other hour is an open discussion on parenting and resources in the community. The Knox Presbyterian Church provides a homemade snack and spends time with the new parents during break time.

Public Health campaigns and provides educational workshops to staff, families and caregivers.

Chedoke McMaster Community Education Flyer- provides families across the City of Hamilton with a listing of available workshops to address a wide range of topics to support families.

Aboriginal services – provides children, parent/caregiver programs with an aboriginal influence and a direct link to services at Niwasa.

Healthy Babies/Healthy Children Family Home visitors – welcome their families into the Hubs to learn about services and programs available in their neighbourhood.

Home Child Care Coordinators – welcome their caregivers and families to the Hubs to learn about services, children’s programs and care givers workshops.

Physical Education – An interactive and participatory physical play time for children and adults -gym programs, “Have A Ball” interactive play, “Jigga Jump”

Toy and Resource Lending Services: Parents and caregivers can access the toy and resource lending services in the hub.

Community Awareness information sessions- participating in Resource Fairs, Mall Displays, orientations at high schools, elementary schools, recreation centres, local Church Board meetings, school councils, YWCA, libraries etc.

Affiliations & Associations: AECEO, ASCY, Provincial OEYC Network, Home Child Care Association, Hamilton Chamber of Commerce

**Service(s) to be linked with the Hub Stronger linkages to:**

Early Learning and Child Care programs in the neighborhood

Business' in neighborhood i.e. Real Estate  
Other service Dentists, Physicians

Music program – Philharmonic, Music Schools  
Art program- Dundas School of Art, local potters  
Recreation programs – swimming, yoga etc  
YWCA/YMCA - fitness trainer (train the trainer model)  
Centre de Sante to provides outreach programs to the Best Start Hub locations; Family gathering time as well as other French resources

**Please describe how Francophone children and families will access hub services and how these services will meet the needs of Francophone children and families (for non-Francophone hubs only):**

Francophone families will be linked to Centre de Sante for support and programs such as French public health nurse, French dietitian, family support programs and interactive parent/child play sessions.

**Please describe how aboriginal children and families access hub services and how these services will meet the needs of Aboriginal children and families (for non-Aboriginal hubs only):**

Aboriginal families are linked to Niwasa for support and programs such as interactive parent/child play sessions and information sessions. Niwasa also provides outreach programs to the Best Start Hubs main locations and neighbourhood locations; Native Family Gathering Time, and special guests for the Traditional Aboriginal Dancing, community resources and books for both adults and children.

## Ancaster-Dundas-Flamborough OEYC - Ancaster Site

Operator/Lead Agency: Today's Family – Caring For Your Child OEYC

Name & Address: Marshall Memorial United Church  
21 Gilbert Avenue, Ancaster, ON

Hours of Operation: Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. Monday 1:00 – 4:00 p.m. Interactive Parent/Caregiver & Child Workshop Sessions

Projected Opening Date: It is already a hub

Location of Hub*		Type of Hub	
Non-school - Church	School	Francophone Link to services provided by Centre de Sante	Aboriginal Specific Link to Services provided by Niwasa

**\*For hubs that are not located within a physical structure, please describe:**

- **How families will be supported with a simplified point of access**  
Families will be introduced to the Early Learning and Child Care programs and Early Years services during their initial visit at the neighborhood hub.
- **Explicit mechanisms to facilitate system integration (e.g. MOUs, communication/service protocols, etc.)**  
An orientation with all School Principals and Early Learning and Child Care Supervisors located in the neighborhood geographical area will be help to increase awareness to Principals/Supervisors of the Best Start Hub and affiliated early years services that are available and how to access the services. At the orientation session there will be a presentation describing all of the early years services at the Best Start Hub and in the community. School Principals, Supervisors and Early Years Facilitators will then disseminate information about the services. Caregivers affiliated with a licensed agency and independent caregivers will be able to access information about early years services at their local Best Start Hubs.

School Principals and or a designate/Supervisors will call the Best Start Hub point of access number to request any early years services. E.g. Esso Family Math

### Services to be provided in the Hub

The Ancaster Hub is located in a church which has an Early Learning and Child Co-operative Care Centre. The Early Learning and Child Co-operative Care Centre provides care for children 18 months – 5 years old.

Early Learning Activities –Family/Child Centered- programs that are responsive to the ever-changing cycle of the family.

Emergent Curriculum is the philosophy/approach that is implemented in the Best Start Hub program. This approach focuses on building relationships with the child and family and planning activities that reflect their background and current happenings in their lives and surrounding community. Activities will follow the children's lead- the adults will encourage the child to gather more information, test their theories, and expand on their knowledge while understanding the child's stage of development. The children's thinking will be made visible through documentation.

Referrals – provides a link to a variety of community resources for families to support all the transitions and situations that can arise in family life.

Parent and Caregiver Education- Information sessions that enhance knowledge on a variety of topics relating to children and families: The Incredible Years, Right from the Start, COPEing with Toddler Behaviour, COPEing with Oppositional 3-12 Year Olds, Beyond the Basics, Siblings without Rivalry, Kids Have Stress Too! Development Through Play.

Interactive Parent/Caregiver & child workshop sessions ex Mother Goose, ESSO Family Math, Early Bird Literacy, Lullabies to Literacy, Kindergarten Readiness, Infant Massage.

Caregiver/Professional workshops – provides information sessions to caregivers, early learning and child care staff, students and all other related professionals on a variety of topics which focus on healthy child development and learning. The majority of information presented is evidenced based.

Information on Local Community Services – Community information sessions enlightening the importance of the Early Years and family life.

Early Literacy - all programs enhance and develop children's literacy skills through books, reading, writing, songs and finger plays in all areas of the learning centres.

Outreach Services- Provides outreach services to Starbuck's located in Chapters in the Ancaster Meadowlands. Public Health and the OEYC Early Years Facilitators provide monthly information parenting sessions on topics such as Infant Brain Development, Toilet Readiness, etc.

Volunteer Coordination- Parents, students, caregivers volunteer by leading groups, providing information sessions and participating on the parent advisory. Their participation is instrumental in helping us plan for the future.

Program Effectiveness/ Family/Child measurable outcomes- We measure outcomes via parent surveys, anecdotal experiences, statistics and the success of integration and community development.

Speakers Bureau- professionals in the community offer to speak on a wide range of topics, which include Family Fitness, and Health & Wellbeing.

We will continue our linkages with other children and family agencies, Associations, neighbourhood schools, Early Learning and Child Care programs, Recreation Centres, Libraries, Colleges, Universities, Public Health, Niwasa, Centre de Sante, Kiwanis Boys and Girls Club, Wesley Urban Ministries, Chedoke Child and Family Centre, Co-op

Council preschool, Early Literacy Consultants, Early Words, Affiliated Services For Children and Youth, Mother Craft, Community Information Hamilton, Contact Hamilton, Women Shelters, , Canadian Hearing society, Canadian National Institute for the Blind, Early Childhood Best Start Network, Early Childhood Integration Support Services, Hamilton Fire and Police Services, Good Beginnings VON.

Public Health- Public Health Nurse/ dietitian provides families with health, nutrition, physical education, pre-natal and post-natal sessions and information.

Chedoke McMaster Community Education Flyer- provides families across the City of Hamilton with a listing of available workshops to address a wide range of topics to support families.

Aboriginal services – provides children, parent/caregiver programs with an aboriginal influence and a direct link to services at Niwasa.

Healthy Babies/Healthy Children Family Home visitors – welcome their families into the Hubs to learn about services and programs available in their neighbourhood.

Home Child Care Coordinators – welcome their caregivers and families to the Hubs to learn about services, children’s programs and care givers workshops.

Physical Education – An interactive and participatory physical play time for children and adults -gym programs, “Have A Ball” interactive play, “Jigga Jump”

Roots of Empathy – An Early Years Facilitator facilitates the Roots of Empathy program at the local school to the grade 4 class on a weekly basis.

Community Awareness information sessions- participating in Resource Fairs, Mall Displays, orientations at high schools, elementary schools, recreation centres, local Church Board meetings, school councils, YWCA, libraries etc.

Affiliations & Associations: AECEO, ASCY, Provincial OEYC Network, Home Child Care Association, Hamilton Chamber of Commerce

**Service(s) to be linked with the Hub Stronger linkages to:**

Early Learning and Child Care programs in the neighborhood

Business’ in neighborhood i.e. Real Estate  
Other service Dentists, Physicians

Music program – Philharmonic, Music Schools  
Art program- Dundas School of Art, local potters  
Recreation programs – swimming, yoga etc  
YWCA/YMCA - fitness trainer (train the trainer model)  
Centre de Sante to provides outreach programs to the Best Start Hub locations; Family gathering time as well as other French resources

**Please describe how Francophone children and families will access hub services and how these services will meet the needs of Francophone children and families (for non-Francophone hubs only):**

Francophone families will be linked to Centre de Sante for support and programs such as French public health nurse, French dietitian, family support programs and interactive parent/child play sessions.

**Please describe how aboriginal children and families access hub services and how these services will meet the needs of Aboriginal children and families (for non-Aboriginal hubs only):**

Aboriginal families are linked to Niwasa for support and programs such as interactive parent/child play sessions and information sessions. Niwasa also provides outreach programs to the Best Start Hubs main locations and neighbourhood locations; Native Family Gathering Time, and special guests for the Traditional Aboriginal Dancing, community resources and books for both adults and children.

**Hamilton Mountain OEYC**

**Hamilton Mountain OEYC - Hill Park**

Operator/Lead Agency: Today’s Family – Caring For Your Child OEYC

Name & Address: Hill Park Secondary School  
East 16<sup>th</sup> Street, Hamilton, Ont.

Hours of Operation: Mon-Thurs 9:00 – 4:00, Fri 9:00 – 12:00  
Mon & Wed Eve 5:00 – 8:00 p.m.

Projected Opening Date: It is already a hub

Location of Hub*		Type of Hub	
Non-school	School	Francophone	Aboriginal Specific
	Yes - Secondary School	Link to services provided by Centre de Sante	Link to Services provided by Niwasa

**\*For hubs that are not located within a physical structure, please describe:**

- How families will be supported with a simplified point of access**  
Families will be introduced to the Early Learning and Child Care programs and Early Year’s services during their initial visit at the neighborhood hub. Best Start Hub phone number will be the single point of access.
- Explicit mechanisms to facilitate system integration (e.g. MOUs, communication/service protocols, etc.)**  
An orientation with all School Principals and Early Learning and Child Care Supervisors located in the neighborhood’s geographical area will be help to increase awareness to Principals/Supervisors of the Best Start Hub and affiliated early years services that are available, how to access the services and networking opportunities. At the orientation session there will be a presentation describing all of the early years services at the Best Start Hub and in the community. School Principals, Supervisors and Early Years Facilitators will then disseminate information about the services. Caregivers affiliated with a licensed agency and independent caregivers will be able to access information about early years services at their local Best Start Hubs.

School Principals and Supervisors will call the Best Start Hub point of access number to an outreach early years service. E.g. Esso Family Math and Early Bird Literacy.

## Hub Services

### **Services to be provided in the Hub**

Hill Park is located in a high school setting. This encourages youth to participate in programs and earn their volunteer credit to graduate. Linkages with the high school departments enhance the Early Years programs and provide learning opportunities for the High School students.

Early Learning Activities –Family/Child Centered- programs that are responsive to the ever-changing cycle of the family.

Emergent Curriculum is the philosophy/approach that will be implemented in all Best Start Hub programs. This approach focuses on building relationships with the child and family and planning activities that reflect their background and current happenings in their lives and surrounding community. Activities will follow the children’s lead- the adults will encourage the child to gather more information, test their theories, and expand on their knowledge while understanding the child’s stage of development. The children’s thinking will be made visible through documentation.

Referrals – provides a link to a variety of community resources for families to support all the transitions and situations that can arise in family life.

Parent and Caregiver Education- Information sessions that enhance knowledge on a variety of topics relating to children and families: The Incredible Years, Right from the Start, COPEing with Toddler Behaviour, COPEing with Oppositional 3-12 Year Olds, Beyond the Basics, Siblings without Rivalry, Kids Have Stress Too! Development Through Play.

Interactive Parent/Caregiver & child workshop sessions i.e. Mother Goose, ESSO Family Math, Early Bird Literacy, Lullabies to Literacy, Kindergarten Readiness, Infant Massage. These programs are offered on an outreach basis.

Caregiver/Professional workshops – provides information sessions to caregivers, foster families, child care staff, students and all other related professionals on a variety of topics which focus on healthy child development and learning. The majority of information presented is evidenced based.

Information on Local Community Services – Community information sessions enlightening the importance of the Early Years and family life.

Early Literacy - all programs enhance and develop children’s literacy skills through books, reading, writing, songs and finger plays in all areas of the learning centres.

Outreach Services- On the Move Mobile Early Years program provides outreach services at neighborhood locations. Early Years Facilitators provide outreach programs in the community; Infant massage, Mother Goose, Roots of Empathy in neighbourhood schools and a variety of parent Information sessions.

Volunteer Coordination- Parents, students, caregivers volunteer by leading groups, providing information sessions and participating on the parent advisory. Their participation is instrumental in helping us plan for the future.

Program Effectiveness/ Family/Child measurable outcomes- We measure outcomes via parent surveys, anecdotal experiences, statistics and the success of integration and community development.

Speakers Bureau- professionals in the community offer to speak on a wide range of topics, which include Family Counseling, Suicide Prevention, Family Fitness, Safe Lifting and back conditioning, Dog Bite Prevention, Health & Wellbeing,

We will continue our linkages with other children and family agencies, Associations, neighbourhood schools, Early Learning and Child Care programs, Recreation Centres, Libraries, Colleges, Universities, Public Health, Niwasa, Centre de Sante, Kiwanis Boys and Girls Club, Wesley Urban Ministries, Wentworth Heights Retirement Village, St. Martins Manor, Chedoke Child and Family Centre, Co-op Council preschool, Early Literacy Consultants, Early Words, Affiliated Services For Children and Youth, Mother Craft, Community Information Hamilton, Children's Aid Society, St. Joseph's Chinese Women's Health, Immigrant Women's Group, Living Rock Ministries, Contact Hamilton, Women Shelters, Intensive Community Care Program, Canadian Hearing society, Canadian National Institute for the Blind, Early Childhood Best Start Network, Latchin, Early Childhood Integration Support Services, Hamilton Fire and Police Services, Good Beginnings VON, The Chamber of Commerce, Artist in the Centre, Hamilton Philharmonic to provide increased opportunities for families.

Public Health- Public health nurse/ dietitian provides families with health, nutrition, physical education, pre-natal and post-natal sessions and information.

Public Health campaigns and educational workshops to staff, families and caregivers.

Early Identification Clinics- provides families with a wealth of professional practitioners who provides information regarding their child's development, behaviour, vision, nutritional needs, dental health or speech and language development. These screening and referral clinics are for children 0-6 years of age.

Speech –language pathologist from Early Words – screening, assessment and goal setting.

Infant Hearing Program – therapy to children with identified hearing loss.

Communicative Disorders assistant – provides therapy for children with communication disorders.

Chedoke McMaster Community Education Flyer- provides families across the City of Hamilton with a listing of available workshops to address a wide range of topics to support families.

Francophone services- provides children, parent/caregiver programs in French and a direct link to services offered at Centre de Sante.

Aboriginal services – provides children, parent/caregiver programs with an aboriginal influence and a direct link to services at Niwasa.

Children's Aid encourages foster parents to attend a weekly educational workshop that also serves as a support group and an opportunity to network.

Children's Aid Workers and Foster parents - welcome the families that they are working with to participate in workshops and children's programs.

Healthy Babies/Healthy Children Family Home visitors – welcome their families into the Hubs to learn about services and programs available in their neighborhood.

Home Child Care Coordinators – welcome their caregivers and families to the Best Start Hubs to learn about services, children's programs and care givers workshops.

Artist In The Centre – provides the children with an opportunity to work together with a professional artist and adults to explore a variety of art media. The children's thinking is made visible through painting, drawing and molding.

Physical Education – An interactive and participatory physical play time for children and adults -gym programs, "Have A Ball" interactive play, "Jigga Jump"

Toy Lending – provides families, caregivers, foster families, students and other professional in the community to borrow toys and learning materials for the Best Start Hub.

Car seat clinics – provides families with a certified staff person to install children's car seats safely and information about Car Seat Safety regulations.

Outreach parent workshops- Early Years Facilitators provide community groups such as Parent Link with information sessions.

Community Awareness information sessions- participating in Resource Fairs, Mall Displays, orientations at high schools, elementary schools, recreation centers, local Church Board meetings, school councils, YWCA, libraries etc.

Affiliations & Associations: AECEO, ASCY, Provincial OEYC Network, Home Child Care Association, Hamilton Chamber of Commerce

<b>Service(s) to be linked with the Hub Stronger linkages to:</b>
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Early Learning and Child Care programs in the neighborhood
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Business' in neighborhood i.e. Real Estate agencies, Other service Dentists, Walk in Clinics,
--

Music program – Philharmonic, Music Schools Art program- Art and Dance Schools Recreation programs – swimming, yoga etc YWCA/YMCA - fitness trainer (train the trainer model)
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Malls – children related stores Toys R Us Baby week
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**Please describe how Francophone children and families will access hub services and how these services will meet the needs of Francophone children and families (for non-Francophone hubs only):**

Francophone families will be linked to Centre de Sante for support and programs such as French public health nurse; French dietitian family support programs and interactive parent/child play sessions. Centre de Sante also provides outreach programs to the Best Star Hub locations; Family gathering time, resources and books for both adults and children.

**Please describe how aboriginal children and families access hub services and how these services will meet the needs of Aboriginal children and families (for non-Aboriginal hubs only):**

Aboriginal families are linked to Niwasa for support and programs such as interactive parent/child play sessions and a wide range Aboriginal services and information sessions. Niwasa also provides outreach programs to the Best Star Hubs and neighbourhood locations; Native Family Gathering Time, and special guests for the Traditional Aboriginal Dancing, community resources and books for both adults and children.

## Hamilton Mountain OEYC - Huntington Neighbourhood Site

Operator/Lead Agency: Today's Family – Caring For Your Child OEYC

Name & Address: Huntington Recreation Centre  
87 Brentwood Ave, Hamilton, Ont.

Hours of Operation: Thurs, Fri 9:30- 12:00

Projected Opening Date: It is already a hub

Location of Hub*		Type of Hub	
Non-school <b>No Recreation Centre</b>	School _____	Francophone <b>Link to services provided by Centre de Sante</b>	Aboriginal Specific <b>Link to Services provided by Niwasa</b>

**\*For hubs that are not located within a physical structure, please describe:**

- **How families will be supported with a simplified point of access**  
Families will be introduced to the Early Learning and Child Care programs and Early Year's services during their initial visit at the neighborhood hub. Best Start Hub phone number will be the single point of access.
- **Explicit mechanisms to facilitate system integration (e.g. MOUs, communication/service protocols, etc.)**

An orientation with all School Principals and Early Learning and Child Care Supervisors located in the neighborhood's geographical area will be help to increase awareness to Principals/Supervisors of the Best Start Hub and affiliated early years services that are available, how to access the services and networking opportunities. At the orientation session there will be a presentation describing all of the early years services at the Best Start Hub and in the community. School Principals, Supervisors and Early Years Facilitators will then disseminate information about the services. Caregivers affiliated with a licensed agency and independent caregivers will be able to access information about early years services at their local Best Start Hubs.

School Principals and Supervisors will call the Best Start Hub point of access number to request information and or to book an outreach early years services. E.g. Esso Family Math, Early Bird Literacy.

## Hub Services

### **Services to be provided in the Hub**

Huntington Recreation Centre highlights a physical education program for children and adults along with the following services. An interactive child/adult play time, Mother Goose and Toddler Tales and Tunes. It also provides a seamless transition to recreational programs for families ex. Swimming lessons.

Early Learning Activities –Family/Child Centered- programs that are responsive to the ever-changing cycle of the family.

Emergent Curriculum is the philosophy/approach that will be implemented in all Best Start Hub programs. This approach focuses on building relationships with the child and family and planning activities that reflect their background and current happenings in their lives and surrounding community. Activities will follow the children’s lead- the adults will encourage the child to gather more information, test their theories, and expand on their knowledge while understanding the child’s stage of development. The children’s thinking will be made visible through documentation.

Referrals – provides a link to a variety of community resources for families to support all the transitions and situations that can arise in family life.

Parent and Caregiver Education- Information sessions that enhance knowledge on a variety of topics relating to children and families: The Incredible Years, Right from the Start, COPEing with Toddler Behaviour, COPEing with Oppositional 3-12 Year Olds, Beyond the Basics, Siblings without Rivalry, Kids Have Stress Too! Development Through Play.

Interactive Parent/Caregiver & child workshop sessions i.e. Mother Goose, ESSO Family Math, Early Bird Literacy, Lullabies to Literacy, Kindergarten Readiness, Infant Massage. These programs are offered on an outreach basis.

Caregiver/Professional workshops – provides information sessions to caregivers, foster families, child care staff, students and all other related professionals on a variety of topics which focus on healthy child development and learning. The majority of information presented is evidenced based.

Information on Local Community Services – Community information sessions enlightening the importance of the Early Years and family life.

Early Literacy - all programs enhance and develop children’s literacy skills through books, reading, writing, songs and finger plays in all areas of the learning centres.

Outreach Services- On the Move Mobile Early Years program provides outreach services at neighborhood locations. Early Years Facilitators provide outreach programs in the community; Infant massage, Mother Goose, Roots of Empathy in neighbourhood schools and a variety of parent Information sessions.

Volunteer Coordination- Parents, students, caregivers volunteer by leading groups, providing information sessions and participating on the parent advisory. Their participation is instrumental in helping us plan for the future.

Program Effectiveness/ Family/Child measurable outcomes- We measure outcomes via parent surveys, anecdotal experiences, statistics and the success of integration and

community development.

Speakers Bureau- professionals in the community offer to speak on a wide range of topics, which include Family Counseling, Suicide Prevention, Family Fitness, Safe Lifting and back conditioning, Dog Bite Prevention, Health & Wellbeing,

We will continue our linkages with other children and family agencies, Associations, neighbourhood schools, Early Learning and Child Care programs, Recreation Centres, Libraries, Colleges, Universities, Public Health, Niwasa, Centre de Sante, Kiwanis Boys and Girls Club, Wesley Urban Ministries, Wentworth Heights Retirement Village, St. Martins Manor, Chedoke Child and Family Centre, Co-op Council preschool, Early Literacy Consultants, Early Words, Affiliated Services For Children and Youth, Mother Craft, Community Information Hamilton, Children's Aid Society, St. Joseph's Chinese Women's Health, Immigrant Women's Group, Living Rock Ministries, Contact Hamilton, Women Shelters, Intensive Community Care Program, Canadian Hearing society, Canadian National Institute for the Blind, Early Childhood Best Start Network, Latchin, Early Childhood Integration Support Services, Hamilton Fire and Police Services, Good Beginnings VON, The Chamber of Commerce, Artist in the Centre, Hamilton Philharmonic to provide increased opportunities for families.

Public Health- Public health nurse/ dietitian provides families with health, nutrition, physical education, pre-natal and post-natal sessions and information.

Public Health campaigns and educational workshops to staff, families and caregivers.

Early Identification Clinics- provides families with a wealth of professional practitioners who provides information regarding their child's development, behaviour, vision, nutritional needs, dental health or speech and language development. These screening and referral clinics are for children 0-6 years of age.

Chedoke McMaster Community Education Flyer- provides families across the City of Hamilton with a listing of available workshops to address a wide range of topics to support families.

Francophone services - provides children, parent/caregiver programs in French and a direct link to services offered at Centre de Sante.

Aboriginal services – provides children, parent/caregiver programs with an aboriginal influence and a direct link to services at Niwasa.

Children's Aid encourages foster parents to attend a weekly educational workshop that also serves as a support group and an opportunity to network.

Children's Aid Workers and Foster parents - welcome the families that they are working with to participate in workshops and children's programs.

Healthy Babies/Healthy Children Family Home visitors – welcome their families into the Hubs to learn about services and programs available in their neighborhood.

Home Child Care Coordinators – welcome their caregivers and families to the Best Start Hubs to learn about services, children's programs and caregivers workshops.

Physical Education – An interactive and participatory physical play time for children and adults -gym programs, “Have A Ball” interactive play, “Jigga Jump”

Toy Lending – provides families, caregivers, foster families, students and other professional in the community to borrow toys and learning materials for the Best Start Hub.

Car seat clinics – provides families with a certified staff person to install children’s car seats safely and information about Car Seat Safety regulations.

Outreach parent workshops- Early Years Facilitators provide community groups such as Parent Link with information sessions.

Community Awareness information sessions- participating in Resource Fairs, Mall Displays, orientations at high schools, elementary schools, recreation centers, local Church Board meetings, school councils, YWCA, libraries etc.

Affiliations & Associations: AECEO, ASCY, Provincial OEYC Network, Home Child Care Association, Hamilton Chamber of Commerce

**Service(s) to be linked with the Hub Stronger linkages to:**

Early Learning and Child Care programs in the neighborhood

Business’ in neighborhood i.e. Real Estate agencies,  
Other service Dentists, Walk in Clinics,

Music program – Philharmonic, Music Schools  
Art program- Art and Dance Schools  
Recreation programs – swimming, yoga etc  
YWCA/YMCA - fitness trainer (train the trainer model)

Malls – children related stores Toys R Us Baby week

**Please describe how Francophone children and families will access hub services and how these services will meet the needs of Francophone children and families (for non-Francophone hubs only):**

Francophone families will be linked to Centre de Sante for support and programs such as French public health nurse; French dietitian family support programs and interactive parent/child play sessions. Centre de Sante also provides outreach programs to the Best Star Hub locations; Family gathering time, resources and books for both adults and children.

**Please describe how aboriginal children and families access hub services and how these services will meet the needs of Aboriginal children and families (for non-Aboriginal hubs only):**

Aboriginal families are linked to Niwasa for support and programs such as interactive parent/child play sessions and a wide range of Aboriginal services and information sessions. Niwasa also provides outreach programs to the Best Star Hubs and neighbourhood locations; Native Family Gathering Time, and special guests for the Traditional Aboriginal Dancing, community resources and books for both adults and children.

## Hamilton Mountain OEYC - Lisgar School Neighbourhood Site

Operator/Lead Agency: Today's Family – Caring For Your Child OEYC

Name & Address: Lisgar Junior Public School  
110 Anson Ave, Hamilton, Ont.

Hours of Operation: Mon 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. Fri 9:00 a.m.- 12:00

Projected Opening Date: It is already a hub

Location of Hub*		Type of Hub	
Non-school	School	Francophone	Aboriginal Specific
		Link to services provided by Centre de Sante	Link to Services provided by Niwasa

### \*For hubs that are not located within a physical structure, please describe:

- How families will be supported with a simplified point of access**  
 Families will be introduced to the Early Learning and Child Care programs and Early Year's services during their initial visit at the neighborhood hub. Best Start Hub phone number will be the single point of access.
- Explicit mechanisms to facilitate system integration (e.g. MOUs, communication/service protocols, etc.)**  
 An orientation with all School Principals and Early Learning and Child Care Supervisors located in the neighborhood geographical area will be help to increase awareness to Principals/Supervisors of the Best Start Hub and affiliated early years services that are available and how to access the services. At the orientation session there will be a presentation describing all of the early years services at the Best Start Hub and in the community. School Principals, Supervisors and Early Years Facilitators will then disseminate information about the services. Caregivers affiliated with a licensed agency and independent caregivers will be able to access information about early years services at their local Best Start Hubs.

School Principals and or a designate/Supervisors will call the Best Start Hub point of access number to request any early years services. E.g. Esso Family Math

### Hub Services

#### Services to be provided in the Hub

Lisgar offers a program in the kindergarten room with many seamless linkages to the school and families in the neighbourhood.

Early Learning Activities –Family/Child Centered- programs that are responsive to the ever-changing cycle of the family.

Emergent Curriculum is the philosophy/approach that will be implemented in all Bet Start Hub programs. This approach focuses on building relationships with the child and family and planning activities that reflect their background and current happenings in their lives and surrounding community. Activities will follow the children's lead- the adults will encourage the child to gather more information, test their theories, and expand on their knowledge while understanding the child's stage of development. The children's thinking will be made visible through documentation.

Referrals – provides a link to a variety of community resources for families to support all the transitions and situations that can arise in family life.

Parent and Caregiver Education- Information sessions that enhance knowledge on a variety of topics relating to children and families: The Incredible Years, Right from the Start, COPEing with Toddler Behaviour, COPEing with Oppositional 3-12 Year Olds, Beyond the Basics, Siblings without Rivalry, Kids Have Stress Too! Development Through Play.

Interactive Parent/Caregiver & child workshop sessions i.e. Mother Goose, ESSO Family Math, Early Bird Literacy, Lullabies to Literacy, Kindergarten Readiness, Infant Massage. These programs are offered on an outreach basis.

Caregiver/Professional workshops – provides information sessions to caregivers, foster families, child care staff, students and all other related professionals on a variety of topics which focus on healthy child development and learning. The majority of information presented is evidenced based.

Information on Local Community Services – Community information sessions enlightening the importance of the Early Years and family life.

Early Literacy - all programs enhance and develop children's literacy skills through books, reading, writing, songs and finger plays in all areas of the learning centres.

Outreach Services- On the Move Mobile Early Years program provides outreach services at neighborhood locations. Early Years Facilitators provide outreach programs in the community; Infant massage, Mother Goose, Roots of Empathy in neighbourhood schools and a variety of parent Information sessions.

Volunteer Coordination- Parents, students, caregivers volunteer by leading groups, providing information sessions and participating on the parent advisory. Their participation is instrumental in helping us plan for the future.

Program Effectiveness/ Family/Child measurable outcomes- We measure outcomes via parent surveys, anecdotal experiences, statistics and the success of integration and community development.

Speakers Bureau- professionals in the community offer to speak on a wide range of topics, which include Family Counseling, Suicide Prevention, Family Fitness, Safe Lifting and back conditioning, Dog Bite Prevention, Health & Wellbeing,

We will continue our linkages with other children and family agencies, Associations, neighbourhood schools, Early Learning and Child Care programs, Recreation Centres,

Libraries, Colleges, Universities, Public Health, Niwasa, Centre de Sante, Kiwanis Boys and Girls Club, Wesley Urban Ministries, Wentworth Heights Retirement Village, St. Martins Manor, Chedoke Child and Family Centre, Co-op Council preschool, Early Literacy Consultants, Early Words, Affiliated Services For Children and Youth, Mother Craft, Community Information Hamilton, Children's Aid Society, St. Joseph's Chinese Women's Health, Immigrant Women's Group, Living Rock Ministries, Contact Hamilton, Women Shelters, Intensive Community Care Program, Canadian Hearing society, Canadian National Institute for the Blind, Early Childhood Best Start Network, Latchin, Early Childhood Integration Support Services, Hamilton Fire and Police Services, Good Beginnings VON, The Chamber of Commerce, Artist in the Centre, Hamilton Philharmonic to provide increased opportunities for families.

Public Health- Public health nurse/ dietitian provides families with health, nutrition, physical education, pre-natal and post-natal sessions and information.

Public Health campaigns and educational workshops to staff, families and caregivers.

Early Identification Clinics- provides families with a wealth of professional practitioners who provides information regarding their child's development, behaviour, vision, nutritional needs, dental health or speech and language development. These screening and referral clinics are for children 0-6 years of age.

Chedoke McMaster Community Education Flyer- provides families across the City of Hamilton with a listing of available workshops to address a wide range of topics to support families.

Francophone services- provides children, parent/caregiver programs in French and a direct link to services offered at Centre de Sante.

Aboriginal services – provides children, parent/caregiver programs with an aboriginal influence and a direct link to services at Niwasa.

Children's Aid Workers and Foster parents - welcome the families that they are working with to participate in workshops and children's programs.

Healthy Babies/Healthy Children Family Home visitors – welcome their families into the Hubs to learn about services and programs available in their neighborhood.

Home Child Care Coordinators – welcome their caregivers and families to the Best Start Hubs to learn about services, children's programs and care givers workshops.

Physical Education – An interactive and participatory physical play time for children and adults -gym programs, "Have A Ball" interactive play, "Jigga Jump"

Toy Lending – provides families, caregivers, foster families, students and other professional in the community to borrow toys and learning materials for the Best Start Hub.

Car seat clinics – provides families with a certified staff person to install children's car seats safely and information about Car Seat Safety regulations.

Outreach parent workshops- Early Years Facilitators provide community groups such as Parent Link with information sessions.

Community Awareness information sessions- participating in Resource Fairs, Mall Displays, orientations at high schools, elementary schools, recreation centers, local Church Board meetings, school councils, YWCA, libraries etc.

Affiliations & Associations: AECEO, ASCY, Provincial OEYC Network, Home Child Care Association, Hamilton Chamber of Commerce

**Service(s) to be linked with the Hub Stronger linkages to:**

Early Learning and Child Care programs in the neighborhood

Business' in neighborhood i.e. Real Estate agencies,  
Other service Dentists, Walk in Clinics,

Music program – Philharmonic, Music Schools  
Art program- Art and Dance Schools  
Recreation programs – swimming, yoga etc  
YWCA/YMCA - fitness trainer (train the trainer model)

Malls – children related stores Toys R Us Baby week

**Please describe how Francophone children and families will access hub services and how these services will meet the needs of Francophone children and families (for non-Francophone hubs only):**

Francophone families will be linked to Centre de Sante for support and programs such as French public health nurse; French dietitian family support programs and interactive parent/child play sessions. Centre de Sante also provides outreach programs to the Best Star Hub locations; Family gathering time, resources and books for both adults and children.

**Please describe how aboriginal children and families access hub services and how these services will meet the needs of Aboriginal children and families (for non-Aboriginal hubs only):**

Aboriginal families are linked to Niwasa for support and programs such as interactive parent/child play sessions and a wide range Aboriginal services and information sessions. Niwasa also provides outreach programs to the Best Star Hubs and neighbourhood locations; Native Family Gathering Time, and special guests for the Traditional Aboriginal Dancing, community resources and books for both adults and children.

## Hamilton Mountain OEYC - Mohawk College Neighbourhood Site

Operator/Lead Agency: Today's Family – Caring For Your Child OEYC

Name & Address: Mohawk Together For Families –OEYC  
Fennell & West 5<sup>th</sup> Street, Hamilton, Ont.

Hours of Operation: Mon-Thurs 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Fri 9:00- 12:00  
Tue Eve 5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.  
Sat 8:30 am to 1:00p.m

Projected Opening Date: It is already a hub

Location of Hub*		Type of Hub	
Non-school	School	Francophone	Aboriginal Specific
	Yes Secondary School	Link to services provided by Centre de Sante	Link to Services provided by Niwasa

### \*For hubs that are not located within a physical structure, please describe:

- How families will be supported with a simplified point of access**  
 Families will be introduced to the Early Learning and Child Care programs and Early Year's services during their initial visit at the neighborhood hub. Best Start Hub phone number will be the single point of access.
- Explicit mechanisms to facilitate system integration (e.g. MOUs, communication/service protocols, etc.)**  
 An orientation with all School Principals and Early Learning and Child Care Supervisors located in the neighborhood's geographical area will be help to increase awareness to Principals/Supervisors of the Best Start Hub and affiliated early years services that are available, how to access the services and networking opportunities. At the orientation session there will be a presentation describing all of the early years services at the Best Start Hub and in the community. School Principals, Supervisors and Early Years Facilitators will then disseminate information about the services. Caregivers affiliated with a licensed agency and independent caregivers will be able to access information about early years services at their local Best Start Hubs.

School Principals and Supervisors will call the Best Start Hub point of access number to request information and or outreach early years services. E.g. Esso Family Math and Early Bird Literacy.

### Services to be provided in the Hub

Mohawk College -Together For Families is a Hub that offers innovative programming and resources to support children, parents, caregivers, Early Learning Facilitators and students from Health Sciences and Human Services programs.

Early Learning Activities –Family/Child Centered- programs that are responsive to the ever-changing cycle of the family.

Emergent Curriculum is the philosophy/approach that will be implemented in all Best Start Hub programs. This approach focuses on building relationships with the child and family and planning activities that reflect their background and current happenings in their lives and surrounding community. Activities will follow the children's lead- the adults will encourage the child to gather more information, test their theories, and expand on their knowledge while understanding the child's stage of development. The children's thinking will be made visible through documentation.

Referrals – provides a link to a variety of community resources for families to support all the transitions and situations that can arise in family life.

Parent and Caregiver Education- Information sessions that enhance knowledge on a variety of topics relating to children and families: The Incredible Years, Right from the Start, COPEing with Toddler Behaviour, COPEing with Oppositional 3-12 Year Olds, Beyond the Basics, Siblings without Rivalry, Kids Have Stress Too! Development Through Play.

Interactive Parent/Caregiver & child workshop sessions i.e. Mother Goose, ESSO Family Math, Early Bird Literacy, Lullabies to Literacy, Kindergarten Readiness, Infant Massage. These programs are offered on an outreach basis.

Caregiver/Professional workshops – provides information sessions to caregivers, foster families, child care staff, students and all other related professionals on a variety of topics which focus on healthy child development and learning. The majority of information presented is evidenced based.

Information on Local Community Services – Community information sessions enlightening the importance of the Early Years and family life.

Early Literacy - all programs enhance and develop children's literacy skills through books, reading, writing, songs and finger plays in all areas of the learning centres.

Outreach Services- On the Move Mobile Early Years program provides outreach services at neighborhood locations. Early Years Facilitators provide outreach programs in the community; Infant massage, Mother Goose, Roots of Empathy in neighbourhood schools and a variety of parent Information sessions.

Volunteer Coordination- Parents, students, caregivers volunteer by leading groups, providing information sessions and participating on the parent advisory. Their participation is instrumental in helping us plan for the future.

Program Effectiveness/ Family/Child measurable outcomes- We measure outcomes via parent surveys, anecdotal experiences, statistics and the success of integration and community development.

Speakers Bureau- professionals in the community offer to speak on a wide range of topics, which include Family Counseling, Suicide Prevention, Family Fitness, Safe Lifting and back conditioning, Dog Bite Prevention, Health & Wellbeing,

We will continue our linkages with other children and family agencies, Associations, neighbourhood schools, Early Learning and Child Care programs, Recreation Centres, Libraries, Colleges, Universities, Public Health, Niwasa, Centre de Sante, Kiwanis Boys and Girls Club, Wesley Urban Ministries, Wentworth Heights Retirement Village, St. Martins Manor, Chedoke Child and Family Centre, Co-op Council preschool, Early Literacy Consultants, Early Words, Affiliated Services For Children and Youth, Mother Craft, Community Information Hamilton, Children's Aid Society, St. Joseph's Chinese Women's Health, Immigrant Women's Group, Living Rock Ministries, Contact Hamilton, Women Shelters, Intensive Community Care Program, Canadian Hearing society, Canadian National Institute for the Blind, Early Childhood Best Start Network, Latchin, Early Childhood Integration Support Services, Hamilton Fire and Police Services, Good Beginnings VON, The Chamber of Commerce, Artist in the Centre, Hamilton Philharmonic to provide increased opportunities for families.

Public Health- Public health nurse/ dietitian provides families with health, nutrition, physical education, pre-natal and post-natal sessions and information.

Public Health campaigns and educational workshops to staff, families and caregivers. and answer question about a child's development, behaviour, vision, nutritional needs, dental health or speech and language development.

Early Identification Clinics- provides families with a wealth of professional practitioners who provides information regarding their child's development, behaviour, vision, nutritional needs, dental health or speech and language development. These screening and referral clinics are for children 0-6 years of age.

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Francophone services- provides children, parent/caregiver programs in French and a direct link to services offered at Centre de Sante.

Aboriginal services – provides children, parent/caregiver programs with an aboriginal influence and a direct link to services at Niwasa.

Children's Aid Workers and Foster parents - welcome the families that they are working with to participate in workshops and children's programs.

Healthy Babies/Healthy Children Family Home visitors – welcome their families into the Hubs to learn about services and programs available in their neighborhood.

Home Child Care Coordinators – welcome their caregivers and families to the Best Start Hubs to learn about services, children's programs and care givers workshops.

Artist In The Centre – provides the children with an opportunity to work together with a professional artist and adults to explore a variety of art media. The children's thinking is made visible through painting, drawing and molding.

Physical Education – An interactive and participatory physical play time for children and adults -gym programs, "Have A Ball" interactive play, "Jigga Jump"

Toy Lending – provides families, caregivers, foster families, students and other professional in the community to borrow toys and learning materials for the Best Start Hub.

Car seat clinics – provides families with a certified staff person to install children’s car seats safely and information about Car Seat Safety regulations.

Outreach parent workshops- Early Years Facilitators provide community groups such as Parent Link with information sessions.

Community Awareness information sessions- participating in Resource Fairs, Mall Displays, orientations at high schools, elementary schools, recreation centers, local Church Board meetings, school councils, YWCA, libraries etc.

Affiliations & Associations: AECEO, ASCY, Provincial OEYC Network, Home Child Care Association, Hamilton Chamber of Commerce

**Service(s) to be linked with the Hub Stronger linkages to:**

Early Learning and Child Care programs in the neighborhood

Business’ in neighborhood i.e. Real Estate agencies,  
Other service Dentists, Walk in Clinics,

Music program – Philharmonic, Music Schools  
Art program- Art and Dance Schools  
Recreation programs – swimming, yoga etc  
YWCA/YMCA - fitness trainer (train the trainer model)

Malls – children related stores Toys R Us Baby week

**Please describe how Francophone children and families will access hub services and how these services will meet the needs of Francophone children and families (for non-Francophone hubs only):**

Francophone families will be linked to Centre de Sante for support and programs such as French public health nurse; French dietitian family support programs and interactive parent/child play sessions. Centre de Sante also provides outreach programs to the Best Star Hub locations; Family gathering time, resources and books for both adults and children.

**Please describe how aboriginal children and families access hub services and how these services will meet the needs of Aboriginal children and families (for non-Aboriginal hubs only):**

Aboriginal families are linked to Niwasa for support and programs such as interactive parent/child play sessions and a wide range Aboriginal services and information sessions. Niwasa also provides outreach programs to the Best Star Hubs and neighbourhood locations; Native Family Gathering Time, and special guests for the Traditional Aboriginal Dancing, community resources and books for both adults and children.

## Appendix 7 – Hamilton’s Hub Planning Process

### I. Purpose

The purpose of this document is to describe and reflect the process for determining the future locations of Best Start Hubs (in Hamilton referred to as Ontario Early Years Centres).

The process is based on discussions that took place with Best Start Network members, Ontario Early Years Centres (OEYCs), representatives from Boards of Education, the child care community, the City of Hamilton as CMSM, and the Ministry of Children and Youth Services (MCYS) through the consultation that led to the development of Hamilton’s 2007 community service plan – *Best Start: Hamilton’s Early Learning and Care Community Plan*.

### II. Background

#### 2006 Phase One Implementation Plan

The following is a brief overview of the hub development process outlined in Phase One Implementation Plan (Jan 2006).

- Development of hubs was to evolve closely with the development of child care spaces
- Future hubs to be built on the existing system of OEYCs and their satellite sites via a process that engages their community partners
- Key tasks for 2006 included:
  - Identifying clusters of schools and reviewing clusters to identify capacity for sites within each school. Where no school space was available schools, OEYCs and other community partners were to develop a process to select the most appropriate site
  - Host parent and key stakeholder engagement sessions in each cluster to talk about the unique features of each neighbourhood – info to be taken into consideration when planning new hubs
  - Finding existing opportunities within the OEYC system (within existing resources)
  - Integrating hub planning whereby key stakeholders work together to create neighbourhood-specific hub development plans
  - Build on lessons learned – create continuous feedback mechanisms to learn from experiences of the demo sites
  - Creation of neighbourhood / hub advisory groups

#### Schools inventory work

In 2006 school boards (public and catholic) completed a space inventory and overlay this information on to maps of existing services/programs. However:

- The review was completed within the context of the fully funded three year expansion plan; funding levels have since changed.
- This information is now out-of-date and with significant changes to school board accommodations over the past year the inventory would need to be re-visited.

#### Changes and implications since January 2006

- Funding levels have changed; there will be no new Best Start funding for hub development
- MCYS’s policy on schools first:
  - Given the funding changes the MCYS is looking to communities to find natural opportunities for new hubs/sites within schools but also within the community – and while there is now more flexibility to build on existing opportunities, the critical role played by school boards as key partners in the development of sites, must be encouraged to continue

- Optimizing system integration is the key focus (less emphasis on the specific location as long as integration is being optimized)
- A good example was the selection of Hamilton East Kiwanis Boys and Girls Club as a hub; this decision was based on input from boards of education and community

### **Consequential Best Start Network decisions**

- At the April 2007 Best Start Network meeting there was agreement that the backbone of the Best Start hubs is the OEYC infrastructure; therefore it was determined that the Best Start early learning and care sites be referred to as 'OEYCs' and that associated child care programs would continue to use their existing names.
- This approach will provide consistency from the parent/family point of view (i.e., using centre name that has already been established in community and that families are already familiar with).
- Best Start will continue to be identified as the umbrella that binds programs and sites across the city; Best Start will be used as a banner to describe the broader vision and as the mechanisms for system integration.

### **Additional historical or contextual factors**

- Creation of the Hamilton Roundtable for Poverty Reduction and their vision to make Hamilton the best place to raise a child; this initiative will be identifying priority neighbourhoods and working with community partners (including schools as natural points of intersect) to address poverty at the neighbourhood level; new Best Start hubs should be planned within the context of the HRPR work to avoid duplication and to optimize local resources (See Section 2 for details)

## **III. Planning Assumptions and Principles**

### **Givens and guiding principles**

The following points were identified by the participants as givens or guiding principles for the planning of new early learning and care centres (OEYC sites/satellites):

- Planning to date has reflected the MCYS's schools first policy; the Hamilton approach has been described as 'schools first where it works / fits', 'look to schools first', or even 'community first' with schools having intrinsic strengths and value as sites
- At this moment, there is no new money for Best Start hub expansion, though some types of expansion may be possible within the current allocation
- The focus is now on how to use existing resources most effectively and efficiently / finding opportunities for integration within existing resources
- Commitment to the Best Start Vision and system integration remains strong
- Location of new centers should be based on identified neighbourhood need (though some clarity will be required around how need is defined)
- Planning will be an inclusive process
- Planning process builds on Best Start structure (i.e., uses existing committees and groups)
- New centers build on OEYC infrastructure with OEYCs engaging key community partners in a collaborative planning process (key partners should reflect existing neighbourhood programs/services)

#### **IV. Hamilton's Response**

With agreement from participants on the preceding assumptions and guiding principles, the following recommendation was endorsed:

***That the Best Start Network's Early Child Development Integrating Committee (ECDIC) be the venue / table for early learning and care centre planning.***

##### **ECDIC as the planning body**

- Current draft Terms of Reference already reflect this role / function
- Committee composition is reflective of the key community partners (though some gaps are acknowledged e.g. child welfare)
- The structure of the ECDIC allows for the creation of subcommittees and work groups to tackle specific issues; additional members are brought to the table as needed; work is brought to ECDIC for discussion/endorsement and then brought to the Best Start Network
- Participants agreed that ad-hoc work groups would be struck as new opportunities (for new centres) arise; work group membership would reflect key community partners and members from the specific neighbourhood in question and bring in individuals not currently engaged in the ECDIC as required
- Agreed to strike a working group to develop the details and specifics of a community planning process / protocol for existing and new centres.

##### **Issues and questions to address**

Some of the issues to be considered by this sub-committee will include:

- Providing clarity to the types of planning decisions that should be discussed at ECDIC (e.g., development of new early learning and care centres and / or changes to existing centres if they impact community partners (for example, moving a satellite location, increasing hours / days of operation, etc.)).
- Implications of developing new centres (especially within existing resources); will they meet our current standards of quality? Will they be sustainable? We need to strike a balance between taking advantage of new opportunities for integration and being realistic with respect to quality and sustainability.
- Understanding the sub-committees roles as developing a process not a plan: we need to be clear that we are developing a process to plan for new centres as new opportunities present themselves over time; this will ensure we have the process and protocol in place so we can take advantage of new opportunities for system integration; we are not creating a 10 year plan for expansion and identifying numerous sites across the city.
- What kind of decision-making latitude does the ECDIC have? Do changes come for 'discussion and input' or for endorsement or approval? What's the relationship to the Best Start Network?
- How are new opportunities brought to the ECDIC's attention? Is there a standing item on ECDIC agendas?
- How do we ensure there are strong linkages to the Hamilton Roundtable for Poverty Reduction (HRPR) and their future work at the neighbourhood level? Opportunities would ideally be identified and developed in partnership with / or with strong communication occurring between Best Start Network/ECDIC and HRPR.
- At what point is a work group created? How is membership determined? Who leads the process? How do we ensure all of the appropriate partners are involved and/or consulted?
- What are the information sharing mechanisms between the work group and ECDIC and the Best Start Network?
- How will 'neighbourhood need' be defined? How will new opportunities be prioritized?

- What standards of quality (for programming, space, etc.) should be used to assess new opportunities and guide implementation? What can we draw from the demo site ‘lessons learned’?
- Other than new centres - what kinds of operational changes should come to the ECDIC for discussion (develop criteria)? What is the process for these discussions?
- Create further opportunity to discuss ‘what makes a hub/centre?’; can this community be more flexible in the definition so that we can build on existing centres/hubs that have developed naturally in neighbourhoods. This is a more flexible approach that strengthens existing partnerships and will be essential if we are looking to identify new centres with no new resources. This may mean creating centres outside of schools and existing OEYC sites/satellites (e.g., use libraries, recreation centres, etc). However, OEYC involvement as a partner is critical - they have administrative infrastructure to support centres which is critical if we are to develop new sites within existing resources.
  - For example, in east Hamilton there is a successful partnership between Riverdale recreation centre/CAPC/Red Hill library/Lake Avenue school/private home daycare partnerships (offering services at Riverdale community centre) – this initiative has engaged and established relationships with newcomer populations; use these ‘open doors’ to create new centres/hubs
  - This might be a successful approach for reaching some of the harder to reach populations e.g., at risk youth, young moms – groups who may not be comfortable seeking supports in a school location

### **Funding implications**

The proposed integrated approach to service planning is an important and significant change to the way service planning takes place across the early learning and care sector. There is an opportunity for the MCYS to reflect this new integrated planning approach in their service contracts with individual organizations.

### **V. Next Steps**

A small working group is being struck under the ECDIC to develop a planning protocol (see above for specific areas of discussion) and identify timelines for their work.

The goal is to have a planning protocol approved by the ECDIC and taken to Best Start Network for endorsement by the end of 2007/08.

## Appendix 8 – Hamilton Best Start ‘Sign-on’ Document

### Hamilton Best Start



My signature below indicates that I have read this document and that as a member of Hamilton’s early years community, I am committed to strengthening the alignment of the planning processes and delivery models of the organizations, networks or groups of individuals that I represent in an effort to move closer to achieving the Best Start Vision of improved access of service for children and families. This means:

**Seeking and supporting opportunities to engage in collaborative service delivery while ensuring links to Early Years Centres are developed and sustained.**

**Developing the mechanisms and tools that will facilitate collaborative service delivery.**

**Highlighting, describing and communicating with Hamilton early years community partners any of the implementation challenges or barriers that might be encountered in moving forward with the Best Start Vision, so that we can work together in developing strategies to overcome these.**

### Hamilton Meilleur Départ



En apposant ma signature ci-dessous, je confirme avoir lu le présent document et, à titre de partenaire communautaire du développement de la petite enfance de Hamilton, j’indique mon engagement à renforcer l’harmonisation des processus de planification de mon organisme et des modèles de prestation des réseaux de l’organisme ou des groupes de personnes que je représente dans le but de progresser vers la réalisation de la vision Meilleur départ d’un accès accru aux services pour les enfants et les familles. Cela signifie ce qui suit :

**Chercher et appuyer les possibilités de s’engager dans une prestation de services en collaboration, tout en assurant la création et le maintien de liens vers les Centres de la petite enfance.**

**Élaborer des mécanismes et des outils qui faciliteront la prestation de services en collaboration.**

**Souligner et décrire les obstacles à la mise en œuvre qui peuvent se présenter pendant la progression vers la réalisation de la vision Meilleur départ et les communiquer aux partenaires communautaires du développement de la petite enfance à Hamilton, de façon à ce que nous puissions travailler ensemble à l’élaboration de stratégies visant à surmonter ces obstacles.**

The following organizations and community members have indicated their support in writing of Hamilton Best Start’s Early Learning and Care Community Plan:

- Affiliated Services for Children & Youth (ASCY)
- Catholic Family Services
- Central Day Care
- Centre de Sante Communautaire
- City of Hamilton
- City of Hamilton – Public Health Services
- City of Hamilton – Red Hill Family Centre
- Community Information Hamilton
- Community Living Hamilton
- Conseil scolaire de district du Centre-Sud Ouest (CSDCSO)
- Contact Hamilton for Children’s and Developmental Services
- ECISS
- Early Words/1ers mots
- First Class Children’s Centre
- Hamilton & District Council of Co-operative Preschool Corp.
- Hamilton Wentworth Catholic Child Care Centres Inc.
- Hamilton Wentworth Catholic Child Care Centres Inc. – Holy Family ELCC
- Hamilton Wentworth Catholic Child Care Centres Inc. – St. Thomas More Children’s Centre
- Hamilton Public Library
- Hamilton Public Library Workplace Child Care Centre
- Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board
- Heritage Green Child Care Inc.
- Jamesville Children’s Centre
- La Garderie Francaise de Hamilton Inc. operant sous Le Ballon Rouge
- Le Petit Navire (Garderie)
- Little Learning House Child Care Center (Barton & Birch)
- Lucky Day/Supervisors Network
- McMaster Children’s Hospital
- McMaster Children’s Centre – Child Care Rep. Supervisors’ Network
- McMaster Students Union Child Care Centre
- Ministry of Children and Youth Services/Ministry of Community and Social Services Mohawk College
- Mohawk College – Artists at the Centre Project
- Niwasa Aboriginal Head Start Preschool
- Noah’s Ark Children’s Centre
- Offord Centre for Child Studies
- Ontario Early Years Centre – Hamilton
- Pathways Child Care & Preschool
- St. Bernadette Children’s Centre
- Services associes a l’enfance et la Jeunesse (ASCY)
- Tapawingo Day Care
- Today’s Family Early Learning and Child Care
- Today’s Family Early Learning and Child Care – Dundas
- Today’s Family Early Learning and Child Care – Eastmount
- Today’s Family Early Learning and Child Care – Huntington
- Today’s Family – OEYC
- Umbrella Family & Child Centres of Hamilton
- Umbrella Family & Child Centres of Hamilton – Templemead
- Village Treehouse Child Care
- Wee Watch Enriched Home Child Care
- Wee Watch Enriched Home Child Care (Stoney Creek)
- Wesley Urban Ministries
- Wesley Urban Ministries – Wesley Child Care Centre
- Westdale Children’s School
- Westmount Children Centre Inc.
- Wraparound/Lynwood
- YMCA of Hamilton/Burlington
- YMCA of Hamilton/Burlington (Mountain YMCA Child Care Centre)
- YMCA of Hamilton/Burlington (Highland YMCA Child Care Centre)
- Community members and parents

## Appendix 9 – 2007/2008 Child Care System Service Targets

Data Element	2006			Projected 2007		
	Cost Shared 80/20	ELCC 80/20	Best Start 100%	Cost Shared 80/20	ELCC 80/20	Best Start 100%
Fee Subsidy Expenditures	9,103,359	2,178,625	2,750,132	10,527,625	2,178,625	4,754,962
Fee Subsidy # of Children Served	4227	320	399	3500	320	700
OW Formal Expenditures	3,373,229			3,373,229		
OW Formal # of Children Served	1166			1000		
OW Informal Expenditures	666,038			666,038		
OW Informal # of Children Served	584			500		
Special Needs Resourcing Expenditures	3,060,339	119,999	111,000	3,060,339	119,999	190,000
Special Needs Resourcing # of Children Served	600	72	13	600	72	20
Special Needs Resourcing # of FTE Resource Teachers	68	3	4	68	3	4
Resource Centres Expenditures	804,290		125,000	804,290		84,706
Resource Centres # of Children Served	26584			25200		
Wage Subsidy NP Expenditures	5,351,615	400,000	569,442	5,214,645	400,000	2,790,138
Wage Subsidy NP # of Contracts	55	54	54	54	54	54
	440	142	441	440	142	440
Wage Subsidy Commercial Expenditures	246,328			246,328		
Wage Subsidy Commercial # of Contracts	27			27		
Wage Subsidy Commercial CBCC # of FTE	260			186		
Wage Subsidy Pay Equity Expenditures	438,505					
Wage Improvements NP Expenditures			193,087			257,450
Wage Improvements NP # of Contracts			54			54
Wage Improvements NP CBCC # of FTEs			698			698

Data Element	2006			Projected 2007		
	Cost Shared 80/20	ELCC	Best Start 100%	Cost Shared 80/20	ELCC	Best Start 100%
Wage Improvements Commercial Expenditures			49,913			66,550
Wage Improvements Commercial # of Contracts			27			27
Wage Improvements Commercial CBCC # of FTEs			215			215
Wage Improvement Avg. Percentage Wage Increase			0.9			0.9
Planning Expenditures			503,843			721,790
Total # of New Spaces created under Best Start			667			
Total # of New Spaces for 0-4 years			355			
Total # of New Spaces for JK/SK			312			
# of New Francophone Spaces for 0 – 4 years			21			
# of New Francophone Spaces for JK/SK			0			
# of New Aboriginal Spaces for 0 – 4 years			0			
# of New Aboriginal Spaces for JK/SK			0			
<b>Best Start Start-up</b>						
Expenditures for Total # of New NP Licenced Spaces			2738852			
Total # of New NP Licenced Spaces			667			
# of New NP Licenced Spaces for 0 – 4 years			355			
# of New NP Licenced Spaces for JK/SK			312			
Expenditures for New NP Licenced Spaces in Existing Schools		ESTIMATE	804747			
Total # of New NP Licenced Spaces in Existing Schools			469			
# of New NP Licenced Spaces in Existing Schools for 0 – 4 years			245			
# of New NP Licenced Spaces in Existing Schools for JK/SK			224			

All of planning project code except HUBs

Data Element	2006			Projected 2007		
	Cost Shared 80/20	ELCC	Best Start 100%	Cost Shared 80/20	ELCC	Best Start 100%
Expenditures for New NP Licenced Spaces in New Schools		ESTIMATE	111161			
Total # of New NP Licenced Spaces in New Schools			72			
# of New NP Licenced Spaces in New Schools for 0 – 4 years			32			
# of New NP Licenced Spaces in New Schools for JK/SK			40			
Expenditures for New NP Licenced Spaces in French Lang. Centres		ESTIMATE	33222			
Total # of New NP Licenced Spaces in French Lang. Centres			21			
# of New NP Licenced Spaces in New Schools for 0 – 4 years			21			
# of New NP Licenced Spaces in New Schools for JK/SK			0			
<b>Hubs (where applicable)</b>						
Expenditures for Hubs			348,750			540,000
Number of Hubs			7			8
Number of Spaces Located in Hubs			261			277
<b>Early Learning</b>						
Expenditures for Early Learning Program Spaces			476,730			932,480
Total # of Early Learning Program Spaces			144			144
<b>Sustainability Expenditure</b>			135,000			235,000
<b>Child Care Administration Expenditure</b>	1,394,131	276,200	623,140	1,727,000	276,200	1,037,664
			<b>9,580,150</b>			<b>11,613,382</b>

1. Expenditures refer to gross expenditures.
2. NP means Non-profit.
3. CBCC means licensed Centre-Based Child Care.
4. New Francophone and/or Aboriginal spaces should be included in the total number of new child care spaces created under Best Start
5. The Ministry of Education provides funding new non-profit licenced child care spaces created in existing schools, new schools and outside schools, for children up to and including 5 years of age, using Best Start capital funds.
6. The year 2006/07 refers to January 1, 2006 to December 31, 2006.

**Appendix 10 – Individual OEYC Service Plans, 2007-2008**

**ANCASTER-DUNDAS-FLAMBOROUGH ..... 150**

**HAMILTON EAST ..... 160**

**HAMILTON MOUNTAIN ..... 169**

**HAMILTON WEST ..... 180**

**STONEY CREEK ..... 189**

**2007-2008  
Ontario Early Years Centre  
Service Plan**

**Ancaster-Dundas-  
Flamborough**

**June 2007**

## **Section 1: Progress Towards Achieving the Long-term Vision for Best Start**

Section 1 provides an overview of the progress made by OEYC Ancaster-Dundas-Flamborough in supporting the community in achieving the community's vision for Best Start. It also outlines progress towards our OEYC goals and objectives as well as key accomplishments for 2006-07. Gaps / emerging needs and challenges / potential solutions for 2007-2008 are also outlined.

### **a) Accomplishments, gaps/emergent needs, and challenges / potential solutions**

#### **Accomplishments with child care community**

- OEYC Early Learning Facilitators have provided workshops such as Right from the Start, and COPEing with Toddler Behaviour with the families at Today's Family Early Learning and Child Care – Dundas, and Small Fry Co-operative Pre-school
- Coordinator co-chairs and hosts Area Supervisor Network meetings at OEYC program locations
- The child care centres, the licensed early learning and home child care and Ancaster-Dundas-Flamborough OEYC are utilizing services together on a regular basis. Small Fry Co-operative Pre-school, Friendship Fun Care and Today's Family Early Learning and Child Care – Dundas, Millgrove Children's Centre all visit the OEYC with their teachers and children.
- Sharing of equipment has been utilized by Small Fry Co-operative Pre-school as well as Today's Family Early Learning and Child Care – Dundas. During renovations of our space in Ancaster, Small Fry offered their space to us when they were closed.

#### **Gaps/emerging needs**

- Funding constraints limit new outreach and professional development opportunities due to staff availability
- Need to plan more opportunities for other child care centres to visit the OEYC as well as the OEYC families to visit the child care centres.

#### **Accomplishments with school boards**

OEYC Early Years programs in partnership with the community improved access and increase programs in the following ways:

- OEYC Neighbourhood site at Millgrove School – Thursday morning emergent curriculum program for children, parents and caregivers.
- OEYC outreach at Queen's Rangers Public School-focus on adult education and fitness program for families one half day per week
- OEYC program provided by On the Move – mobile OEYC program at Beverly Central School, Troy and Rousseau School, Ancaster to service the families in rural Flamborough West and in the Meadowlands area
- Early Years Facilitators provide Roots of Empathy program at Queen's Rangers School, St. Joachim's Separate School and Allan A. Greenleaf for 3.5 hours per week
- Early Years Facilitators are members of the school councils at Millgrove School, Queen's Rangers School and Beverly Central School
- Partnership with School Boards on the Early Literacy Hamilton Committee that has over 20 community representatives. Coordinator is co-chair of the Forum Committee that provided 14 workshops for primary teachers, early childhood educators and librarians.
- Planned a parent workshop showcase for parents with children ages 0 – 6 years old at Guy B. Brown School in partnerships with the primary teachers, principal at the school, as well as Public Health and Hamilton Public Library.

- Provided a 3-session workshop on “Getting Ready for Kindergarten” at Rousseau Public School and Queen’s Rangers School. Kindergarten teacher and principal active in recruiting families as well as teacher was a participant.

### **Accomplishments with Francophone community**

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- OEYC enhanced their linkages with the Centre de Sante by providing marketing materials and resources in French
- A referral phone number was accessible to all families
- Centre de Sante representation at the Early Years Coordinating Table ensures a systems approach for planning and implementation of programs across the City

### **Gaps/Emerging Needs**

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- Lack of new funding impedes the expansion of francophone services within the Ancaster/Dundas/Flamborough geographical area

### **Challenges/potential solutions**

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- To continue to plan francophone services by adopting a systems collaborative approach

### **Accomplishments with Aboriginal community**

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- OEYC has continued to increase the services provided by Niwasa Head Start Preschool i.e. special events
- OEYC has promoted the Niwasa Head Start Preschool programs at all OEYC sites i.e. brochure and special events displayed

### **Gaps/Emerging Needs**

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- Funding constraints

### **Challenges/potential solutions**

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- To continue to plan services utilizing the systems collaborative approach across the City of Hamilton
- To continue to ensure Niwasa Head Start is an integral part of the decision making process for new program planning and implementation

### **Ethnically diverse populations**

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- Learning opportunities are created for each individual child and family that is reflective of their background, interests, happenings in their current life situation and surrounding community, supporting the emergent curriculum approach.

### **Emerging Needs/Gaps**

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- Stronger representation and linkages with service providers working with diverse populations
- Increase in new immigrant families in the City of Hamilton results in challenges for OEYC and community service providers
- Lack of additional funding to address the needs of diverse populations

#### Challenges/potential solutions

---

- To continue to build new partnerships with service providers that offer support and resources to new immigrant families and diverse populations i.e. SISO
- To continue to link with community partners to provide staff with cultural sensitivity training and to further their knowledge of the unique needs of this population

#### Special needs children

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- Early Identification clinics to support families with the initial referral
- Environments are adapted to meet the specific needs of special needs children
- OEYC Early Years Facilitators have Resource Teacher training to support the families
- Speech-Pathologist and Infant Hearing Program available at main site one morning per week

#### Gaps/Emerging needs

- Lack of staffing and resources to support the demand for parent consultations for children identified as grey area and or special needs

#### Challenges/Potential solutions

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- To build partnerships with the Child Care Community i.e. Resource Teachers and School Boards Learning Resource Staff to help address the increased demand for support for special needs children.

## **b) Progress regarding linkages with DAC**

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- DAC has provided one on one support to Lead Coordinator to review the EDI findings and support with community planning to address the needs of the neighbourhood
- DAC is a representative at the Early Years Coordinating Table to provide support on data analysis and the development of systems to reduce duplication and improve efficiency

### Emerging Needs/Gaps/Potential solutions

---

- Community planning to reflect a systems approach and the decision making for the expansion of OEYC programs to take place at the Integrating Table with representatives from key stakeholders involved in the Best Start initiative
- The development of a process/protocol for the expansion of OEYC programs in the City of Hamilton

## **c) Progress regarding linkages with Early Literacy Specialists**

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- Continual support and partnership strengthened with Early Literacy Specialist
- OEYC has monthly meetings with Literacy Liaison to support further integrated literacy activities in Hamilton i.e. train the trainer

### Gaps/Emerging needs/Potential solutions

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- The rapid expansion of child care and the OEYC programs has placed increased pressures on the Early Literacy Specialists since there have been no increase in funding
- To integrate professional development training opportunities for staff at (OEYC/Child Care) as well as parents

## **Section 2. Activities and Community Engagement Process**

### **a) Community Engagement**

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- Joint professional development with Area 4/5 Network (Supervisors, Early Childhood Educators)
- Increase in OEYC outreach i.e. Dundas Public Library, Greensville Public Library, Lynden Public Library, Alexander Place Nursing Home, School Sisters of Notre Dame Retirement Home
- Toy Lending program integrated with OEYC mobile program and available across all ridings
- Hosting meetings with area doctors to provide orientations about the Early Years Services

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### **Emerging Needs/Gaps/Potential Solutions**

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- To ensure a systems approach to planning for the expansion and or change of existing OEYC program locations to avoid duplication and ensure collaboration/coordination
- The development of a process/protocol for the expansion of OEYC programs in the City of Hamilton.

### **Parent Engagement Goals**

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- To continue to plan workshops that are responsive to the parents expressed interests and which support healthy child development and learning
- To continue to develop innovative strategies to collect parent feedback
- To continue to plan caregiver workshops to support their roles with children
- To provide professional information sessions and current information and research to support the public awareness
- To support families needing assistance with transportation (e.g. bus tickets provided, cabs in emergency situations)

### **b) Description of core and unique /centre specific services including evaluation findings or data specific to children and families**

#### **Early Learning Activities**

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- Emergent curriculum/documentation of children's learning
- Indoor/outdoor learning activities
- A variety of active and quiet activities
- Arts and Music
- Literacy activities
- Math/Science
- Planting of garden at main site with children, parents and caregivers

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#### **Parent/Caregiver Education**

#### **Pre-Post Natal**

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- Public Health Nurse – Lynden 2 times/ month, Ancaster 2 times/ month, Waterdown weekly
- Parent Link – Dundas weekly
- Parent to parent mentorship

- Car seat clinics – 3 Early Years Facilitators trained and assist in facilitating clinic

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### **Outreach Services**

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- On the Move programs at Beverly Central Public School, Troy, Rousseau Public School, Ancaster
- Intergenerational program-School Sister of Notre Dame Retirement Home- Mother Goose, Toddler Tales and Tunes, Shake 'n Stomp
- Intergenerational program-Alexander Place Nursing Home
- Queen's Rangers Gym Program – Wednesday mornings

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### **Early Literacy Programs**

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- Parent-Child Mother Goose program
- Snuggle up and Read
- Early Bird Literacy
- Literacy Forum
- Literacy Checklist

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### **Volunteer Recruitment and Coordination**

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- Empower parents and caregivers to take lead roles
- High school students fulfill their 40 hours
- Co-operative Students from Waterdown High school

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### **Information on Local Services/Referrals**

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- Link to Community Information Services
- Community Education Services
- Ontario Early Years Web site and Links
- City Recreation Centres and Libraries
- Health Service and Doctor Offices
- Child Care and Home Child Care
- Early Literacy Programs
- Services for children with special needs
- School Boards
- Public Awareness

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### **Linkages to the Community**

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- Social service agencies
- Public Health
- Healthy Babies/Healthy Children
- Aboriginal
- Francophone
- Recreation Centres, Libraries, Churches
- Business linkages

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### **Speakers Bureau**

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- Partnership with Today's Family Speaker's bureau
- Coordinated Conferences and guest speakers

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## **Unique Services**

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- Emergent curriculum/Artist at the Centre- opportunities to explore a variety of art media with a professional artist
  - Intergenerational program
  - Gym and Nutrition program- gym time, meal planning and healthy snacks and making baby food
-

### **c) Data and Evaluation findings**

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- Parent/Caregiver Evaluations are distributed to parents quarterly to gather feedback and plan program based on identified needs and interests.
- The Early Developmental Index (EDI) 2004/2005 identified children residing in the Waterdown, Greenville, and Ancaster with low scores in the Emotional Maturity domain. Emotional Maturity includes questions dealing with pro-social behaviour, aggression, inattentiveness and hyperactivity as well as anxious behaviours. Low scores in Greenville in the Social Competence domain. Social competences focuses on competence and cooperation in working with others, the ability to remember and follow rules, curiosity and eagerness, approach to learning and problem –solving ability. Low scores in the Language and Cognitive Development Domain in Waterdown and Greenville. Language and Cognitive Development includes items such as the child’s ability to use language correctly, cognitive developmental aspects of language and numeracy (i.e. Basic literacy and numeracy skills, interest and memory and more complex literacy)
- EYSIS data reports indicate statistical information relating to specific programs and the riding as a whole. It appears that we are continually attracting new families, especially families with newborn babies. Caregivers and children use the programs on a regular basis. The total number of people accessing services within our building has increased steadily. Workshop partnerships with other community programs continue to increase and so does the attendance of parents/caregivers in workshops. We are continuing to make referrals to other early years services and programs.

## **Section 3: 2007-08 Strategies to Move Forward with the Community Vision for Best Start**

### **Forecast of 2007-2008 OEYC Service priorities**

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1. To recruit more parent/caregiver volunteers to support children’s programs and parent education facilitation.
2. To continue to collaborate with community partners to facilitate joint professional development opportunities for families i.e. Making a Difference Events
3. To explore space opportunities that are in-kind and located close to schools as an alternative to securing space in schools. I.e. Recreation Centres and Child Care
4. To coordinate and collaborate with the CAS to integrate other possible programming opportunities across the Early Years System
5. To have stronger representation on OEYC committees reflecting ethnically diverse populations
6. To continue to build new partnerships with ethnically diverse service providers that offer support and resources to new immigrant families and diverse populations i.e. SISO
7. To continue to link with community partners to provide staff with cultural sensitivity training and to further their knowledge of the unique needs of this population.
8. To build partnerships with the Child Care Community i.e. Resource Teachers and School Boards Learning Resource Staff to help address the increased demand for support for special needs children.
9. To integrate professional development training opportunities for staff (OEYC/Child Care) as well as parents

10. To create a neighbourhood location at Dr. John Seaton Public School depending upon availability of space
11. To continue to link with a variety of different community partners to raise community awareness about the Early Years system
12. To continue to plan programs for families by adopting the emergent curriculum philosophy
13. To investigate new community partnerships which will enhance and enrich the curriculum through the arts and music
14. To continue to plan programs for children and families which focus on fitness, nutrition and healthy living.

Description of emergent needs/gaps/strategies to close gaps and obstacles and challenges to close gaps see above sections 1 and 2 and also section 3 service priorities for strategies to close gaps and overcome obstacles.

## **Section 4: Strategies for System Integration**

Please see Section 4 of the Best Start Plan (pages 27 to 30) for a description of the strategies OEYCs will employ (with their Network partners) to support the early years system in moving further along the continuum of integration. As key partners at the Best Start Network table, OEYCs have an integral role in this process.

## **Section 5: Service Targets for 2007-08**

### **2007-08 Projection Targets**

LABEL	DATA ELEMENT	2007-08 PROJECTION
CCSCHDSER#	Number of Children Served	2784
CHDVISIT#	Number of Visits Made By Children	17971
PARCARSER#	Number of Parents/Caregivers Served	2224
PARVISIT#	Number of Visits Made by Parents/Caregivers	12837
CCSPARTSER#	Number of Parents/Caregivers in Workshops/Seminars	967
PROFSER#	Number of Professionals in Workshops/Seminars	211
REFERRALS#	Number of Referrals	803
PROTLINKS#	Number of Protocols/Official Linkages	85

## **Section 6: Process for the OEYC Service Plan Development**

Please see Section 6 of the Best Start Community Plan (page 70) for a description of the OEYC service plan development process.

**2007-2008  
Ontario Early Years Centre  
Service Plan**

**Hamilton East**

**June 2007**

## **Section 1: Progress Towards Achieving the Long-term Vision for Best Start**

Section 1 provides an overview of the progress made by OEYC Hamilton East in supporting the community in achieving the community's vision for Best Start. It also outlines progress towards our OEYC goals and objectives as well as key accomplishments for 2006-07. Gaps / emerging needs and challenges / potential solutions for 2007-2008 are also outlined.

### **a) Accomplishments & progress in supporting Best Start vision and OEYC goals for 2006/07**

Oley's have continued to evolve with systems level planning, understanding that this assists in creating seamless access for families and supporting the goal of healthy child development and learning. We understand that strengthening partnerships will enhance integration of community supports for children and families. Parents and children are the beneficiaries of system integration since the outcomes include healthy child development and learning, school readiness and a strong foundation for children's future success ensuring a prosperous sustainable society thereby helping to create strong neighbourhoods. (Reference Building on the Foundation Moving Forward pg 3) Let it be noted that the following accomplishments and progress have been achieved as a result of community collaboration and strengthening of partnerships. The following are examples of accomplishments and progress to date.

#### **Accomplishments with Child Care Community**

- Hamilton East Kiwanis Boys' & Girls' Club has now completed over a full year of operation of our Early Learning and Care Centre. Our program has operated at full capacity since September 2006
- Our child care supervisor is an active member of the child care community, attending Supervisor's Network, Area Network, as well as an active participant on Preschool Universal Action Group for supervisors of the demo area
- We have had much success having involvement from childcare providers in our community attending our Early Years Advisory Committees
- Internally, OEYC and Child Care staff develop joint planning for families as well as for professional development
- Partnerships between our OEYCs and childcare centres in the demo area have strengthened over the school year. Staffs are planning/attending joint events together (i.e. Native Drumming & Dance), touring new families, sharing information with families (childcare will provide OEYC parent education guide to their families), referrals to OEYC, OEYC staff will attend monthly childcare staff meetings, will plan/attend school open houses together, share resources...

#### **Gaps/Emerging Needs**

- Provide information/workshop sessions for childcare centres that are unaware of OEYC services and plan strategies on how we can work together to meet the needs/support families
- To have increased time available for OEYC/Childcare staff to program together

## **Accomplishments with School Boards**

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- We have had great success at engaging principals to be active members of our Early Years Advisory Committees
- Local schools have included our OEYCs as key partners when developing plans for community/school events (open houses, meet the teacher night, JK/SK registration, nutrition events...)
- The schools have been instrumental in the distribution of OEYC materials to children who attend the school
- School staff have information and materials readily available that allow them to refer families to the OEYCs
- Board of Education staff that sit on Best Start/OEYC Committees have been a great resource and support in the schools when needed
- OEYC staff are working closely with local schools to implement a school readiness program for children who will be entering the school in the fall (this is also in partnership with public health, library, and childcare) This partnership has developed and strengthened over the past 3 years
- We have shared information (and have received some referrals) to local schools regarding a program for children who are not meeting their developmental milestones and would benefit from additional programming over the summer months. This service will be available in our Early Learning and Care Centre for half day or full day sessions during July and August.

### **Gaps/Emerging Needs**

- Space in schools is a constant issue. It would be wonderful to see OEYC programs located on the first floor in schools, which makes accessibility and visibility much more convenient for families. Our OEYCs located in basements (Gibson, Bagshaw) do not receive as many families as those located on the first floor (Hillcrest, Cunningham)
- The opportunity for JK/SK teachers to participate in neighbourhood advisories

### **Accomplishments with special populations:**

#### **Francophone**

- The Francophone Family Gathering Time has been moved to the Sanford OEYC and Cunningham OEYC due to the demand from families in these two communities. The Cunningham OEYC is located in a French Immersion School. Parents/caregivers have shown great interest in an immersion OEYC model
- Conversations have taken place with Centre de Sante regarding a purchase of service for a French speaking staff for 2 sessions per week. We would like to see this in place for September 2007

### **Gaps/Emerging Needs**

- Our challenges have been with the recruitment of a French speaking ECE for the Cunningham location

#### **Aboriginal**

- Along with our partnership with Niwasa, we have developed a partnership with the Native Indian Centre which is located in close proximity to the Boys' & Girls' Club. One time per week an aboriginal parent program is offered in partnership with Healthy Babies/Healthy Children. The Native Indian Centre also makes use of the pool for families one time per month along with their weekly dance program. We have seen an

increase in participation from aboriginal families within our OEYC services at our main OEYC

- Niwasa has provided native Drum & Dance Presentations for families at neighbourhood OEYCs which have had participants from OEYCs, childcare and the school.
- Niwasa provides a monthly Family Gathering Time at our main OEYC

#### Gaps/Emerging Needs

- Current services provided by Niwasa need to be reviewed across the OEYC system and placed in neighbourhoods where the need is higher

#### **Ethnically Diverse populations**

- We have found several of our neighbourhood sites serve many families who are new to Canada. We provide services that meet the current population of our unique neighbourhoods. The needs change as the population changes. Currently we have a very large Asian population at our Sanford location and a Muslim population at our Hillcrest location. We provide interpreters, Multi-cultural Parent Education Program, Community Kitchen, ESL classes and support from our PHN on a weekly basis.
- We are investigating the possibility of starting ESL classes at our Hillcrest location for July 2007.
- PHN and Family Home Visitors refer clients/new comers to our program on a regular basis

#### Gaps/Emerging Needs

- Many of our current services we provide at our Hamilton east OEYCs are a result of National Child Benefit Funding. We will no longer be able to provide the current level of these services in 2008 if funding is not renewed with the new City Grants program
- In the past ESL services have been provided on site with no cost by St. Charles. Due to funding cuts we have had to cover the costs of our own ESL teacher. This also included the recruitment of ESL staff to provide the program to clients
- We have had a large increase for transportation support for our new comer families
- Space is an issue at our Hillcrest location; we are in need of permanent space in the school to provide ESL classes. The families do not want to travel by bus to another location for the service

#### **Special Needs Children**

- We have had great success with the Early ID clinics that we have hosted. Parents give feedback that it is wonderful to have the opportunity to speak to multiple developmental agencies in one location
- Preschool Speech and Language and Infant Hearing services have been available at our main site since January 2007. Families who have not used our OEYC services in the past are being referred to the program and vice versa.
- We have now started supporting the IBI program at our Hillcrest location. We currently have one family accessing the IBI services several times per week with much success

#### Gaps/Emerging Needs

- Our Early Years Facilitators often recognize developmental concerns of children in our programs. It is difficult to have families wait so long on wait lists prior to a consultation
- One of our biggest challenges is identifying needs in children where English is a second language. Staffs come across difficulties in communicating with parents when we do not have translation services

- When supporting ESL families with children who have not been identified (due to wait lists or parent resistance) the transition to school can difficult

## **Accomplishments with OEYC Database and Public Access statistics**

The OEYC inventory is accessed quite regularly. It had 142,511 total hits for the 2006-2007 years of public service indexing in OEYC view. It is one of the top 50 most viewed records. In Hamilton east we received the following hits: Main OEYC 3367, Hillcrest 2278, Sanford 2092, Gibson 2063, Congress 1960, Cunningham 1842, Woodward 1490 and Elizabeth Bagshaw 614.

## **b) Progress re: linkages with Early Literacy Specialists/DAC**

### **Early Literacy Specialists**

#### **Accomplishments**

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- Our facilitator who attends the monthly meetings with the Early Literacy Specialists has found her participation to be extremely beneficial for herself and co-workers. This staff person has become the Literacy Liaison with a representative from all OEYC ridings
- Our facilitator has done several train the trainer workshops for our team as well as well supported staff to ensure we are providing literacy rich environments
- In 2006 the Hamilton east OEYC staff were recognized at the Literacy Breakfast for the strong commitment and involvement in literacy based initiatives
- Early Literacy Specialists have been a strong support for our Entry To School Programs by providing kits and train the trainer opportunities for the early years staff

#### **Gaps**

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- With the expansion of early years services it would be beneficial to expand the literacy liaison beyond one staff, this is not practical due to funding constraints

#### **Goals**

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- To ensure our continued involvement with the Literacy Liaison initiative and train the trainer models

### **DAC**

#### **Accomplishments**

- We have given support around the EYISS data base
- With the DAC support we have been able to generate reports that reflect the services that have been accessed by families as well to see where there may be gaps
- Hamilton east OEYCs were involved in the pilot of the new scannable parent survey – this new survey provided much more detail than previously collected which in turn will support with the program and parent ed planning

#### **Goals for next year**

- Opportunities for us to provide our parent survey in multiply languages will strengthen the data being collected from families. Currently we have grandparents taking home surveys to their adult children to assist with completion. Our grandparents will greatly benefit from the opportunity to complete the surveys on their own
- To ensure that all programs and services are correctly inputted into the EYSIS data base to assist with accurate results

## **Section 2: Activities and Community Engagement Process**

### **Community Engagement Process**

The introduction of the Best Start Initiative in Hamilton has resulted in creating pathways to an integrated system while recognizing the importance of building upon the existing framework of the Hamilton Early Years system. Best Start is about organizing resources across a community so that young children are offered the opportunity for healthy development and the best start in life. In moving forward to achieve these results Hamilton has created the Early Child Development Integrating Committee. This committee has broad representation of community stakeholders that understand the importance of community planning and capacity building. This committee has been working to integrate services at a systems level. The role of the OEYC's is integral in achieving this vision. The work of this committee has been a catalyst in developing the beginning stages of a seamless family-centered system. Examples of successes to date;

- In Hamilton east we have developed strong partnerships with Public Health to provide multiple pre/post natal programs to meet the needs of the neighbourhood
- Being located in a recreation facility we are able to draw on the expertise of community partners that are involved with our recreation programs, adult day program, youth programs and child care centre
- The Community Health Bus is a great resource to our staff as well as families in the community
- The IBI Program has been embraced at our Hillcrest location giving the community more opportunity to become aware of Autism services
- The Preschool Speech & Language Services again increase community awareness of services and support available at our main OEYC location
- The Integrating Committee has given OEYCs the opportunity to inform other service providers of our services as well to create new links and partnership that will support families and children in our community

### **Gaps/Emerging Needs**

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- The expansion of OEYC programs and services may be limited due to the lack of new resources

### **Parent Engagement**

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- In Hamilton east we have found it valuable for OEYC facilitators to meet families face to face. This may include going door to door with flyers, meeting parents during school pick up and drop off times, visiting locations where families naturally gather like the park, library, grocery store...
- Our Program Advisory has given parents the opportunity to become involved at a higher level. Parents/caregivers who sit on this committee are a great advocate for programs and services
- The local schools provide support by including OYC services in newsletters.

## **Section 3: 2007-08 Strategies to Move Forward with the Community Vision for Best Start**

### **2007/2008 OEYC Service Priorities:**

- To be involved in a communication strategy that is inclusive, common language for clarity
  - To secure funding for current services provided at Hamilton east OEYCs that have support from National Child Benefit funding
  - To ensure programs are supporting data from local EDI results and Keeping Score on Kids. We will be focusing on areas such as: **1.** Compared to the City of Hamilton as a whole, there is a higher proportion of English as a Second language students living in the neighbourhoods that overlap with the Hamilton east OEYC riding (14% of senior kindergarten versus 8% city wide. **2.** The mean EDI scores for ESL students are lower in our riding than the mean EDI scores for all students in Hamilton, with the greatest difference being evident in the language and cognitive development and communication and general knowledge domains.
  - We are currently working with our DAC to assist with the translation of parent surveys in Mandarin & Arabic
  - To work closely with Turn Around Schools in our community to ensure we are aware of school plans and how we can best support children and families prior to school entry (i.e. Price of Whales School has a 103% turn over of students each year)
  - To look at new Census Data when it is available and look for key themes and areas where our neighbourhoods will need support
  - Best Start evaluation data and outcomes will be used to assist with new planning
  - To strengthen relationships with JK/SK teachers around shared children, school entry, professional development, etc.
  - To find creative solutions with partners for staff development, sharing of resources ...
- 4) Focus on integration at a system level.
- To continue to be an active member of the Integration Committee as well as many sub-committees that are part of OEYCs/Best Start
  - To support local advisory committees and the creation of our new service provider teams
  - To look at supports that can assist unique populations in our local OEYCs
- 5) Creative expansion
- To be supportive to community initiatives for early years services that include expansion of services and locations
  - To be aware of under-services neighbourhoods and best we can meet their needs with limited resources

## **Section 4: Strategies for System Integration**

Please see Section 4 of the Best Start Plan (pages 27 to 30) for a description of the strategies OEYCs will employ (with their Network partners) to support the early years system in moving further along the continuum of integration. As key partners at the Best Start Network table, OEYCs have an integral role in this process.

## **Section 5: Service Targets for 2007-08**

	<b>Service Level Target  2007/08</b>
<b>I - Service Provision Targets</b>	
Number of Children Served	<b>2,000</b>
Number of Visits Made by Children	<b>25,000</b>
Number of Parents/Caregivers Served	<b>1,300</b>
Number of Visits Made by Parents/Caregivers	<b>18,000</b>
<i>II - Service Specific Targets</i>	
Parent/caregiver education - Number of Parents/Caregivers in Workshops/Seminars	<b>1,500</b>
Number of Professionals in Workshops/Seminars	<b>250</b>
Information on other early years services – Number of Referrals	<b>3,000</b>
Linkages to the Community and Other Service Providers - Number of Protocols/Official Linkages	<b>60</b>
<i>III - Staff Component</i>	
Number of Full-time Equivalent Staff	<b>15</b>

## **Section 6: Process for the OEYC Service Plan Development**

Please see Section 6 of the Best Start Community Plan (page 70) for a description of the OEYC service plan development process.

**2007-2008  
Ontario Early Years Centre  
Service Plan**

**Hamilton Mountain**

**June 2007**

## **Section 1: Progress Towards Achieving the Long-term Vision for Best Start**

Section 1 provides an overview of the progress made by OEYC Hamilton Mountain in supporting the community in achieving the community's vision for Best Start. It also outlines progress towards our OEYC goals and objectives as well as key accomplishments for 2006-07. Gaps / emerging needs and challenges / potential solutions for 2007-2008 are also outlined.

### **a) Accomplishments, Gaps/emerging needs, and challenges/potential solutions**

#### **Accomplishments with Child Care Community**

- OEYC Early Learning Facilitators have implemented outreach program- Mother Goose program with the families and staff at Little Learning House child care centre
- OEYC provided workshops on a variety of topics – Brain Development and the Value of Play, Building Children's Self Esteem, Professionalism, Nutrition and Safety for child care centres and in-home care providers.
- Hosting Area Supervisor Network meetings at OEYC program locations

#### **Gaps/Emerging Needs**

- Funding constraints limit new outreach and professional development opportunities due to staff availability

#### **Challenges/Potential Solutions**

- To recruit more parent/caregiver volunteers to support children's programs and parent education facilitation
- To continue to collaborate with community partners to facilitate joint professional development opportunities for families i.e. Making a Difference Events

#### **Accomplishments with School Boards**

OEYC Early Years programs in partnership with the community improved access and increase programs by 10%

- OEYC outreach at Templemead School- Monday evening interactive parent-child education session
- OEYC outreach at Eastmount Public School-focus on adult education and fitness program for families one half day per week
- OEYC outreach at Linden Park School-Learning Together-emergent curriculum mentorship program for children and families
- OEYC outreach at Lisgar Public School, increase of one half day per week- focus on literacy and math skills development for children and families
- OEYC program provided by On the Move –mobile OEYC program at G.L Armstrong to service an unmet need in the north end of the Mountain
- Roots of Empathy at Buchanan Park School/3 hours per week

#### **Gaps/Emerging Needs**

- Securing space in schools can be a challenge when school enrolment increases and space is no longer available

## **Accomplishments with special populations:**

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### **Francophone**

- OEYC enhanced their linkages with the Centre de Sante by providing marketing materials and resources in French
- A referral phone number was accessible to all families
- Centre de Sante representation at the Early Years Coordinating Table ensures a systems approach for planning and implementation of programs across the City

### **Gaps/Emerging Needs**

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- Lack of new funding impedes the expansion of francophone services within the Mountain geographical area

### **Challenges/potential solutions**

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- To continue to plan francophone services via the systems collaborative approach

### **Aboriginal**

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- OEYC has continued to increase the services provided by Niwasa Head Start Preschool i.e. Special events
- OEYC has promoted the Niwasa Head Start Preschool programs at all OEYC sites i.e. brochure and special events displayed

### **Gaps/Emerging Needs**

- Funding constraints

### **Challenges/Potential solutions**

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- To continue to plan services utilizing a systems collaborative approach across the City of Hamilton
- To ensure Niwasa Head Start is apart of the decision making process for new program planning and implementation and communicate via technology if Niwasa is unable to provide representation at the Early Years Coordinating Table.

### **Children's Aid Society**

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- Partnered with CAS to provide professional development opportunities for foster families with support from Harmony Baptist Church and Jones Bakery
- Teen pre-natal classes
- Parent to parent mentorship program

### **Gaps/emerging needs/potential solutions**

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- To coordinate and collaborate with the CAS to integrate other possible programming opportunities across the Early Years System in Hamilton

### **Ethnically Diverse populations**

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- Specialized women's groups are offered at the OEYC Hill Park site for St Joseph's Chinese Health Group and the Immigrant Women's Muslim Group (discussions of various health topics)

- Learning opportunities are created for each individual child and family that is reflective of their background, interests, happenings in their current life situation and surrounding community, supporting the emergent curriculum approach.

#### Emerging Needs/Gaps

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- Stronger representation and linkages with service providers for this population
- Increases in new immigrant families in the City of Hamilton results in challenges for OEYC's and community service providers
- Lack of additional funding to address the needs of diverse populations

#### Challenges/potential solutions

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- To continue to build new partnerships with service providers that offer support and resources to new immigrant families and diverse populations i.e. SISO
- To continue to link with community partners to provide staff with cultural sensitivity training and to further their knowledge of the unique needs of this population

#### Special Needs Children

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- Early Identification clinics to support families with the initial referral
- Environments are adapted to meet the specific needs of special needs children
- OEYC staff have Resource Teacher training to support the families
- Connection for Kids-specialized program to support the development of children's social skills for a small group of 5 children ages 3-5 years social skills
- Parent Education for Connections for kids provided by Chedoke Child and Family staff

#### Gaps/Emerging needs

- Lack of staffing and resources to support the demand for parent consultations for children identified as grey area and or special needs

#### Challenges/Potential solutions

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- To build partnerships with the Child Care Community i.e. Resource Teachers and School Boards Learning Resource Staff to help address the increased demand for support for special needs children.

#### **b) Progress re: Linkages with DAC**

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- DAC has provided one on one support to Lead Coordinator to review the EDI findings and support with community planning to address the needs of the neighbourhood
- DAC is a representative at the Early Years Coordinating Table to provide support on data analysis and the development of systems to reduce duplication and improve efficiency

#### Emerging Needs/Gaps/Potential solutions

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- Community planning to reflect a systems approach and the decision making for the expansion of OEYC programs to take place at the Integrating Table with representatives from key stakeholders involved in the Best Start initiative
  - The development of a process/protocol for the expansion of OEYC programs in the City of Hamilton
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### **c) Progress re: Linkages with Early Literacy Specialists**

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- Continual support and partnership strengthened with Early Literacy Specialist
- OEYC has monthly meetings with Literacy Liaison to support further integrated literacy activities in Hamilton i.e. train the trainer

#### Gaps/Emerging needs/Potential solutions

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- The rapid expansion of child care and the OEYC programs has placed increased pressures on the Early Literacy Specialists since there have been no increase in funding
- To integrate professional development training opportunities for staff at (OEYC/Child Care) as well as parents

## **Section 2. Activities and Community Engagement Process**

### **a) Community Engagement**

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- Joint professional development with Wee-Watch and Today's Family in-home care providers
  - Increase in OEYC outreach to new program locations i.e. Mount Hope Library, Harmony Baptist Church, Huntington Park Recreation Centre
  - Toy Lending program integrated with OEYC mobile program and available across all ridings
  - Hosting meetings with area doctors to provide orientations about the Early Years Services
  - Community field trips 4 times per year and have included Twin Valley Zoo, Bay Front Park, Bronte Creek and Wild Waterworks
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### **Emerging Needs/Gaps/Potential Solutions**

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- To ensure a systems approach to planning for the expansion and or change of existing OEYC program locations to avoid duplication and ensure collaboration/coordination
  - The development of a process/protocol for the expansion of OEYC programs in the City of Hamilton.
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### **Parent Engagement Goals**

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- To continue to plan workshops that are responsive to the parents expressed interests and which support healthy child development and learning
  - To continue to develop innovative strategies to collect parent feedback
  - To continue to plan caregiver workshops to support their roles with children
  - To provide professional information sessions and current information and research to support the public awareness
  - To support families needing assistance with transportation (bus tickets provided, cabs in emergency situations)
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### **b) Description of core and unique /centre specific services including evaluation findings or data specific to children and families**

#### **Early Learning Activities**

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- Emergent curriculum/documentation of children's learning
  - Indoor/outdoor learning activities
  - A variety of active and quiet activities
  - Arts and Music
  - Literacy activities
  - Math/Science
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#### **Parent/Caregiver Education**

##### **Pre-Post Natal**

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- Teen and pre-natal classes-Public Health
  - Parent to parent mentorship
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## **Outreach Services**

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- Fortino's-Mother Goose
- On the Move programs across 3 ridings
- Intergenerational program-Wentworth Heights-Infant Massage/Mother Goose
- Learning Together-Linden Park School
- Have a Ball-Eastmount School
- Toddler Tales and Tunes-Harmony Baptist Church
- Preschool Tales and Tunes-Huntington Recreation Centre
- Healthy Parenting Practices-Templemead School

## **Early Literacy Programs**

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- Parent-Child Mother Goose program
- Snuggle up and Read
- Early Bird Literacy
- Literacy Forum
- Literacy Checklist
- Lullabies to Literacy
- Literacy in your lap

## **Volunteer Recruitment and Coordination**

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- Empower parents and caregivers to take lead roles
- High school students fulfill their 40 hours
- School personal volunteer on advisory committees

## **Information on Local Services/Referrals**

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- Link to Community Information Services
- Community Education Services
- Ontario Early Years Web site and Links
- City recreation Centres and Libraries
- Health Service and Doctor Offices
- Child Care and Home Child Care
- Early Literacy Programs
- Services for children with special needs
- School Boards
- Public Awareness

## **Linkages to the Community**

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- Social service agencies
- Public Health
- Healthy Babies/Healthy Children
- Aboriginal
- Francophone
- Recreation Centres, Libraries, Churches
- Business linkages

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## **Speakers Bureau**

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- Partnership with Today's Family Speaker's bureau
- Coordinated Conferences and guest speakers

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## **Unique Services**

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- CAS Foster families receive professional development and networking opportunities
- Emergent curriculum/Artist at the Centre- opportunities to explore a variety of art media with a professional artist
- Intergenerational program –enjoy stories, songs and finger plays together
- Gym and Nutrition program-stroller walk and talk, gym time, meal planning and healthy snacks and making baby food

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## **Data and Evaluation findings**

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- Parent/Caregiver Evaluations are distributed to parents quarterly to gather feedback and plan program based on identified needs and interests.
- The Early Developmental Index (EDI) 2004/2005 Hamilton Mountain identified children residing in the north end of Hamilton Mountain with low scores in the Social Competence domain. Social competences focuses on competence and cooperation in working with others, the ability to remember and follow rules, curiosity and eagerness, approach to learning and problem –solving ability
- EYSIS data reports indicate statistical information relating to specific programs and the riding as a whole. It appears that we are continually attracting new families, especially families with new born babies. Caregivers and children use the programs on a regular basis. The total number of people accessing services within our building has increased steadily. Workshop partnerships with other community programs continue to increase and so does client attendance in workshops. We are continuing to make referrals to other early year services and programs.

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## **Section 3: 2007-08 Strategies to Move Forward with the Community Vision for Best Start**

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### **Forecast of 2007-2008 OEYC Service priorities**

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1. To recruit more parent/caregiver volunteers to support children's programs and parent education facilitation.
2. To continue to collaborate with community partners to facilitate joint professional development opportunities for families i.e. Making a Difference Events
3. To explore space opportunities that are in-kind and located close to schools as an alternative to securing space in schools, i.e. Recreation Centres and Child Care
4. To coordinate and collaborate with the CAS to integrate other possible programming opportunities across the Early Years System
5. To have stronger representation on OEYC committees reflecting ethnically diverse
6. populations
7. To continue to build new partnerships with ethnically diverse service providers that offer support and resources to new immigrant families and diverse populations i.e. SISO

8. To continue to link with community partners to provide staff with cultural sensitivity training and to further their knowledge of the unique needs of this population.
9. To build partnerships with the Child Care Community i.e. Resource Teachers and School Boards Learning Resource Staff to help address the increased demand for support for special needs children.
10. To integrate professional development training opportunities for staff (OEYC/Child Care) as well as parents
11. To create two neighbourhood hubs at Harmony Baptist and Templemead and/or Eastmount School depending upon availability of space
12. To continue to link with a variety of different community partners to raise community awareness about the Early Years system
13. To continue to plan programs for families by adopting the emergent curriculum philosophy
14. To investigate new community partnerships which will enhance and enrich the curriculum through the arts and music
15. To continue to plan programs for children and families which focus on fitness, nutrition and healthy living.

Description of emergent needs/gaps/strategies to close gaps and obstacles and challenges to close gaps see above sections 1 and 2 and also section 3 service priorities for strategies to close gaps and overcome obstacles.

## **Section 4: Strategies for System Integration**

Please see Section 4 of the Best Start Plan (pages 27 to 30) for a description of the strategies OEYCs will employ (with their Network partners) to support the early years system in moving further along the continuum of integration. As key partners at the Best Start Network table, OEYCs have an integral role in this process.

## **Section 5: Service Targets for 2007-08**

### **Hamilton Mountain service targets 2007-08**

1. <i>Number of Children Served</i>	3,564
2. <i>Number of visits made by children</i>	25,274
3. <i>Number of parent/caregivers served</i>	3,939
4. <i>Number of visit made by parents/caregivers</i>	20,966
5. <i>Number of parents/caregivers in a workshop</i>	2,756
6. <i>Number of professionals in a workshop/seminar</i>	350.
7. <i>Number of referrals</i>	1,095
8. <i>Number of Protocols/official linkages</i>	97
9. <i>Number of FTE staff</i>	

## **Section 6: Process for the OEYC Service Plan Development**

Please see Section 6 of the Best Start Community Plan (page 70) for a description of the OEYC service plan development process.

**2007-2008  
Ontario Early Years Centre  
Service Plan**

**Hamilton West**

**June 2007**

## **Section 1: Progress Towards Achieving the Long-term Vision for Best Start**

Section 1 provides an overview of the progress made by OEYC Hamilton West in supporting the community in achieving the community's vision for Best Start. It also outlines progress towards our OEYC goals and objectives as well as key accomplishments for 2006-07. Gaps / emerging needs and challenges / potential solutions for 2007-2008 are also outlined.

Wesley Urban Ministries continues to embrace the Best Start vision for families in Hamilton. We have been honored to see the impact of integrating services for families we serve.

Understanding that integration benefits all families and children we also realize it produces considerable outcomes for high need families. We recognize that the integrated model allows families to navigate the system with ease. The Best Start vision has brought together multiple partners in family and children's services creating a gateway to services/one stop shop for families. We are excited at our accomplishments and enhanced partnerships over the past year.

In moving forward with the Best Start vision we felt it was imperative that we as an agency and community partner reflect the vision in how we interact with each other, our own programs and our partners. This resulted in some changes within our current structure. In order to be connected with the various committees and planning tables without impacting services we created another team leader position. This person represents Wesley Urban Ministries at the coordinating services table and others affiliated at this level. Above the two team leaders is our Director of Family and Children's Programs. She is representing the organization at a manager's level. This change has been necessary to have proper representation at community tables while ensuring at an operational level our services are aligned with the Best Start vision.

As an agency we have a strong commitment to community collaboration and partnership. Listed below are examples of how we have accomplished this goal.

### **a) Accomplishments and gaps/emergent needs**

#### **Accomplishments with Child Care Community**

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- Provision of wrap around care within the agency's childcare centre including walking children to and from the neighbouring schools
- Linking OEYC participants with the childcare centres within their home/school community and providing one on one staff support to manoeuvre through the subsidy process
- Providing joint training opportunities for both OEYC and childcare staff within the agency, i.e. CAS information session
- OEYC staff acting as an Early Literacy Liaison for the agency childcare centre
- Taking on an active role within the Supervisor's Network of Hamilton
- Joining the childcare community at the Area Network Meetings to create more effective avenues of communication between the OEYCs and the childcare centres
- Sharing of relief staff between programs exposes staff to a variety of settings and allows for skill building

## Gaps/Emerging Needs

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- Needing time for both the childcare centre and the OEYC to case conference in order to address unique family situations
- More time needed for joint professional development and planning

## Accomplishments with School Boards

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- Planning of school readiness programs to be run within the neighbourhood schools and using the input of the school principals and kindergarten teachers to create better quality programming
- Participation in kindergarten information sessions run within the neighbourhood schools
- Participation of teachers and principals within the OEYC neighbourhood advisory groups
- Participation in school-run early literacy information events for parents
- Participation in school open houses
- Providing information regarding upcoming OEYC programs/events via for school newsletters
- Providing monthly calendars to the neighbourhood schools
- Providing staff support at our neighbourhood sites in order to assist parents in filling out kindergarten registration forms
- Offering Early Literacy Information Sessions in the evening at neighbourhood schools to meet the needs of working parents

## Gaps/Emerging Needs

- Increasing school staff awareness of the programs available through the OEYCs for the families in their schools
- EDI scores indicative of high percentages of children with lower than average Emotional Maturity scores ; OEYC will approach neighbourhood schools, childcare centres and offer to facilitate a Resiliency Skills training which can be applied to their work with young children

## Accomplishments with special populations

### Francophone

- Staff sharing for the francophone hub in order to ensure quality services and to mentor new staff
- Sharing of up to date francophone program/event information within the main site and all neighbourhood sites

## Gaps/Emerging Needs

- Decreasing duplication of services by other community agencies – creating a more functional system of communicating current programs to community agencies in order to support planning of programs

### Aboriginal

- Monthly aboriginal program opportunities within the main site and quarterly events/programs within neighbourhood sites
- Partnering with the aboriginal childcare centre to provide full time care to aboriginal families via the Wesley Childcare Centre
- Frequent meetings with both our childcare centre and the aboriginal childcare centre to ensure the family's unique needs are best met by both programs

### Gaps/Emerging Needs

- Budget pressures within the OEYC system limit our ability to increase funding for aboriginal specific services

### **Ethnically Diverse populations**

- Neighbourhood advisory groups that are representative of the diverse population of families we currently serve
- Partnering with SISO for a new initiative that will examine ways to create more welcoming communities through increased participation of immigrant parents at community-based programs
- Opening of two new neighbourhood sites within culturally diverse communities
- Creating opportunities for families to have ongoing support when manoeuvring through various services such as Hamilton Housing and Ontario Works in order to build stronger relationships between staff and families
- Creating innovative ways to provide core services that best meet the needs of the very diverse populations we service which prove to be successful based on parent survey feedback

### Goals

- To review new census data available in order to review how various demographic profiles have changed such as which ethnicities are currently represented in the various neighbourhoods
- To look at family mobility and turn over based on new census data
- To look at new census data in order to see the percentage of ESL children in each neighbourhood
- To increase parent engagement within the programs by creating more volunteer opportunities and chances to mentor and support new families within the sites

### Gaps/Emerging Needs

- EDI scores indicate a high percentage of children with low Physical Health and Well Being Scores which may be due to newcomers experiencing challenges with being placed with a family practitioner and therefore receiving fragmented health care from walk in clinics and trips to the emergency room for non-emergency care
- The Hamilton West Riding is an extremely diverse area of Hamilton from a cultural and socio-economic perspective which presents a challenge when planning programs that will effectively meet the needs of as many families as possible

### **Special Needs Children**

- Creating opportunities such as hosting the Early Identification Clinics at our main site that enable parents to speak directly with various community partners that specialize in supporting families that have children with special needs
- Hosting an Early Identification Clinic at a neighbourhood site which is located in an area where families tend to be more isolated from the greater community
- Hosting workshops run by the SLP that are geared towards families that have children with an Autistic Spectrum Disorder
- Providing appropriate and integrated children's programs that enable parents and caregivers to attend parent education sessions

- Providing appropriate contact information and at times assisting families in contacting professionals that can thoroughly address any concerns they have regarding their child's development
- Working closely with Early Words in order to provide consistent and accurate information to families regarding augmentative communication strategies for children
- Having a community partner from ASCY evaluate the inclusiveness level of our main centre and each of the neighbourhood sites using the ECERS tool
- Using signing interpreters to enable hearing impaired parents and caregivers to actively participate in parent education programs

#### Gaps/Emerging Needs

- Funding limitations create challenges in meeting the specific and varying needs of families that have children with special needs
- Further strengthening the communication between the OEYCs and other service providers to ensure consistency of support for the families

### **b) Progress re: linkages with Early Literacy Specialists/DAC**

#### **Early Literacy Specialists**

##### Accomplishments

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- Having staff act as a liaison between the Early Literacy Specialists and the OEYCs as well as our childcare centre
- Effective communication between Early Lits. and OEYC staff on new research which ensures consistency in the messages we give to families regarding the development of their child's early literacy skills
- Creating opportunities for OEYC staff to be trained by Early Literacy Specialists in specific programs in order for them to train other early childhood professionals increases opportunities for joint professional development opportunities and decreases limitations around how many professionals are able to receive the training

##### Gaps

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- Lack of time and funding create challenges around preparation of literacy materials; therefore finding difficulties in providing an adequate rotation of literacy activities for families to do together while at the OEYC

#### **DAC**

##### Accomplishments

- Participated in the pilot of a scannable version of the Parent Survey we use
- Working together using census data to explore possible service gaps when planning programs and services in various neighbourhoods

##### Goals for next year

- To create a feature in the parent surveys that will indicate which site the parent was visiting when the form was filled out in order to compile more site specific feedback
- Inviting DACs to speak at the neighbourhood advisory committees quarterly to share updates with the table in order to ensure more fully informed planning/ideas around the needs of the neighbourhoods



## **Section 2: Activities and Community Engagement Process**

Wesley Urban Ministries strives to build strong partnerships between the community partners we work along side as well as create new partnerships with agencies and organizations that we have not yet worked with. We recognize the positive impact that creating a seamless set of early years services can have on a family and have made this a priority in our work.

Community engagement at Wesley Urban Ministries has also meant seeking out individuals that are seen by their community as leaders. We see these individuals as instrumental in creating a sense of belonging within the programs we provide and are key in building relationships within the community. We understand that it takes the efforts of many to create quality programs and services. Therefore, we will continue to use and create opportunities to work with our community partners as well as individuals living in these communities to ensure consistency, quality, and sustainability of programs within the community.

### **a) Community Engagement Process**

- Partnering with the local Midwives association in the way of offering space at the OEYC to deliver their services
- Creation of neighbourhood advisory committees that accurately represent the various early years services, programs, agencies, and organizations with the community
- Inviting the Integrating Service Coordinator to attend some of the neighbourhood advisory committee meetings so that they may assist in bridging potential communication gaps with other early years practitioners
- Participation in various community events such as open houses at other community agencies to increase awareness of the OEYCs programs as well as inviting community agencies to participate in events that the OEYC plans

### **Gaps/Emerging Needs**

- As many partnerships are formed, difficulties arise around being able to be an active part of the various committees that are created due to time constraints
- Continued work on improving communication between all early years organizations and agencies to ensure consistency for families as well as enriching the information we all have access to i.e. New research, websites
- We need to strengthen the understanding that community engagement encompasses more than our community partners. It must include individuals who display leadership in their community's, volunteers, etc.

### **b) Parent Engagement**

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- Ensuring adequate parent and/or caregiver representation on the neighbourhood advisory committee
- Continuing to have parent/caregiver feedback assist in the planning of programs
- Constant relationship building between staff and new families as well as families that already utilize the OEYC services and programs
- Creating new programs with the goal of engaging families in the OEYCs that would otherwise not be active participants due to a variety of barriers

- Constant interactions between staff and families in order to ensure quality parent –child interactions

#### Gaps/Emerging Needs

- Funding limitations create staffing challenges around providing children’s programs/care for all the parents and caregivers that wish to attend parent education/information sessions at our main site and therefore force us to limit the amount of adults that attend the programs
- Having to limit the amount of parent education/information sessions we offer at the neighbourhood sites due to staffing limitations

### **Section 3: 2007-08 Strategies to Move Forward with the Community Vision for Best Start**

As we move forward with The Best Start Vision, Wesley Urban Ministries will continue to build upon the accomplishments of the last year, while placing an emphasis on the priorities listed below.

#### **Strategies to move forward with the Best Start Vision**

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##### **2007/2008 OEYC Service Priorities:**

##### 1) Public awareness and communication

- Continue to provide staff support to the central phone line and monitor it’s usage
- Continue to offer outreach to unique populations as a method of promoting awareness of early years service
- To ensure that whenever possible our documents are linguistically sensitive in order to meet the needs of our very ethnically diverse communities
- Accessing various community, school, church, and agency newsletters for the purpose of promoting OEYC programs

##### 2) Focus on integration at a system level.

- Strengthening existing sites by bringing in additional early years services in order to create a place where parents and caregivers can access as many services as possible in one place
- Sharing of expertise and knowledge with community partners around servicing ethnically diverse communities
- Ongoing networking and dialogue with the area childcare providers to discuss trends and emerging needs
- Continued representation at community planning tables such as the Early Childhood Integrating Committee, the Coordinator’s table, Neighbourhood Advisory Committee, the Francophone Network, etc.
- Looking at area specific quarterly service reports that give a clear picture of each community served in order to influence program planning
- Utilization of the “Welcome Home” Project as a stepping stone to strengthening our relationship with SISO

##### 6) Creative expansion

- Continuing to bring together OEYCs, Childcare Centres, and schools wherever natural fits are found
- Hamilton Community Foundations supporting the opening of an Early Years program in the Beasley community that will assist in working towards sustainability

## **Section 4: Strategies for System Integration**

Please see Section 4 of the Best Start Plan (pages 27 to 30) for a description of the strategies OEYCs will employ (with their Network partners) to support the early years system in moving further along the continuum of integration. As key partners at the Best Start Network table, OEYCs have an integral role in this process.

## **Section 5: Service Targets for 2007-08**

	<b>Service Level Target 2007/08</b>
<b>I - Service Provision Targets</b>	
Number of Children Served	<b>3531</b>
Number of Visits Made by Children	<b>18444</b>
Number of Parents/Caregivers Served	<b>3421</b>
Number of Visits Made by Parents/Caregivers	<b>17306</b>
<i>II - Service Specific Targets</i>	
Parent/caregiver education - Number of Parents/Caregivers in Workshops/Seminars	<b>1981</b>
Number of Professionals in Workshops/Seminars	<b>89</b>
Information on other early years services – Number of Referrals	<b>767</b>
Linkages to the Community and Other Service Providers - Number of Protocols/Official Linkages	<b>125</b>
<i>III - Staff Component</i>	
Number of Full-time Equivalent Staff	<b>8</b>

## **Section 6: Process for the OEYC Service Plan Development**

Please see Section 6 of the Best Start Community Plan (page 70) for a description of the OEYC service plan development process.

**2007-2008  
Ontario Early Years Centre  
Service Plan**

**Stoney Creek**

**June 2007**

## **Section 1: Progress Towards Achieving the Long-term Vision for Best Start**

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Section 1 provides an overview of the progress made by OEYC Stoney Creek in supporting the community in achieving the community's vision for Best Start. It also outlines progress towards our OEYC goals and objectives as well as key accomplishments for 2006-07. Gaps / emerging needs are also outlined.

### **Accomplishments with Community Partners**

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- CAPC
  - the brown bag lunches with 50-70 community partners in the East Hamilton area
    - St. David site hosted luncheon and participates monthly
  - Coordinator attends CAPC monthly advisory meetings
  - On-going communication with CAPC coordinator sharing information and publicizing each others' programs
  - CAPC coordinator participates on St. David Advisory Committee
- St. Matthew's House / St. John Community Support Program- Winona
  - Stronger links have been established between St. John and St. David staff
    - Joint Professional activities
    - Co-facilitation of parent workshops
    - Joint programming and staff meetings
    - Joint planning for promotional activities in the community
    - St. David staff worked with St. John staff assessing the St. John's environment and identifying strategies to enhance literacy component
    - Cooperatively revised the calendar for the entire riding so it now includes the St. John activities/programs along with all the other out-reach programs
    - Community services – e.g. Speech pathologist, public health nurse, aboriginal services- have been extended to the Winona location
- Public Health
  - Public Health Nurse in attendance weekly at main and neighbourhood sites to provide supports to families re: pre- and post –natal care and education
    - More workshops offered at the outreach locations to better serve the rural communities
    - Offered staff development opportunities on varied topics
  - Cooperative planning with the Dietician
    - Parent/Caregiver workshops on
      - Feeding your child
      - Meal Planning
      - Canada's Food Guide
    - Staff Development re: Feeding infants, Canada's Food Guide
  - Pre-natal Courses now offered on
    - Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday evenings
    - Tuesday afternoons for teenagers
    - Saturday 9:00-3:00
- Investing in Kids
  - Piloted *Parent Partnerships* in the Hamilton area

- Speech-Language Pathologist
  - Available on a consultative basis at the main as well as the neighbourhood locations on a rotating schedule
  - Conducted staff training opportunities
  - Participates on the St. David Community Advisory Committee
- Infant Hearing Screens
  - Scheduled at the St. David location
  - Technician works with Centre staff to introduce families to the centre activities – conducts tours of the centre
  - Participates on the St. David Community Advisory Committee
- Voice
  - Offers consultative services to families on weekly schedule

#### Gaps/Emerging Needs

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- The size of Stoney Creek requires more locations to ensure access for all families
  - Equal access to quality programs within neighbourhoods for families is impeded by the availability of affordable or free space to establish programs which are within walking distance for families challenged by transportation needs
  - The establishment of additional programs will require additional staff and resources
  - Programs need to be reviewed on a regular basis to ensure they are offered at a time and in locations that reflect the changing needs of families and the other resources in the community
- Links with Community Service Partners
  - Continue to work with CAPC programs to plan services for the community
  - Develop increased awareness/partnerships with other service providers in the Stoney Creek area
  - Support work of the 18 Month Initiative by developing stronger links with the primary care providers

#### **Accomplishments with Early Learning and Care Centres**

- Working with staff at St. David and Holy Name of Jesus to develop a seamless system of service for families
- Presentation to supervisors of the child care programs in the Demo area to develop an awareness of OEYC programs and to encourage the development of strong partnerships
- Resources shared in common between OEYC and on-site child care programs
- Room at Billy Green site shared with YMCA child care program
- Room at St. Francis shared with child care program

#### Gaps/Emerging Needs

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- Create stronger links with ELCC programs in the community
- Continue to participate in joint professional development opportunities

## **Accomplishments with School Boards**

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- OEYC Staff partnered with the JK Readiness initiative linking parents and children who are to enter school in September with OEYC staff/programs along with staff from Public Health, Hamilton Public Libraries and School Boards
- OEYC staff participated with schools through
  - JK In-take nights
  - School council meetings
  - Major school events such as Education Week activities, Authors Day, Parent – Teacher Interview Times, Curriculum Nights
  - Store Front Displays
  - High School Co-op students
  - Hosting a neighbourhood school's staff meeting and parent council meeting to help increase their awareness of the centre and the programs/resources

### **Gaps/Emerging Needs**

- Limited available space in schools
- Stronger connections with more community schools
- Early Learning and Care Centres (ELCC)
  - Develop a plan for joint training or sharing of training opportunities with ELCC staff and OEYC staff
  - Schedule joint planning time for OEYC and ELCC staff that share rooms to facilitate communication and joint planning

## **Accomplishments with special populations**

### **Francophone**

- Francophone mapping provided by DAC shows area of francophone families in the riding
- Francophone Program calendars available at all sites
- Centre de Sante providing monthly opportunity at Main site
- French literacy kits and parent resources available at the main site
- French children's books are at all locations

### **Gaps/Emerging Needs**

- Need to ensure staff are aware of francophone services and how to connect families with those services
- French speaking staff
- Mapping information will be used to guide decision-making re: location of additional French material and resources
- Translation of monthly calendar into French for posting on Ministry web-site

### **Aboriginal**

- Native gathering time to promote awareness of Native language and traditions and to help families connect with supports at Niwasa has increased so it now occurs monthly not only at the Main site but also at the neighbourhood sites;
  - children of the ELCC and the JK/SK children of the school have joined the OEYC families for these experiences
  - Native Drumming and Dance experience was connected with St. David and Holy Name of Jesus Schools to enhance their community awareness of aboriginal culture and traditions

#### Gaps/Emerging Needs

- Culturally sensitive materials, activities and workshops for families
- Promotion of the new aboriginal centre

### **Ethnically Diverse populations**

- Staff developing a better awareness of cultural/religious dietary requirements
- Family cooking experiences reflect diverse groups
- Invited by Punjabi community to do presentation on OEYC services

### **Gaps/Emerging Needs**

- Continue to hire staff and encourage volunteers with diverse backgrounds
- Resources in many languages being expanded
- Statistical analysis from new census data to give better awareness of populations in the Stoney Creek area
- Continue to try to connect with Punjabi community and its leaders

### **Special Needs Children**

- Nipissing screens available for parents
- Speech and language supports through staff training with Language Pathologist
- Staff training e.g.
  - Public Health's
    - Children with Special Needs,
    - Immunization Issues with Parents,
    - Healthy Child Development re: Height and Weight,
  - For Goodness Sake
  - Bullying Initiative
- IBI coming to OEYC locations
- Location and washrooms designed to be accessible
- Staff referrals to community supports/resources

### **Gaps/Emerging Needs**

- Stronger links with
  - the Blind/Low Vision initiative
  - families and deaf/hearing loss children
  - with Mental Health Supports
- Connect with Special Needs Support Groups through School Boards' Special Education Advisory Groups
- Doors modified to allow handicap access
- Links with other support areas such as
  - Grief / Loss or
  - Divorce/Separation

## **b) Early Literacy Specialists**

### **Accomplishments**

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- Participation with Early Literacy Specialists on the EYF Literacy Liaison working group that met monthly to further knowledge and share expertise
- Facilitation of Early Literacy programs by OEYC staff using the power point presentations developed by ELS –i.e. Phonemic Awareness, Shake and Stomp
- Early Literacy Checklist training and implementation
- Early Literacy Checklists completed by ELS at main and neighbourhood sites
- “Every Child Ready to Read” training and implementation
- ELS referrals used to link OEYC staff with Schools

## **Gaps/Emerging Needs**

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- stronger links between the literacy experiences in the OEYC, ELCC and School programs
- continue to implement the recommendations of ELS to enhance the literacy component of the programs

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## **c) Accomplishments with DAC**

### **Accomplishments**

- Increased awareness of the Stoney Creek area because of the mapping and EDI data shared by the DAC
- Strong support from DAC for staff re: data entry and computer program
- More accurate collection and analysis of data because of support from DAC

### **Gaps/ Emerging Needs**

- Use tracking data to become better aware of the effectiveness of the programs we offer as well as providing guidance in decision-making as to when and where services are provided
- Use registration data to provide input re: population that is actually attending our programs; this will enable us to target non-participants and help us develop targeted strategies for specific groups

## **Section 2: Activities and Community Engagement Process**

### **Parent Engagement**

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- Parent participation on the Community Advisory Group supports decision-making and planning
- Parent volunteers in programs
  - Support centre with donations of food and other resources
  - Preparing snack
  - Cooking experiences
  - Maintaining centre
  - Survey data
  - Caring for children and supporting other parents in the program
  - Provided workshops alone and with community partners
  - Conducting tours and centre orientations
- Parents provide links to schools and school councils
- Parents are influential in developing
- Referral service -word-of-mouth publicity
- Parents provide direction for the programs and services offered
  - *The Power of Parenting Workshop* is a parent driven initiative that sees parent coming together on a monthly basis to share experiences/expertise; monthly topics are determined by the group participants. Participation has been growing monthly as parents invite or tell other parent about the group.

### **Section 3: 2007-08 Strategies to Move Forward with the Community Vision for Best Start**

Please see Section 3 of the Best Start Plan (pages 20 to 25) for a description of the strategies OEYCs will employ (with their Network partners) to see the community move forward with the Vision for Best Start. As key partners at the Best Start Network table, OEYCs have an integral role in this process.

### **Section 4: Strategies for System Integration**

Please see Section 4 of the Best Start Plan (pages 27 to 30) for a description of the strategies OEYCs will employ (with their Network partners) to support the early years system in moving further along the continuum of integration. As key partners at the Best Start Network table, OEYCs have an integral role in this process.

### **Section 5: Service Targets for 2007-08**

**2007-08 Ontario Early Years Centre Service Plan  
Service Level Target and Staff Component Chart**

	<b>Service Level Target  2007/08</b>
<b>I - Service Provision Targets</b>	
Number of Children Served	<b>3200</b>
Number of Visits Made by Children	<b>13500</b>
Number of Parents/Caregivers Served	<b>3000</b>
Number of Visits Made by Parents/Caregivers	<b>10000</b>
<i>II - Service Specific Targets</i>	
Parent/caregiver education - Number of Parents/Caregivers in Workshops/Seminars	<b>700</b>
Number of Professionals in Workshops/Seminars	<b>900</b>
Information on other early years services – Number of Referrals	<b>3300</b>
Linkages to the Community and Other Service Providers - Number of Protocols/Official Linkages	<b>60</b>
<i>III - Staff Component</i>	
Number of Full-time Equivalent Staff	<b>7.5</b>

## **Section 6: Process for the OEYC Service Plan Development**

Please see Section 6 of the Best Start Community Plan (page 70) for a description of the OEYC service plan development process.