

## Request for Decision

### Ontario Early Years Child and Family Centres (OEYCFC) Transition Plan

Presented To: Community Services Committee

Presented: Monday, Oct 23, 2017

Report Date: Wednesday, Oct 04, 2017

Type: Managers' Reports

### Resolution

THAT the City of Greater Sudbury approves the Ontario Early Years Child and Family Centres Planning Report, as outlined in the report entitled "Ontario Early Years Child and Family Centres Transition Plan", from the General Manager of Community Development, presented at the Community Services Committee meeting on October 23, 2017.

### Relationship to the Strategic Plan / Health Impact Assessment

This report supports the Strategic Plan adopted by the City of Greater Sudbury, as it aligns with the Quality of Life and Place pillar, improving the health and well being of families.

This report will have a positive impact on the Social Determinants of Health as the proposed plan recommends more equitably distributed and accessible supports to parents/caregivers. This will also provide an enhanced contribution to the early childhood development and improve access to quality child and family support services.

### Report Summary

The City of Greater Sudbury Children Services Section and the Planning Network for Sudbury Families have worked collaboratively, to develop a local plan to guide the transformation of the current system of Best Start Hubs to a new system of Ontario Early Years Child and Family Centres (OEYCFC). This report provides an overview of the plan and identifies the increased City's administrative responsibilities including accountability, reporting, quality assurance, workforce management and community capacity building.

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Furthermore, the planning guide describes the responsive redistribution of services from the current equal allocation to a more equitable allocation model based on child population and the number of families with young children living in poverty. This distribution also considered the broader context of other local community services; neighbourhood need and current service provider strengths.

### **Financial Implications**

Currently, the Ministry of Education mandates the City of Greater Sudbury to administer the Best Start hub funding to service providers. As well, some service providers receive Provincial funding directly from the Ministry of Education. Beginning in 2018, the Children Services Section will continue to administer the funding for these programs under a new Ontario Early Years Child and Family Centres (OEYCFC) program model, whereby all the provincial funding will be received by the Municipality to be administered to the service providers.

The amount currently allocated through the cost-sharing agreement between the Province and the City of Greater Sudbury is approximately \$1 million. As a result of the change in program administration, the total 2018 allocation for the OEYCFC program will be increased to \$3,330,956 reflecting the transfer of funding that was currently being provided by the Ministry of Education directly to local service providers.

Overall, there are no financial implications to the City of Greater Sudbury.

## Background

In January 2017, the Community Services Committee received an information report entitled [Service System Management of Early Years and Family Support Programming](#). This report outlined the Children Services Section, Community Development Department planning process to work collaboratively with the community to develop a local plan to guide the transformation of the current system of Best Start Hubs to a new system of Ontario Early Years Child and Family Centres.

Since 2007, the City of Greater Sudbury's Children Services Section, through the Planning Network for Sudbury Families, has led the coordination of child and family support programs in the community, which were funded through different funding streams. Effective 2018, the Ministry of Education has established a new Provincial approach where all existing child and family programs currently funded by the Ministry of Education will be combined into one program model. With this new model, Municipal Service Managers will be mandated to administer all provincial funding to the service providers, as well as oversee the planning and delivery of these programs.

January 16, 2017 Community Services Committee Meeting

[Service System Management of Early Years and Family Support Programming](#)

<http://agendasonline.greatersudbury.ca/index.cfm?pg=agenda&action=navigator&id=1150&itemid=12296&lang=en>

## The Ontario Early Years Child and Family Centre Planning Report

The Ontario Early Years Child and Family Centre Planning Report (Appendix A) is the local plan developed to guide the transformation of the current system. The following sections provide further details and information on the key elements:

### The New Funding Model

The amount currently allocated through the cost-sharing agreement between the Ministry of Education and the City of Greater Sudbury is approximately \$1 million.

As a result of the provincial change in program administration, the total 2018 allocation for the OEYCFC program of \$3,330,956 will be directed to the City of Greater Sudbury, Children Services Section and allocated to the current service providers based on community needs through data collected.

The following chart represents the service providers and the source of funding:

<b>Current Service Provider</b>	<b>Better Beginnings Better Futures</b>	<b>Child &amp; Community Resources</b>	<b>CPTM</b>	<b>Jubilee Family Resource Centre</b>	<b>Our Children Our Future</b>
# of Hubs	<b>2</b> English – 1 Aboriginal – 1	<b>7</b> French – 2 English - 5	<b>2</b> French – 2	<b>2</b> English – 2	<b>2</b> English - 2
Future Funding Sources					
Provincial (Administered by the City)	100%	100%	100%	100%	20%
Federal	0%	0%	0%	0%	80%

With the new model, the following are some of, but not limited to, the added administrative responsibilities:

- Financial management
- Accountability
- Responsiveness
- Reporting requirements
- Quality assurance
- Communications with families and partners
- Media Management
- Expectation to lead collaborative community planning and integration of services
- Capacity building
- Workforce management
- Enhanced core services

### **Readiness**

With ten years of experience planning together, the City of Greater Sudbury, Children Services Section, community partners and the members of the Planning Network for Sudbury Families were well positioned to follow the new provincial direction, building on existing community strengths, while ensuring minimal disruptions for families.



The following chart compares the current existing practice with the new provincial direction for 2018:

Current Existing Practice	2018 Provincial Direction
Collaborative service planning in our community has been in place since 2005 through the Children services planning networks	Mandated collaborative service planning
Service providers offer similar services under various mandates	Common mandated core services
Limited responsibilities and authority with current System Management role	Mandated System Manager role with defined administrative responsibilities
Equal distribution of services across catchment areas	A mandate to ensure responsive and flexible services across the community

### **Equitable Distribution of Services**

Programs and services are responsive to early learning by focusing on mandated core services for children under 6 years of age and their families. Core services include supporting parents, early learning, and connecting families to the services needed. All programs are expected to align with Ontario's early years pedagogy which describes the foundations of early learning.

Using a comprehensive needs assessment, the system funding will be allocated based on the following percentages:

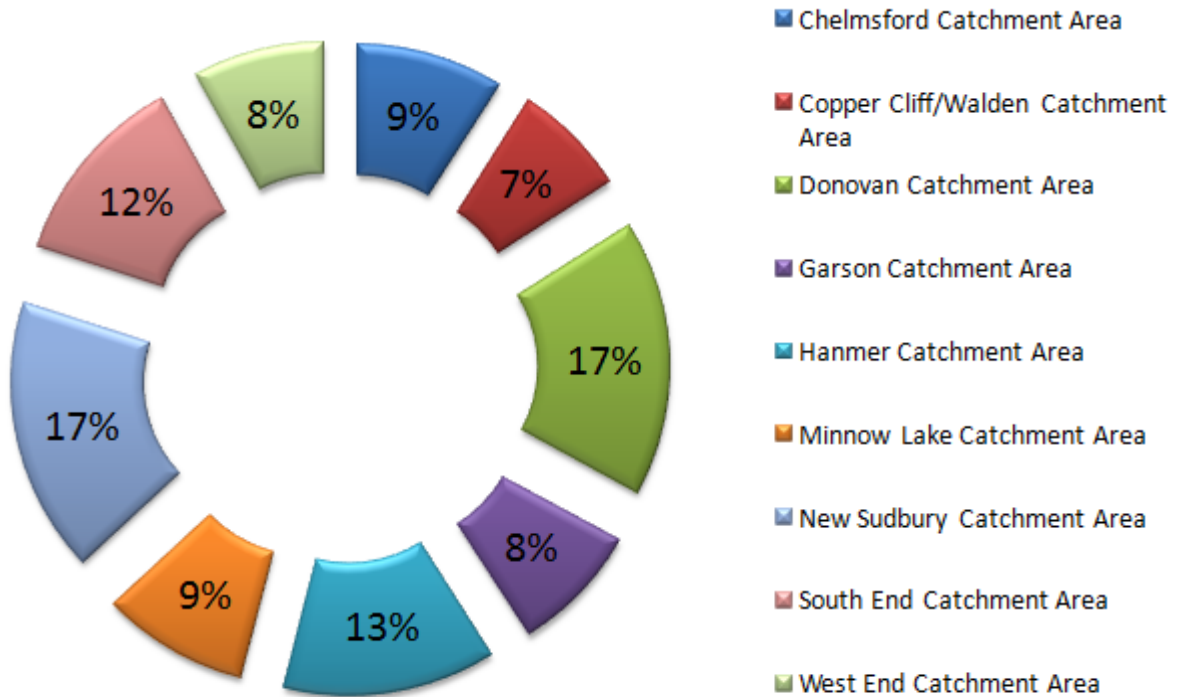
- Aboriginal across all catchment areas – 11 %
- Francophone catchment areas – 24%
- English catchment areas – 65%

To further ensure responsive services, the OEYCFC Plan plan will outline an equitable distribution of programs and services. In order to achieve this, the demographics of child population and family poverty were weighted as follows:

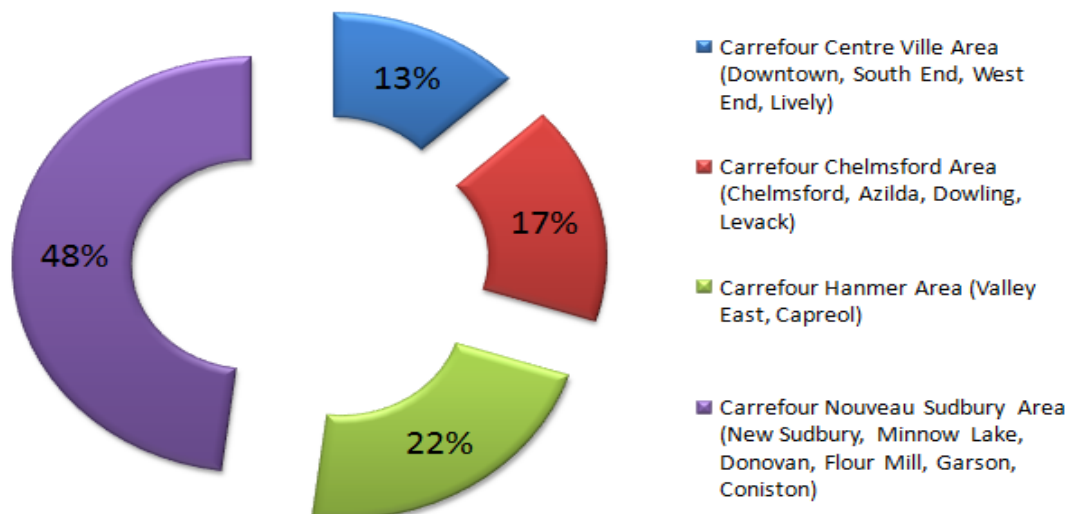
- Child Population – 70%
- Family Poverty – 30%

As a result, the following charts represent the distributions for the 9 English catchments and 4 Francophone catchments:

### % of System Funding - English



### % of System Funding - Francophone



## **Building on Community Strengths**

This OEYCFC provides further detail of service planning by examining each of the catchment area maps within the community, with respect to population, family need and current infrastructure. Reflecting upon local considerations, universal core and targeted services have been outlined for each catchment area, incorporating current service providers' strengths and expertise. During the remainder of 2017, the Children Services Section will work with the existing service providers to confirm and/or re-assign service locations. Any potential reassignments will be transitioned by the end of 2018 in coordination with the service providers.

## **Overall Key Messages**

The following are key messages as a result of the new Provincial funding model for the Ontario Early Years Child and Family Centres (OEYCFC):

- All across the Province, Best Start Hubs and like programs will now be referred to as "Ontario Early Years Child and Family Centres (OEYCFC)"
- Most programs will remain the same, building on what early years professionals know about how children learn
- Some programs will move closer to where families live
- Locations where families gather may be used to offer programs, in addition to neighbourhood schools

## **Next Steps**

Building upon the work that has been accomplished, the following are the next steps:

1. Service provider agreements will be revised to reflect core service delivery expectations, outcome measurements, and funding allocations
2. An accountability framework will be created in 2018
3. Communication strategy will be implemented

## **Appendix A** – Ontario Early Years Child and Family Centres Planning Report



# Ontario Early Years Child and Family Centres Planning Report

## 2017

*Children Services Section  
City of Greater Sudbury*

**August 2017**

## Summary

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This document is an Ontario Early Years Child and Family Centre Planning Report for submission to the Ministry of Education on September 29, 2017. The intent of this plan is to transform the current system of Best Start Hubs to Ontario Early Years Child and Family Centres in 2018. The Ministry of Education's expectation is that local partners would come together to plan services in the early years sector in an integrated way.

In the City of Greater Sudbury, the Children Services Section has led early years planning through a series of planning networks. The direction, membership and focus of these networks is significant because it provides some understanding about the evolution of Best Start Hubs and the readiness of this community to successfully transition into Ontario Early Years Child and Family Centres (OEYCFCs). Most significantly, it documents how the partners collaboratively provide a progressively more integrated and flexible system and describes a shift towards a more equitable distribution of services, based on catchment child population and demographic risk of families instead of the current equal distribution. Today's children services planning network, the Planning Network for Sudbury Families, is creating this plan, using two working groups; the OEYCFC Planning Group and the local needs assessment team.

Before beginning the actual planning, the Children Services Section with the OEYCFC Planning Group created four simple planning principles to guide the group and an engagement spectrum to identify areas that are non-negotiable and areas over which community partners could have greater influence or autonomy.

This document follows the same sequence the planning process used.

It began with the local needs assessment: the OEYCFC Planning Group used a variety of community information and data. Together, this assessment was considered in order to inform the transformation, and make decisions that were based on fact and evidence.

Using this assessment, the Planning Group was able to consider catchment service levels. The group needed to first: define catchment areas, determine how to consider "other community services" that can or do meet the OEYCFC core service mandate from the province and calculate a language and Aboriginal allocation. The second step was to determine the pertinence of child population and demographic risk to create a funding formula. The resulting formula reflects a 70% allocation based on catchment areas language and child population, and 30% based on catchment areas demographic risk. This calculation will be used for each of the Aboriginal, English and French envelopes. Other recognized community services that offer like-services will be subtracted from the catchment allocation to ensure there would be no duplication or concentration of services. The final OEYCFC funding allocations will be converted to percentages by catchment area to accommodate any future changes in the overall funding allocation from the Ministry of Education.

It was also very important to define the core services; what services would be accessible to families, what they would look like and how much of each would be available. Criteria were developed for core services along with a service mix. Other service considerations included planning community-wide Aboriginal services that are aligned with the Indigenous Early Years Proposal also being submitted to the Ministry of Education in September of 2017, addressing those areas within a catchment that would benefit from more targeted services; the Early Development Instrument (EDI) data which identifies domains of vulnerability; and the linkages to the Provincial Special Needs Strategy.

Neighbourhood plans were developed based on this process. Maps of each catchment highlight the higher concentration of children 0-5 years old; the areas that have scored higher in the Deprivation Index and locations of the schools, hubs and child care sites, identifying the unique needs of that catchment. Providers will be asked to provide programs and services according to their strengths and unique specialty as described in their profiles. The planning networks have created a system in spite of different funders, mandates and populations to service. Most of the planning regarding moving to schools, providing consistent services, and responding to families has been practiced in Sudbury for years. In most catchment areas, the implementation plans will build on what has become common practice with enhanced intentionality and purpose of serving children and families.

Multi-pronged communication strategies have already been implemented. An outline of the plan and a progress summary are included.

Lastly, an accountability framework is being developed in conjunction with a phased in transformation plan. Accountability principles are outlined and quantitative and qualitative indicators are listed. The phases of the transformation plan include the timelines for sharing information, adapting and coordinating services to meet mandate, aligning locations to implementation plans, creating a reporting structure/accountability framework and improving quality/aligning the work to Ontario's pedagogy.

Already the Planning Network for Sudbury Families members have been actively transforming the way they plan and deliver their programs by thoughtfully considering core service criteria and incorporating the new pedagogy into their practice while considering access and inclusion. They are preparing for the provision of consistent core and responsive services with flexibility to be delivered where the need has been identified. They anticipate a successful transformation which will better support the needs of local families.



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# Introduction & Background

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## The City of Greater Sudbury

The City of Greater Sudbury is centrally located in **Northeastern Ontario** at the convergence of three major highways. It is situated on the Canadian Shield in the Great Lakes Basin and is composed of a rich mix of urban, suburban, rural and wilderness environments. Greater Sudbury is **3,627 square kilometres** in area, making it the geographically largest municipality in Ontario and second largest in Canada. Greater Sudbury is considered a city of lakes, containing 330 lakes and the largest lake contained within a city, Lake Wanapitei.

In 2011, Greater Sudbury was home to **160,274 people** reflecting a growth rate of 1.5% from previous data. It is a multicultural and truly bilingual community. Over 27 per cent of people living in the City reported French as their mother tongue in **2011**. Almost 39 per cent of people identify themselves as being bilingual. Italian, Finnish, German, Ukrainian and Polish are the top five non-official languages spoken in the City. More than 11 per cent of people living in the City are Aboriginal.

Greater Sudbury is a world class mining centre. The city's mining companies employ approximately 6,000 people and support a 300-company mining supply and service sector cluster that employs a further **10,000 people**. The City is also a regional centre in financial and business services, tourism, health care and research, education and government for Northeastern Ontario - an area that stretches from the Quebec border west to the eastern shore of Lake Superior and north to the James and Hudson's Bay coastlines – a market of **555,000** people.

Greater Sudbury is a regional hub for many Ontario residents who live in nearby communities. These visitors come to the city to visit with family and friends, for cultural and educational experiences, such as **Science North** and **Dynamic Earth**, for entertainment, for health care, for shopping and for conducting business. **(Source 1)**



## Evolution of Sudbury Early Years Planning Networks 2005 - 2017

The first children services planning network was the Best Start Network which was created in 2005 to support the community and Children Services Section to implement the Best Start initiative. The members of the Network were (and still are) funded through different ministries/sources and had no mandated obligation to participate at the Network or take direction from the City of Greater Sudbury, yet continued to build partnerships and plan collaboratively for children and families.

Most significantly the Best Start Hubs were and still are operated by 5 distinct agencies funded by 4 different sources. These leading agencies are CPTM, Jubilee Heritage Family Resource, (both of whom receive City of Greater Sudbury Family Support funding), Child & Community Resources (which receive Ontario Early Years Centre funding), Our Children, Our Future/Nos enfants, notre avenir (the Community Action Program for Children (CAPC) and the Canada Prenatal Nutrition Program (CPNP) funded by Public Health Agency of Canada, and Better Beginnings Better Futures (recently funded directly by the

Ministry of Education). This OEYCFC transformation will bring most of these funding sources together, under the supervision and direction of the City of Greater Sudbury as the Consolidated Municipal Service Manager (CMSM).

Since 2007 when the first Best Start Hubs were established, these family support providers began to operate as a system, and have continued to do so to date. From a formal perspective providers were not distinguished by their particular agency.

Network membership has consistently included school boards, public health, specialized services, child care, family support programs, OEYC, Aboriginal partners, post secondary and the Province. However the level of representation has varied as the Networks evolved and changed focus.



## Best Start Network 2005 – 2010

When established in 2005, the “Best Start Network” focused on the expansion of child care, engagement of school boards, the creation of Best Start Hubs and linkages to specialized services. “*The Best Start Integrated Implementation Plan 2005*” described this vision.

The membership of the **Best Start Network** included high level executives of school boards, family support programs, public health, mental health and specialized services to oversee decisions about locations of Best Start Hubs and providers. At this time child care did not participate at the Network, but instead were represented by the City’s Manager, Children Services.

The Best Start Initiative included the creation of provincial Expert Panels. These panels were responsible for initiating the writing of “*Early*

*Learning for Every Child Today*” and “*Investing in Quality*” which became instrumental in the modernization of child care and led to Ontario’s Early Years Pedagogy and the establishment of the College of Early Childhood Educators. Both transformed the practice of early childhood education in Ontario.



The **Best Start Network** directed the work of the Best Start Hubs including what services would be offered and where. There was an expectation that Best Start Hubs work with partners to offer or share partners’ more specialized or targeted services as part of the typical menu of services. Hubs were still recognizable as original Ontario Early Years Centres and Family Resource Programs, designed for children from birth to 12 years old and their parents or caregivers. Still, these partners came to the planning table, considered their combined funding and collaboratively distributed services equally across defined neighbourhoods.

Hubs were set up much like preschool play rooms. There was a variety of learning centres, toys, equipment and activities to appeal every level of child development. During “playgroup” or “drop-in” times, children were free to participate in whichever activities they chose. There was often some time set aside for the adults and children to gather together to participate in staff-run activities (from parenting discussions to sing-a-longs). Hubs offered a great opportunity for children to interact with other children, but also for families to meet and get involved in the community. Hub staff had a variety of qualifications and most included a Registered Early Childhood Educator.

All hubs were established in schools with the exception of the Aboriginal Hub which was invited into a school in 2010. Before this time, the Aboriginal Hub was community-centre based.



## Best Start Integration & Planning Network 2011 – 2015

The Best Start Network renamed the “Best Start Integration & Planning Network” in 2011, wrote the “*Best Start Integration and Planning Network Strategic Plan 2012-2015*” which reflected a new focus on integrated services.



The Best Start Integration & Planning Network membership also evolved to include managers and coordinators that created and coordinated the work of these new initiatives, with the executive leadership of the agencies attending as required. The Ministry of Education was now responsible for funding child care and a new role for the CMSMs as Children Service System Managers was defined during this period. The modernization of child care was marked by the release of the following documents: Ontario

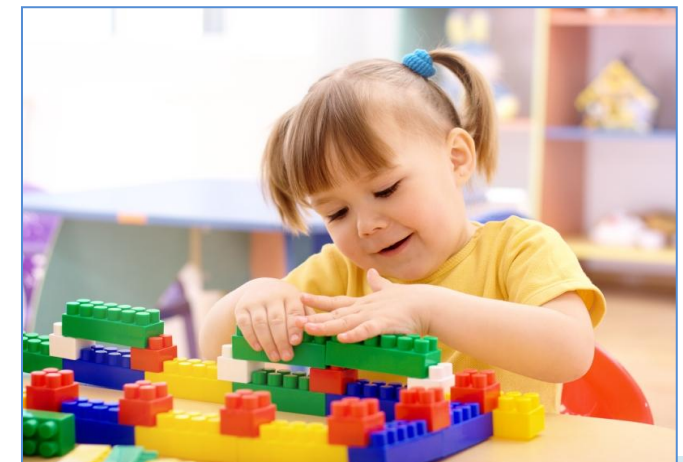
Early Years Policy Framework; “*Think Feel Act*”; and “*How Does Learning Happen? Ontario’s Pedagogy for the Early Years*”. The development of the documents significantly shifted thinking and allowed planning partners to reconsider their practices together. With the focus on relationships, the Best Start Hubs had the additional responsibility to get to know families and the neighbourhoods in which they live and child care became much more involved and visible at the Network table.

Best Start Hubs were involved in almost all the Network initiatives at this time:

- Providing school readiness for children starting school
- Using screening tools and coordinating screening clinics
- Contributing to a new website
- Maintaining a community calendar
- Implementing a community engagement strategy
- Creating Neighbourhood Teams

- Working very closely together at this time to coordinate services across the system and provide consistent programs and services

Mid-way through the implementation of this strategic plan, the Network wanted an assessment of how Best Start Hubs were meeting family needs; as a result, a hub system review was undertaken. This led to a request from Hub Managers for a more self-directed, collaborative, and thoughtful review, unlike any other attempted to date. This review, contributed greatly to the Planning Network’s readiness to transform into OEYCFCs.



## Planning Network for Sudbury Families 2016 – 2019

By 2016, as a result of this meaningful review, the network articulated a shared vision of equally invested partners planning flexible and seamless services in “*Sudbury’s Early Years System Vision: Reflections on Collective Leadership, Early Learning Pedagogy and Authentic Practice*” (See Appendix A). The Network revised its name to **Planning Network for Sudbury Families** and wrote the *Planning Network for Sudbury Families Strategic Overview 2016-2019*. This plan is focused on:

- Creating a culture of collective leadership
- Creating an informed planning process
- Becoming more outcome driven in planning services

This emphasis on planning and outcomes was transformational and the membership again adapted to accommodate the shift. The Network membership is now multi-level, with some partners having more than one member attending meetings regularly. Many executives rely on strong internal communication to remain informed

and attend only when relevant items are on the agenda.

The Planning Network for Sudbury Families strives for collective leadership in planning and leading authentic practice that “lives” Ontario’s pedagogy. The Network is committed to a collective leadership approach and is thoughtfully and intentionally moving toward this practice. The meetings are designed to generate input and engage the members in a “community of practice”. This means reflecting on practices together, considering program intent and uptake. It means using past experience, trusting partners and knowing what families need and how children learn. The collective leadership is based on professional partnerships that can endure disagreement and support honest dialogue. The foundations of “*How Does Learning Happen? Ontario’s Early Years Pedagogy*” is embedded in the Network planning. As planners, the network members believe they can lead authentic practice within their organizations through exploring values and beliefs, and aligning practice to the system vision. Each Network member is expected to contribute data and feedback in a

meaningful way that when compiled, informs future planning based on evidence and best practice. They are also expected to provide take-away messages to their organization and regularly solicit feedback from their organizations and parents to contribute to these discussions.

As described, the Best Start Hub system has been independently central to the past model. Together, hub services had become consistent, flexible and responsive. With this new approach, the network could no longer view the work of the Best Start Hubs in isolation outside of a broader service system. Best Start Hubs are now seen as part of a broader service system offering a range of free programs and services for families. Hub programs, along with other community services such as library and school board programs, provide high quality, welcoming and responsive early learning and family support programs.





# Best Start Hub Locations Created From 2007 – 2011



## About the Planning Network for Sudbury Families

The **Planning Network for Sudbury Families** has two advisory committees; the Aboriginal Advisory Committee and the Regional French Language Network. There are also two working groups; the Quality Reference Group and the Communication Engagement Team. For the purposes of considering the transformation to Ontario Early Years Child & Family Centres and writing this plan, the **Planning Network for Sudbury Families** created two working groups, the **OEYCFC Planning Group** and the **local needs assessment team**.

The **OEYCFC Planning Group** consisted of the 5 agencies leading the transformation, specifically those that operate the Best Start Hubs. As this process continues to evolve, this group will expand to include school boards, libraries, and public health to create more detailed neighbourhood plans.

The **local needs assessment team** was a smaller group that focused on collective, analyzing and presenting the needs assessment.

The group consisted of the OEYCFC planning lead, the Children Services Planner, the Children Services Planning Aide as well as the Data Analysis Coordinator and the Analytics and Geographic Information System Coordinator. This group will continue to assist significantly in further mining the data to create wholesome neighbourhood plans.

These working groups, along with the full network are ready to make this transition in part because some of that transformational work has already been done. The Network has become more deliberate in moving forward as a group, collectively leading the system in informed and outcome based planning and authentic practice based on the shared values, collective relationships, responsive/inclusive services and accountability.

The Planning Network articulates their vision as “equally invested partners planning a progressively integrated system of services that “lives” the early years pedagogy”.

This highlights both system outcomes and desired outcomes for children and families including three distinct areas:

- Creating a culture of collective leadership
- Creating and utilizing an informed planning process
- Planning programs and services that progressively improve system and parent/child outcomes which are:
  - Inclusion
  - Accessibility
  - Collaborative planning
  - Flexible /Responsiveness services
  - Seamless services
  - Parent and child well being, expression, belonging and engagement



## Planning Principles

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Before launching into the planning of Ontario Early Years Child & Family Centres, the City and OEYCFC Planning Group wanted to set the groundwork for completing the report collaboratively and respectfully.

The group first established **planning principles**. That set a positive tone and eliminated some initial fear and resistance. These principles were:

- The planning of the OEYCFCs would be **informed by data**
- OEYCFCs would **build on identified community strengths**; the 5 agencies operating Best Start Hubs would be maintained, assuming the agency was willing to align programs and services to the core services mandated. This meant maintain funding stability as much as possible.
- OEYCFC Planning Group would minimize **service disruption to families** by phasing in changes to service levels and providing continued access to programming and services;
- The Planning Network for Sudbury Families and OEYCFC Planning Group would commit to **transparent, constant and consistent communication**.



## Engagement Spectrum

In the next step of the planning process the City described a partner engagement spectrum which articulated **partner engagement levels** to different steps of the planning. This described the benefits for the OEYCFC Planning Group to participate in the planning process and articulated the City's promise to the group to keep them engaged. This **spectrum demonstrated** what was non-negotiable and what aspects of the planning would allow greater autonomy. It encouraged a discussion about expectations and defined roles in a practical way.

The consultation and involvement domains of the spectrum were **combined** to allow the City to make a decision if members could not agree on certain items. This ensured the momentum of planning **continued** at a reasonable pace. **(Source 2)**

	Inform	Consult	Involve	Collaborate	Empower
<b>OEYCFC Planning Group participation goal</b>	Objective Information	Obtain feedback on analysis to influence decisions	Concerns and aspirations are considered	Develop alternatives and preferred solution	Place final plan in the hands of the stakeholders
<b>City/Children Services Promise to the OEYCFC Planning Group</b>	Keep You Informed	Acknowledge Concerns	Work with you	Formulate solutions and incorporate your advice	Implement what you decide
<b>Within our Local Planning</b>	<b>Non-negotiables:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Following EDU Guidelines</li> <li>• Role of Planning Network</li> <li>• Core Service Definitions</li> <li>• Timelines</li> <li>• Plan components</li> </ul>	The City will consult with and involve you to the maximum extent possible throughout the process. The City will acknowledge and understand your concerns to ensure your perspective will influence: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Core service criteria</li> <li>• Core Service Distribution Formula</li> <li>• Accountability Framework</li> </ul>		Together, we will create: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communication Strategies</li> <li>• A Weighted Neighbourhood Service Distribution Formula</li> </ul>	Using the tools, strategies and framework created, you will lead the development of Neighbourhood Implementation Plans



# Section One

## Local Needs Assessment

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## Local Needs Assessment

To inform the Ontario Early Years Child & Family Centre planning, the Network conducted a **comprehensive needs assessment**. The local needs assessment team completed and presented an assessment that included **demographic** information, **parent survey** results, **Early Development Instrument** (EDI) data, **Hub utilization** data, and **Professional/Provider** feedback. This data formed the basis for all planning decisions made. The information sources included:

### LOCAL NEEDS ASSESSMENT

The demographics used for the purpose of the local needs assessment were drawn from the 2016 **census data**. Data such as:

- Child population
- Language Spoken
- Aboriginal Ancestry
- # of families with children aged 0-6 living in poverty were especially important to creating a service level formula.

### PARENT FEEDBACK

In **2016**, a parent survey was done. Participants were asked questions based on satisfaction of services. There were a total of **1266 respondents**, from a variety of **different neighbourhoods and demographic backgrounds**

**Please refer to Appendix B for the 2016 Parent Survey**

### EARLY DEVELOPMENT INSTRUMENT (EDI)

**The Early Development Instrument** (EDI) is a questionnaire that measures young children's **readiness** to learn at school.

The EDI is divided into 5 areas that will influence the services available in that neighbourhood:

- Physical Health & Well-Being
- Social Competence
- Emotional Maturity
- Language & Cognitive Development
- Communication Skills & General Knowledge

### HUB UTILIZATION DATA

Through web-based Client Information Management System (CIMS), hub registration and attendance data includes:

- # of children participating
- # of adults participating
- # of unique children participating
- # of unique adults participating
- # of referrals
- # of programs, by program type

### PROFESSIONAL/PROVIDER FEEDBACK

The OEYCFC Planning Group received anecdotal information during **on-going updates** at planning groups, communication teams and communities of practice meetings. There were also **focus groups** conducted to formalize this feedback and engage those working directly with children and families into the process.

**Please refer to Appendix C for the 2016 Needs Assessment Front-Line Staff Focus Group**

## Section Two

### Service Levels

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## Determining a Service Level

Historically, local service level expectations and funding amounts have been allocated on a per-hub basis regardless of the population or needs of the catchment area being served. As part of this transformation, the Planning Network for Sudbury Families wanted to establish an equitable and responsive service level based on child population and demographic risk of families within the specific catchment. Services would be redistributed based on community need to increase access for all families.

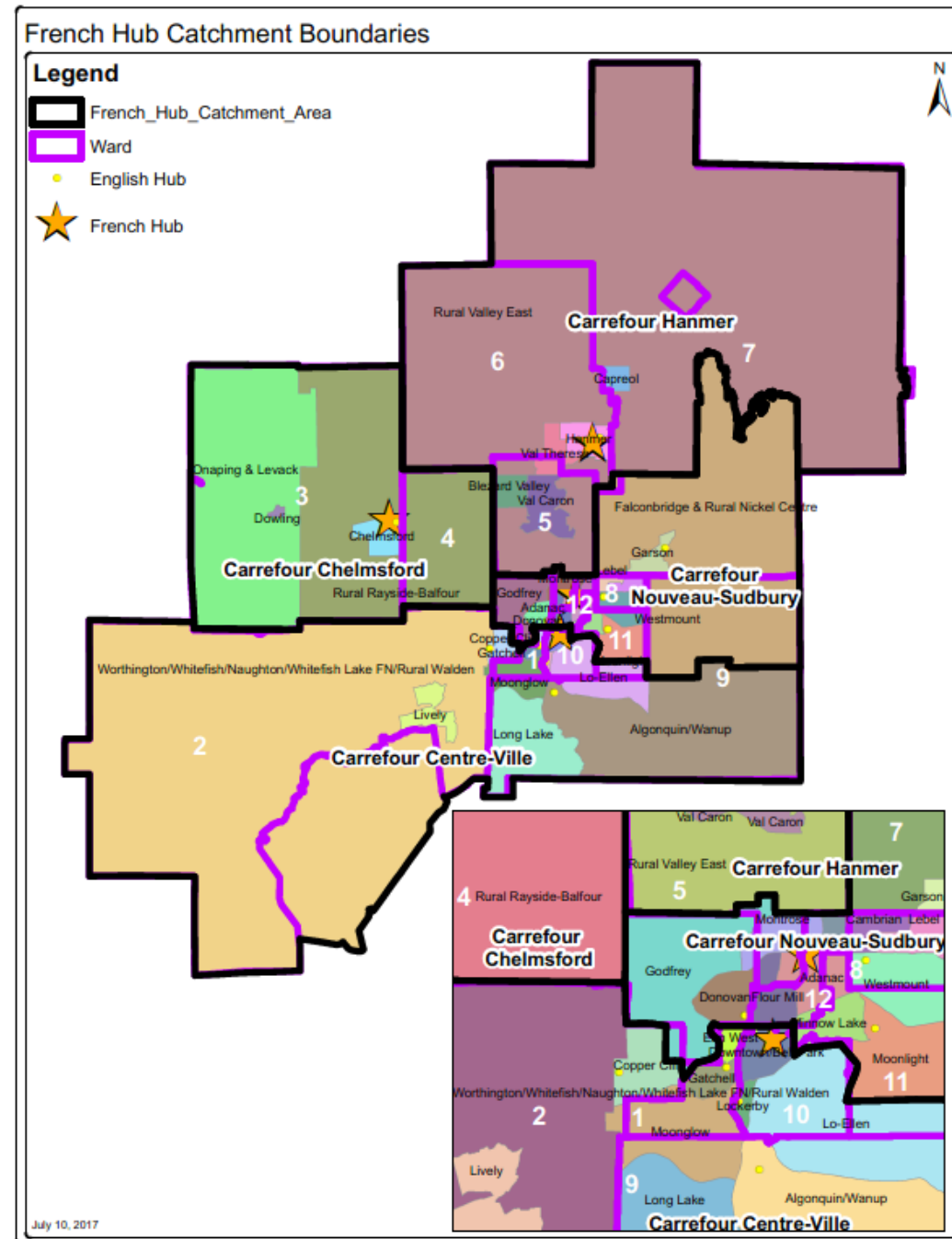
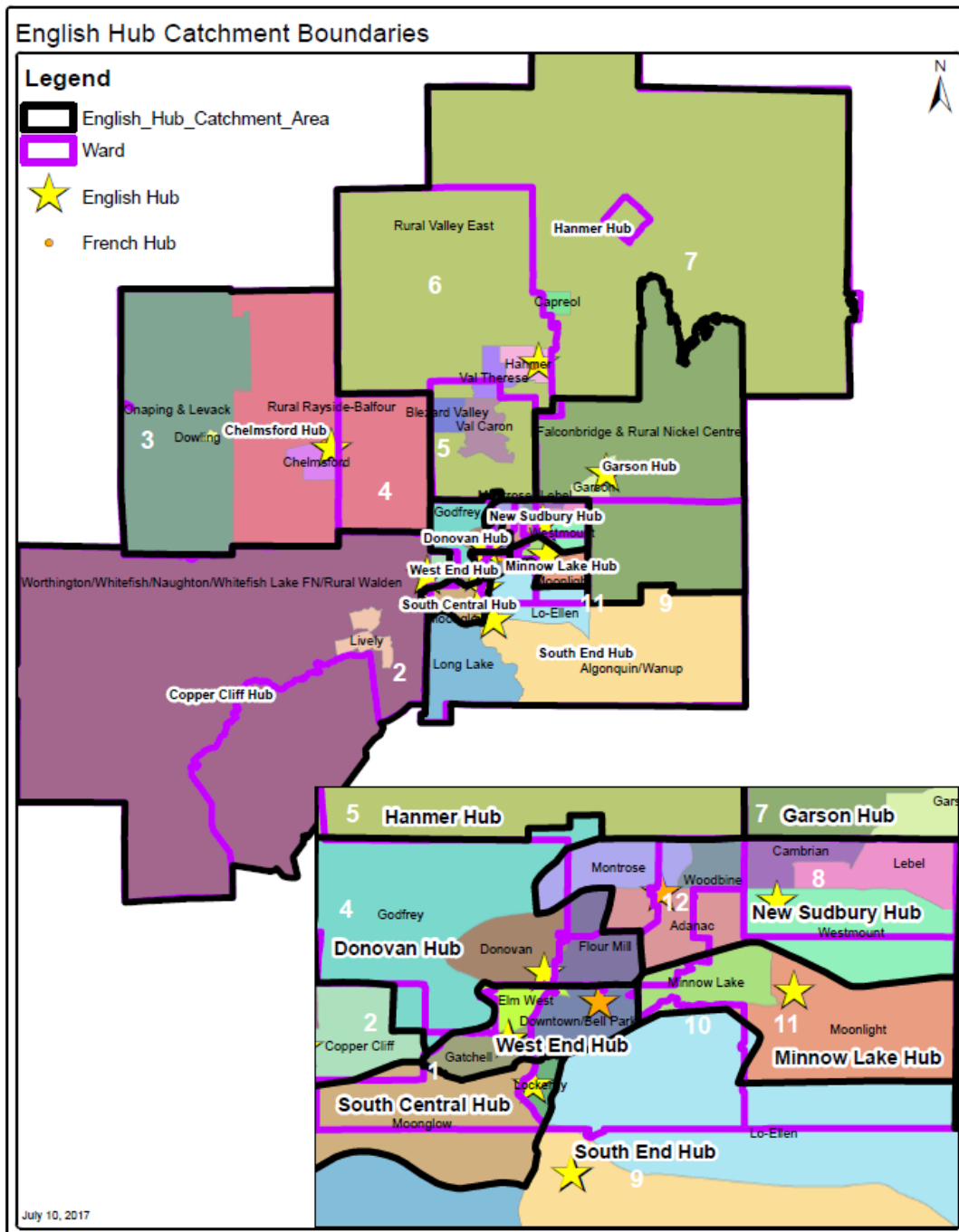
To consider catchment service levels, the group needed to first define catchment areas, determine how to consider “other community services” that can or do meet the OEYCFC core service mandate and calculate a language and Aboriginal distribution.

## Defining Catchment Areas

Catchment areas are different for English and Francophone services. Using the same geographical boundaries of the City of Greater Sudbury, our community is divided into 9 English catchments and 4 Francophone catchments. Areas with higher Aboriginal populations are identified to facilitate better planning and further inform the Indigenous Early Years Plan being submitted separately to the Province.







### Considering “Other Community Services”/Integrating OEYCFCs into the Context of Local Community Services:

The total system allocation is determined by adding the funding amounts for all services that meet or should meet the criteria for the early years core services as defined by the Province. These services presently include:

- **Community Action Program for Children/Canada Prenatal Nutrition Program (CPAC/CPNP)** funded through **Public Health Agency of Canada** and operated by Our Children, Our Future/Nos enfants, notre avenir (OCOF/Nena).
- School operated and/or funded early years programs, in each of **our 4 school boards** which target children starting school and their families.



**Step A - Determining Equitable French Language and Aboriginal Program & Service Allocations**

The total OEYCFC allocation was divided into 3 envelopes according to the language and culture demographics. As our Aboriginal programs can service both English and French families, their share of the total allocation is determined first, with the remains of the funding being allocated between the English and the French programs. These allocations are based on language census data as follows:

STEP A - SYSTEM ASSESSMENT
<b>Total Funding (system wide)</b>
Aboriginal Funding (11%)
<b>Remaining Funding</b>
Non-Francophone Funding (73%)
Francophone Funding (27%)



Establishing Funding Allocations

The distribution of Provincial OEYCFC funding will be determined based on three factors: language and culture, child population and demographic risk. The next step in determining the funding distribution was to establish the weight of child population and demographic risk to create a funding formula. The result was a formula that reflects 70% of the funding based on child population, adjusted by language, and 30% based on demographic risk of every family with children under six living in poverty.

Considering Child Population and Demographic Risk

Within each envelope, **70%** will be allocated according to child population to ensure adequate core services are accessible to all families and 30% to demographic risk to enhance and expand core services to accommodate greater needs such as transportation, food security and smaller group sizes. It may also expand core services to a larger variety of locations.

**Step B** - The child population in each catchment is adjusted by **language**. This adjustment is made by using two factors, the total child population in the catchment and the **francophone census data** (%). The adjustment is made by calculating the francophone percentage of the total child population in each catchments and using the remaining percentage as the non-Francophone (English) in each of the English catchment.



STEP B - CATCHMENT POPULATION BASED ALLOCATION		
POPULATION FUNDING (70%)		
Catchment Areas	Children	% of total
ENGLISH	6,796	100%
Chelmsford	670	10%
Copper Cliff	663	10%
Donovan	669	10%
Garson	641	9%
Hanmer	1,061	16%
Minnow Lake	568	8%
New Sudbury	934	14%
South End	935	14%
West End	655	10%
FRANCOPHONE	2,669	100%
Carrefour Centre Ville	343	13%
Carrefour Nouveau Sudbury	996	37%
Carrefour Hanmer	755	28%
Carrefour Chelmsford	575	22%
Total	9,465	

**Step C** - The **demographic risk** was calculated within each funding envelope separately, using a “per family” amount awarded to the catchment where that family lives.

STEP C - DEMOGRAPHIC RISK BASED ALLOCATION		
DEMOGRAPHIC RISK FUNDING (30%)		
Catchment Areas	Children	% of total
ENGLISH	1,755	100%
Chelmsford	110	6%
Copper Cliff	35	2%
Donovan	600	34%
Garson	85	5%
Hanmer	135	8%
Minnow Lake	195	11%
New Sudbury	395	23%
South End	110	6%
West End	90	5%
FRANCOPHONE	1,755	100%
Carrefour Centre Ville	235	13%
Carrefour Nouveau Sudbury	1,275	73%
Carrefour Hanmer	135	8%
Carrefour Chelmsford	110	6%
Total	1,755	

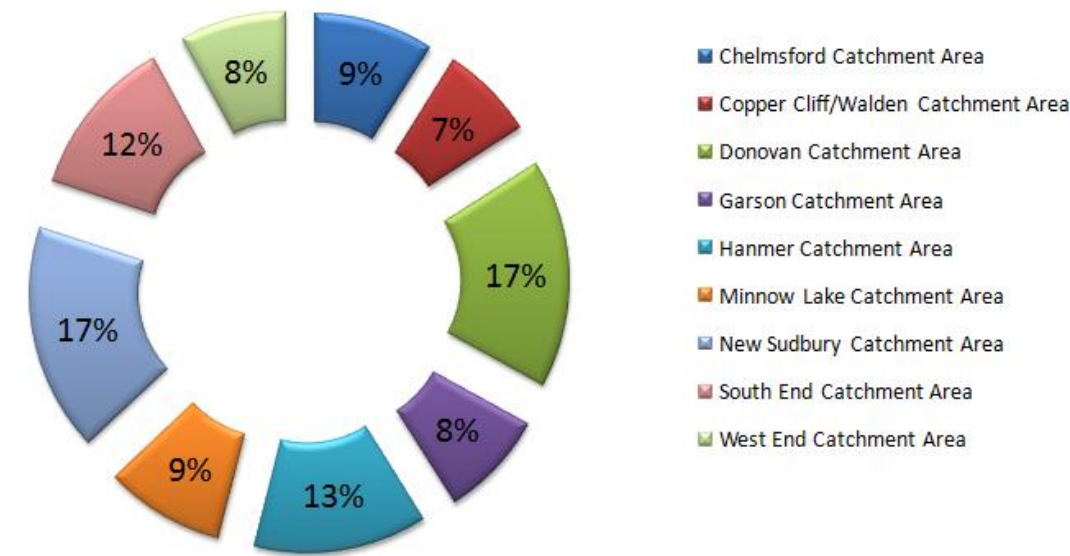




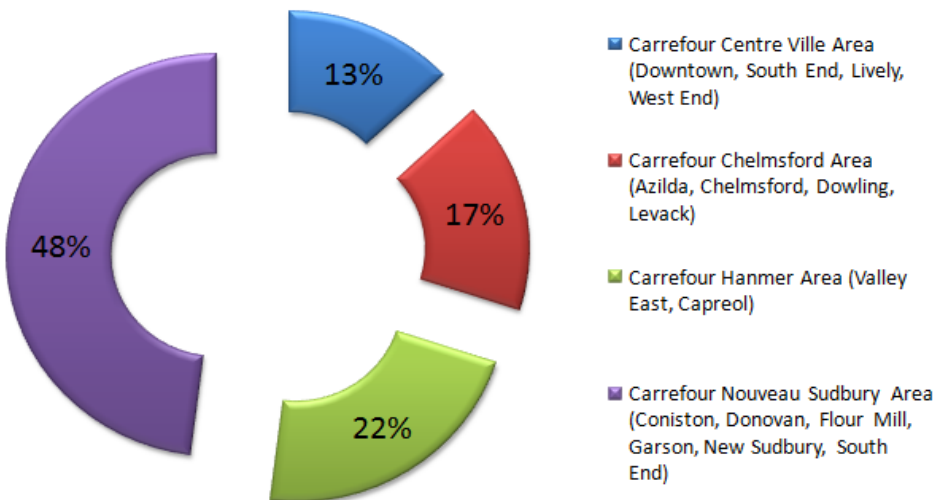
Step D - Allocations

The final allocations determine a funding level and a service level within that catchment. This calculation would be used for each of the Aboriginal, English and French. The calculation results in a percentage that reflects that catchment’s total allotment determined by the child population (70%) and demographic risk (30%).

% of System Funding - English



% of System Funding - Francophone



Allocations

Catchment	70%	30%	Total
English			
Chelmsford	10%	6%	9%
Copper Cliff	10%	2%	7%
Donovan	10%	34%	17%
Garson	9%	5%	8%
Hanmer	16%	8%	13%
Minnow Lake	8%	11%	9%
New Sudbury	14%	23%	17%
South End	14%	6%	12%
West End	10%	5%	8%
Francophone			
Carrefour Centre Ville	13%	13%	13%
Carrefour Nouveau Sudbury	37%	73%	48%
Carrefour Hanmer	28%	8%	22%
Carrefour Chelmsford	22%	6%	17%
Aboriginal			11%

## Section Three

### Defining Services

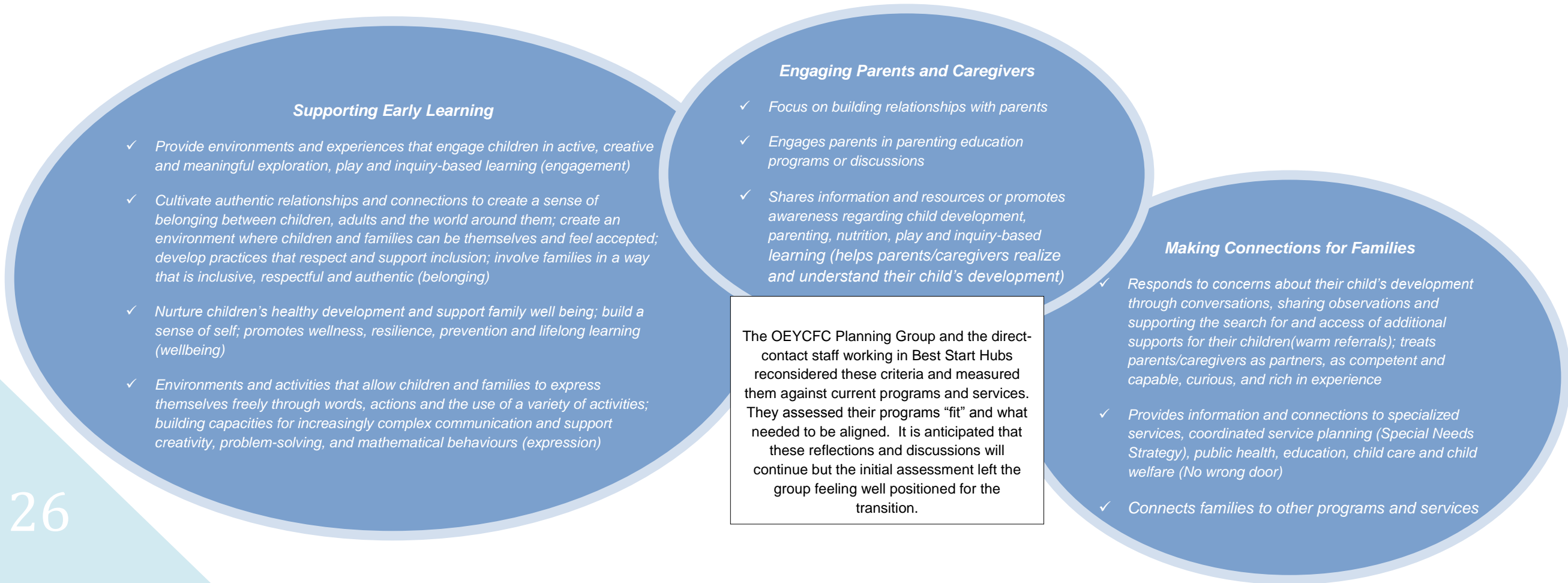
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# Defining Services and Service Mix

It was important to the OEYCFC Planning Group to reflect together and locally define **services**, **delivery expectations** and a **service mix**. It allowed the group to create a sense of ownership over the mandated service descriptions and ensured a common shared vision of delivering these services. An alignment to the **Indigenous Early Years Planning, areas of deprivation and EDI vulnerabilities** and linkages to the **Special Needs Strategy** are also considerations moving forward.

## Core Services

This was done by first, articulating clear **service definitions** and **criteria** based on the Ministry of Education’s guidelines for core services:

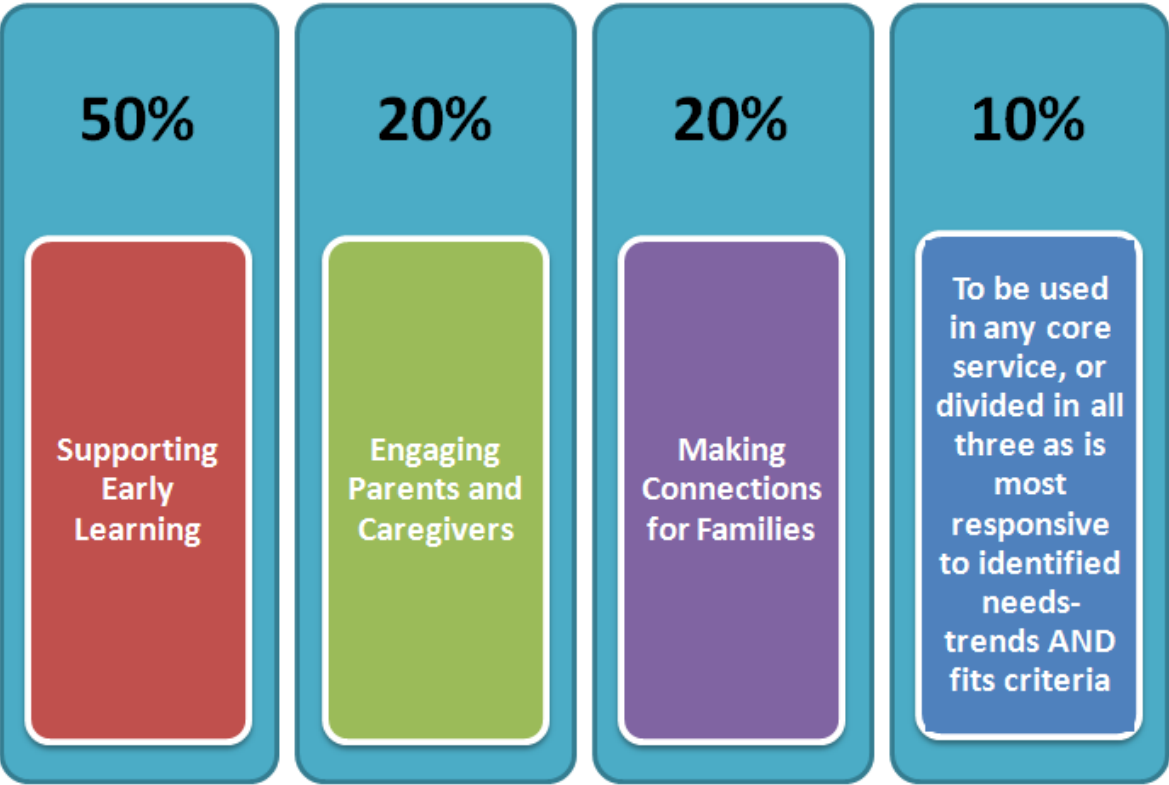




# Service Mix

The OEYCFC Planning Group also worked on establishing a service mix which will be used as a guide to ensure all OEYCFCs are providing a full range of the core services to children and families within their catchments. It was noted that there could be substantial overlap between the core services but the exercise of considering the distinction would help providers to further challenge the status quo and emphasize the intent of each program. The service mix also further defined the expectations and gave providers a target. The service mix agreed to was:

**% of total programs/services offered:**



## Aligning with the Indigenous Early Years Proposal

The Planning Network for Sudbury Families and the OEYCFC Planning Group want to ensure an alignment to the **Indigenous Early Years Proposal** being submitted separately to the Ministry of Education in September 2017. The Aboriginal Advisory Committee has been advising the OEYCFC Planning process and it is anticipated that they will advise on the community allocations for the Aboriginal population. This will ensure that the **two planning streams** will be coordinated. Furthermore, the Aboriginal partners will be invited to join the neighbourhood planning to ensure their proposed activities are planned within the context of the system. The **Indigenous Early Years Planning Team** has identified the following priorities:

1. Increased Indigenous **Child Care** Spaces - (Moderate Priority) look at the creation or transition of existing spaces to focus on the Indigenous culture, with enhancements as described in the other priorities.

2. Improved Evaluation Capacity – (High Priority) develop clear goals and measure attainment and **improved advocacy** in Indigenous organizations, hubs and child care.
3. Communication / Awareness Strategy – (Moderate/High Priority) **increase accessibility**. Difficult to determine if need is an awareness or accessibility issue.
4. **Indigenous Pedagogy/guidelines** – (High Priority) clear vision of Indigenous services; create guidelines; improved communication about benefits of cultural awareness/participation.
5. Language and Traditional Food Resources – (High Priority) **increase resources to ensure language and food** are enhanced in programs and services, and use as a tool for improved communication and awareness.

These priorities are being brought to the elders and families for their input and feedback.

Activities surrounding these priorities will be determined shortly and aligned to our community plan and the creation of the OEYCFCs is expected before implementations.



## Linking to the Special Needs Strategy

It is also important to the Network to support the Provincial Special Needs Strategy. Many members of the Network have been involved in the local strategy development and have ensured all partners are informed. The role of the OEYCFCs in this strategy is still somewhat undefined but the network is very supportive of the Tiered Service Delivery Framework. All partners are willing to participate in the Tier 1, and make instructional method or environmental changes that benefit all children in the natural context of participation.



## Adapting to Local Circumstances

Within each catchment, additional considerations to adapt OEYCFC programs and services are:

- Some catchments include neighbourhoods or distinct areas that have their own demographic identity which includes many **risk factors**.  
If statistically significant, universal programs will be situated in those specific locations.
- Also considered is the **EDI data** which identifies the domains of vulnerability. This information will be used to tailor programs specifically to the need of that catchment

## Future Discussions

As a group, providers began to reflect on delivery expectations, realizing some direction will come from the province and many more discussions will be necessary. So far, the discussions have included:

- Possible unit of service calculation may be developed so targets can be set and expectations for both providers and families will be clear.
- RECEs will deliver core services along with a diverse team of other professionals and partners with a variety of qualifications.
- Evening and weekend scheduling will be offered to ensure that programs are accessible 5 days per week.
- Multiple delivery models such as one-on-one, formal groups, informal discussions, presentations, on-line information or social media will be used to engage families.

- Providers will be responsive to parents/caregivers interest in age specific or topic specific child development information, nutrition, and early learning
- Targeted outreach to reach parents who could benefit but have not accessed programs or services remains a goal. Programs and services would still focus on child development, parenting, nutrition, play and inquiry-based learning (may connect families to each other and/or create a sense of community)
- “sudburyfamilies.ca” and “311” will be used as information hubs.



## Section Four

# Neighbourhood Assessments

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## Neighbourhood Assessments

Each catchment will have a unique implementation plan reflective of the equitable service level determined, the infrastructure in that area and best provider(s) available to service the unique needs of that catchment. Maps will show specialized needs in each catchment and providers will be matched according to their strength or uniqueness. It should be noted that the Aboriginal allotment of 11% of the total funding will support planned services across the whole community as well as the main Hub in the Donovan Catchment.

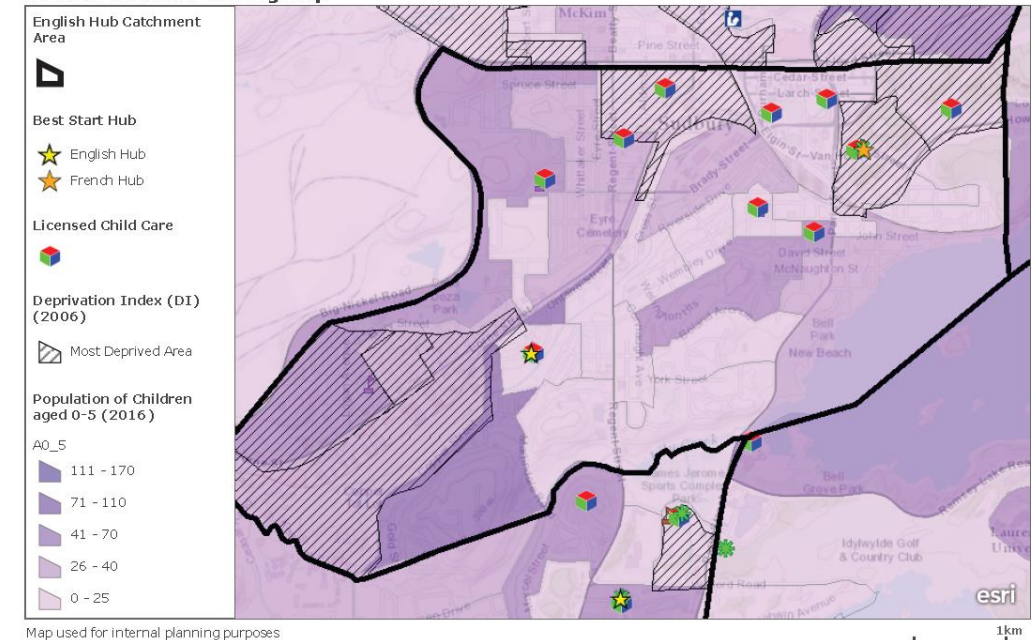
### How to Read the Maps, using an example

When reviewing the catchment maps, the key partners, including hub providers, school boards, public health and child care consider:

- The black line represents the Catchment for the West End area of Sudbury – this catchment includes the West End, Gatchell, Downtown and Kingsmount neighbourhoods.
- The purple shading indicates where within the catchment that children aged 0-5 live (2016 Census).
- The areas with cross hatching are areas that have scored higher in the Deprivation Index - a measure that indicates relative deprivation based on a number of factors like high unemployment, social isolation and low education.
- Other symbols indicate the locations of schools, Best Start Hubs, licensed child care centres and other family programs.
- Other layers that can be added to the maps for planning purpose include the Aboriginal Ancestry population, the francophone population, and the population of families with children 0-5 living in poverty.

These maps are being used to assist in planning where OEYCFC programming and centres should be located, to best meet the needs of the population in the area.

**Children Services Planning Map**



Map used for internal planning purposes

City of Greater Sudbury, Province of Ontario, Ontario MNR, Esri, HERE, Garmin, INCREMENT P, Intermap, USGS, METI/NASA, EPA, USDA, AAFC, NRCan | 2011 Census of Canada, Statistics Canada | 2011 National Household Survey (NHS), Statistics Canada | 2011 National Household Survey, Statistics Canada | 2016 Census of Canada, Statistics Canada | City of Greater Sudbury, INSPQ | City of Greater Sudbury, Offord Centre for Child Studies | City of Greater Sudbury, Offord Centre | City of Greater Sudbury

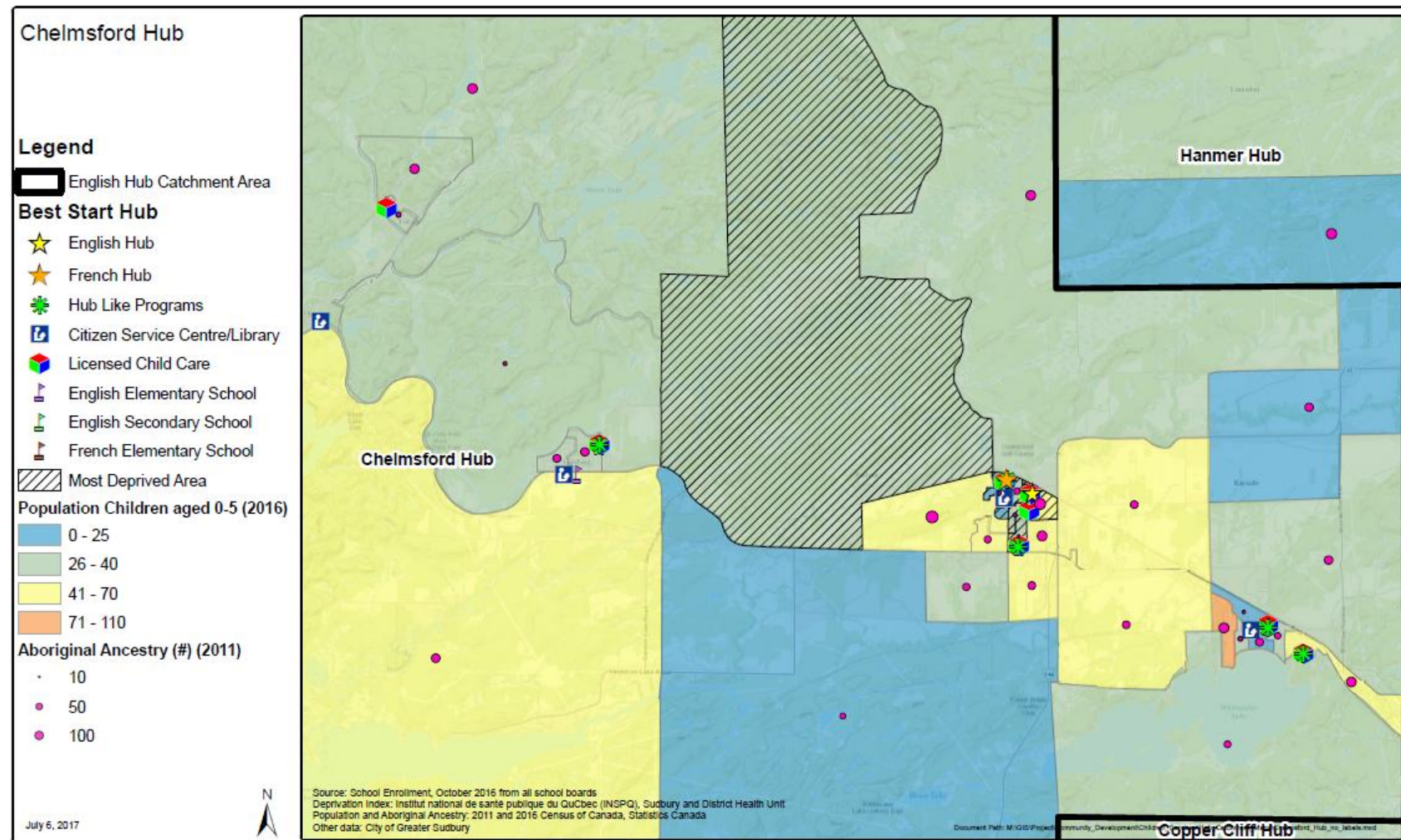




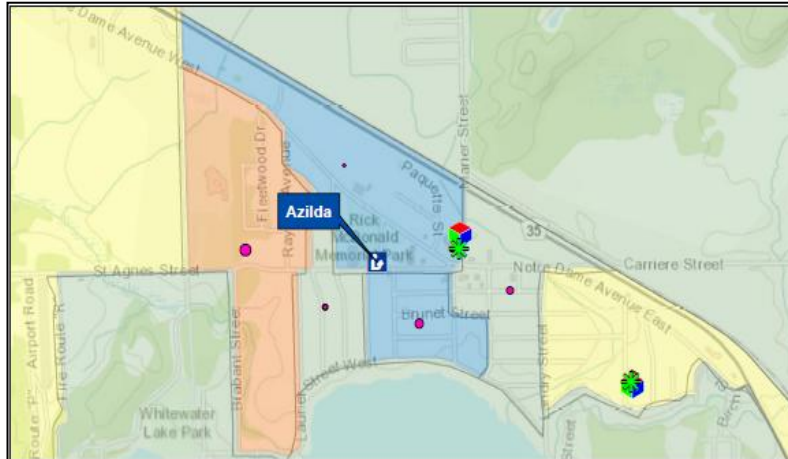


## Azilda, Chelmsford, Dowling and Levack Catchment

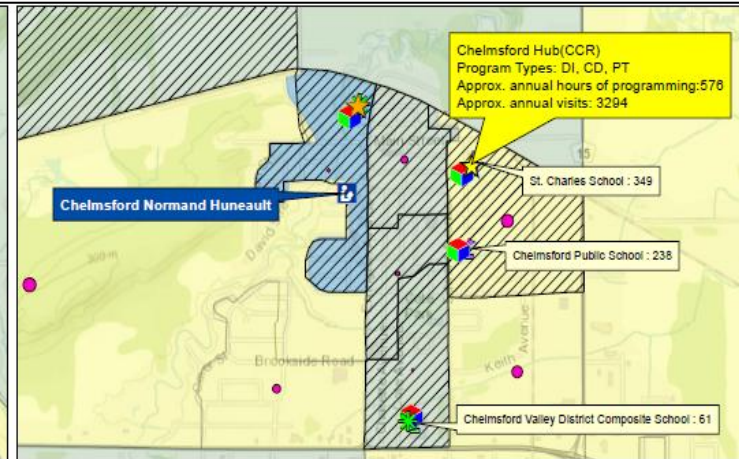
- The existing Best Start Hub at St. Charles Catholic Elementary School is well located for an OEYCFC, in an area of higher concentration of children and within a deprived area.
- There are two other schools within walking distance which will continue to be used for programming.
- Each of Azilda, Dowling and Levack areas has a school that will also be utilized.
- A small amount of targeted services will be planned for the geared to income housing and/or in the areas of isolation.



**Azilda**



**Chelmsford**



**Dowling**



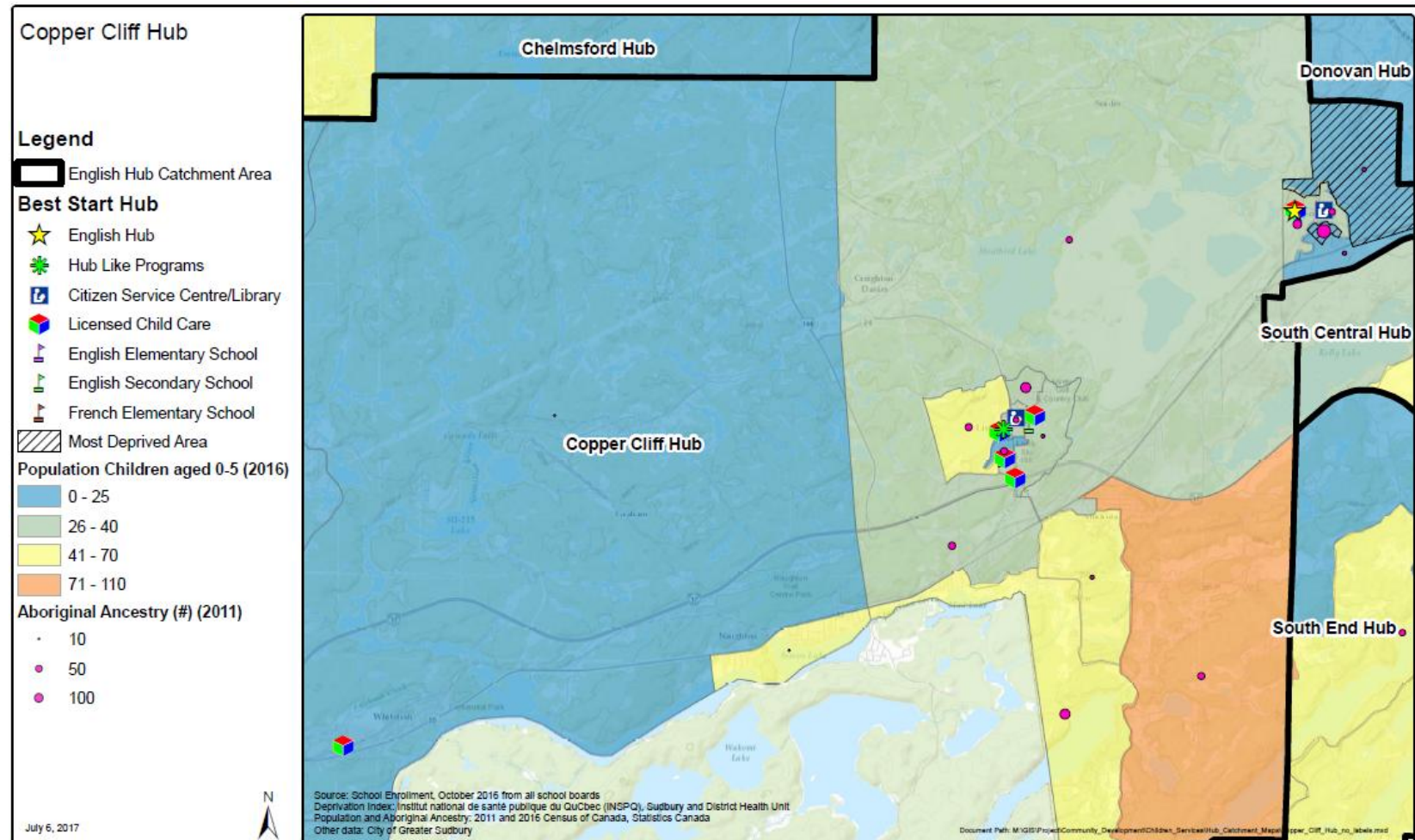
**Levack**



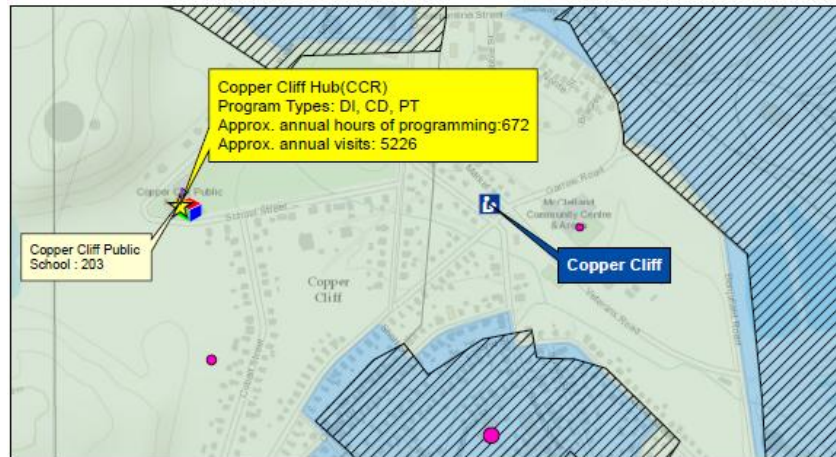


## Copper Cliff, Lively and Whitefish Catchment

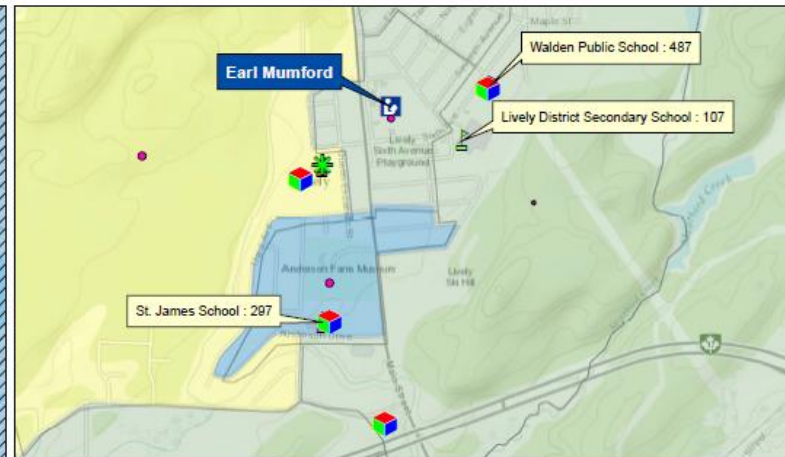
- The existing Best Start Hub at Copper Cliff Public School will become the OEYCFC and is close to the areas that are deprived and within walking distance.
- There are bigger concentrations of children in Lively where there are two elementary schools that will have programming.
- The more remote school locations will be considered for regular programming.



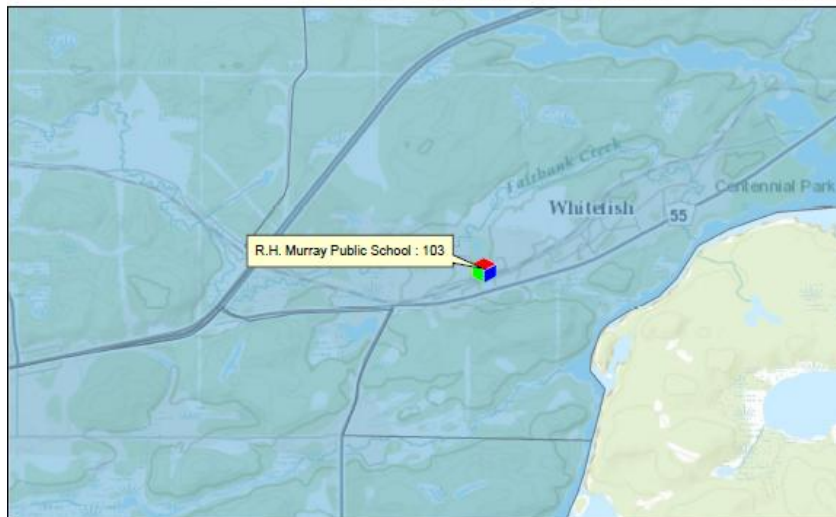
## Copper Cliff



## Lively



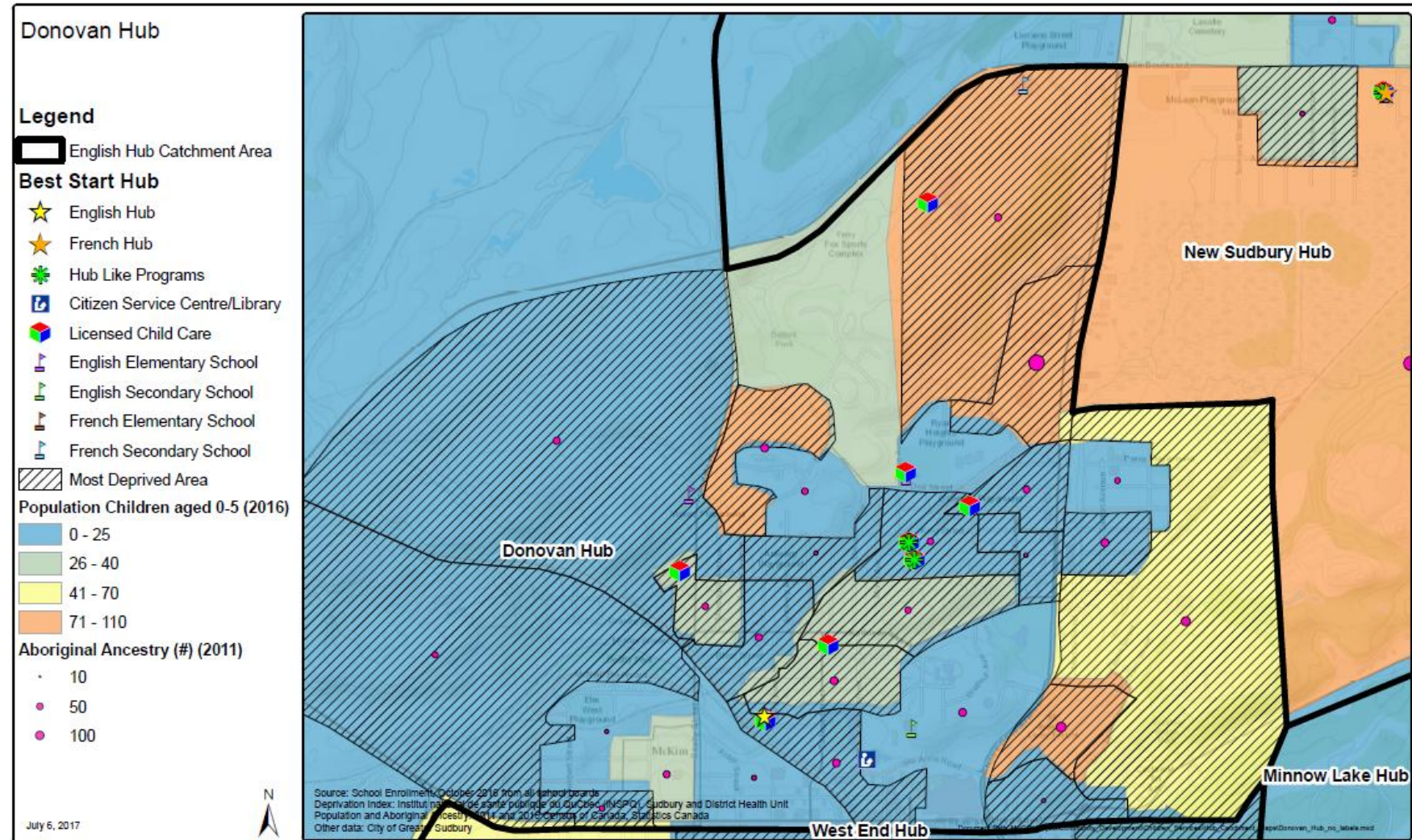
## Whitefish





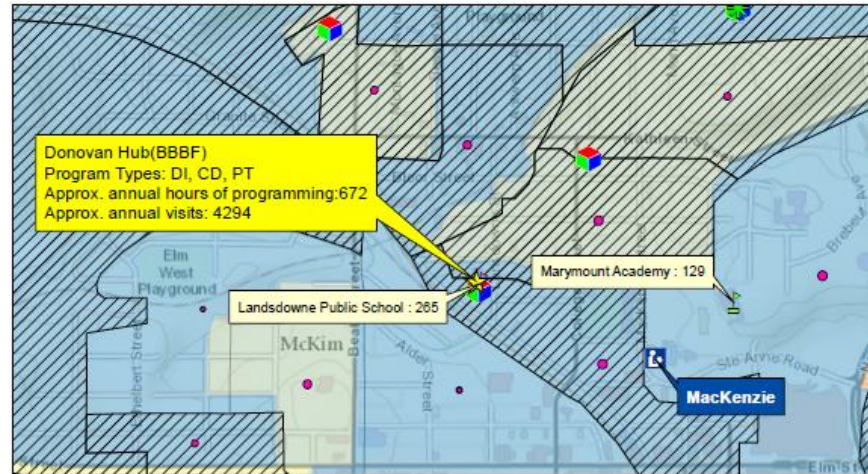
## Donovan and Flour Mill Catchment

- The three English schools will continue to be used as main sites for services for this catchment. There is also centre based programs that will continue and several geared-to- income housing complexes that will be utilized for outreach programs.
- This neighbourhood has “other community services”, with broader mandates that will also be considered.

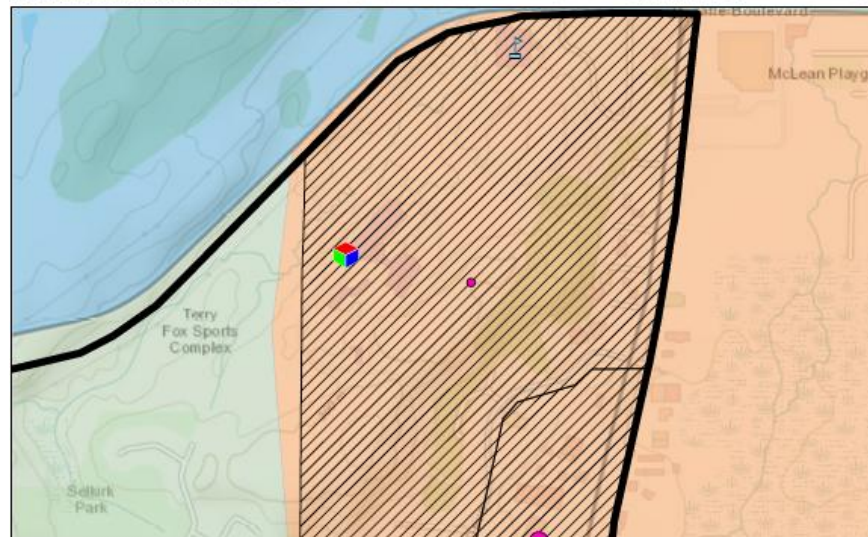
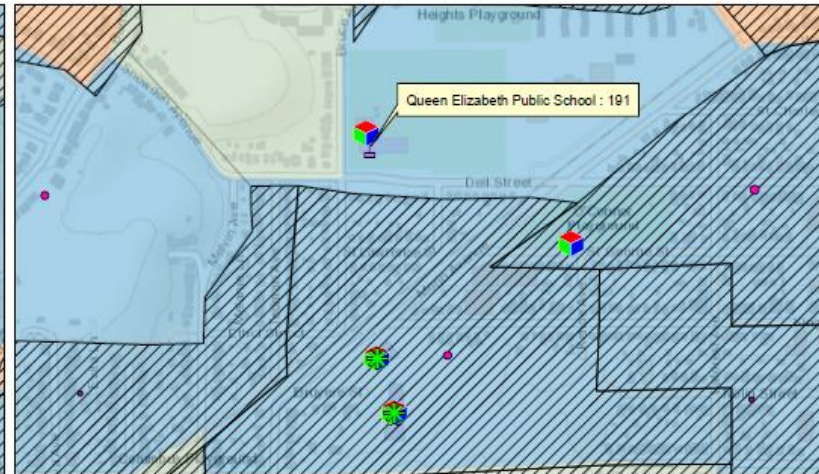




Donovan



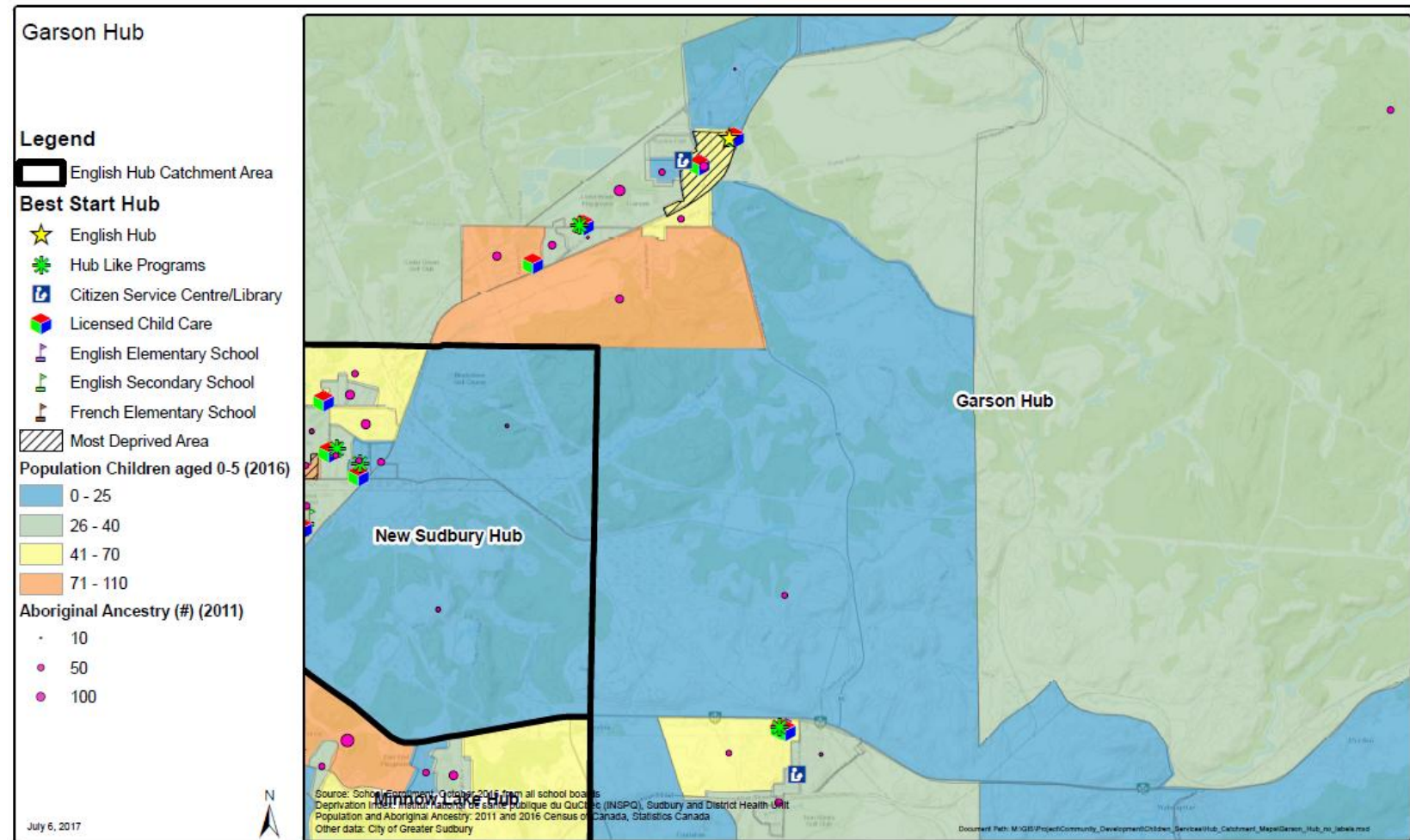
Flour Mill



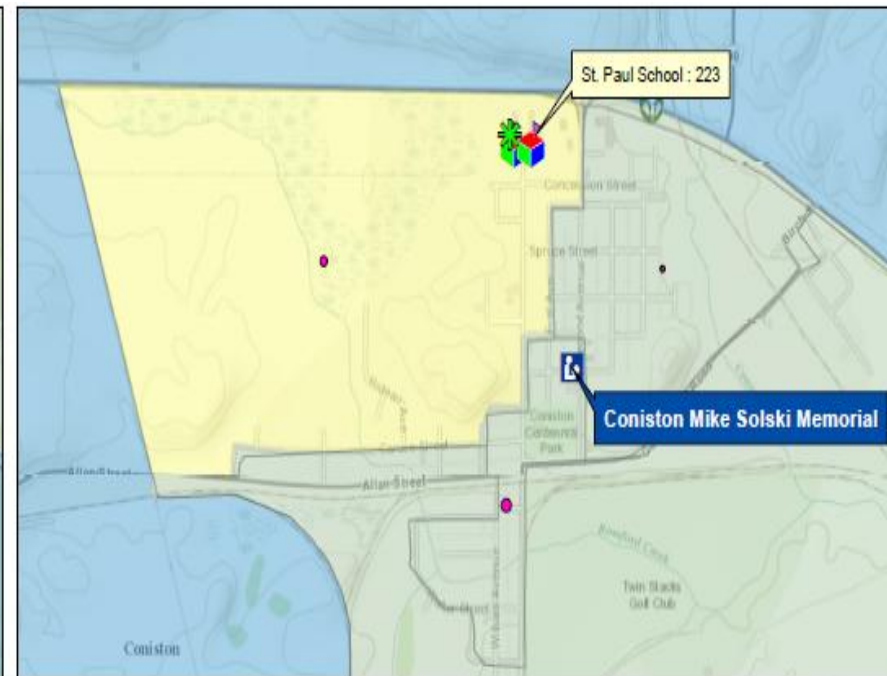
Flour Mill

## Coniston and Garson Catchment

- The existing Best Start Hub is located in a moderately high child populated area with a higher deprivation level. The OEYCFC will take over this location.
- The two populated areas have easier access to community space, alternate schools and child care sites which will be utilized for outreach programming.

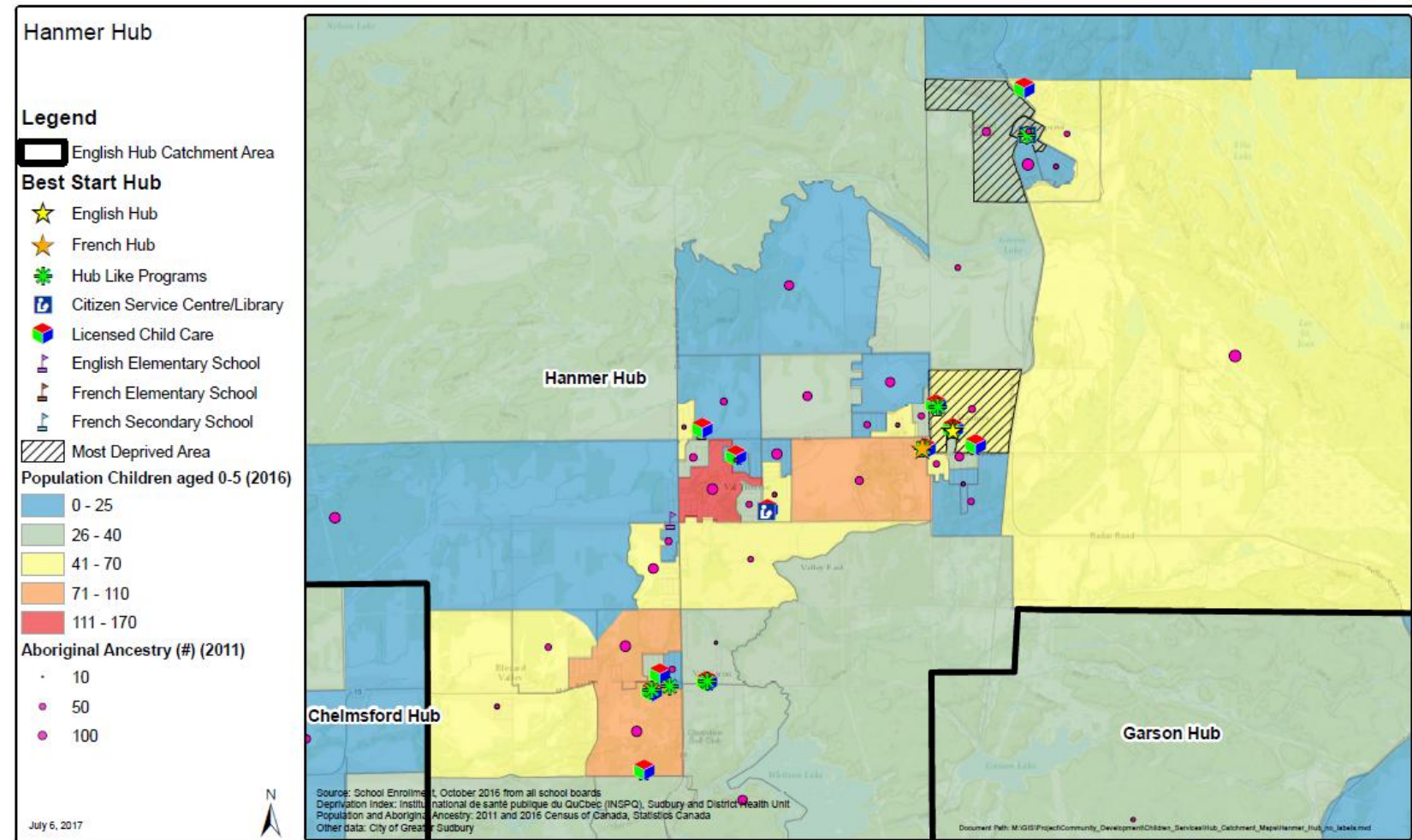






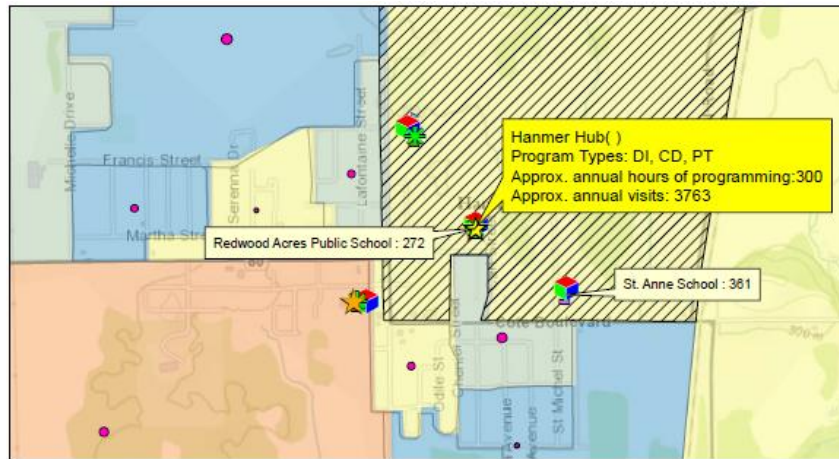
## Hanmer, Capreol, Val Caron and Val Therese Catchment

- Two of the three schools used as main sites for existing Hub programming and services are within the most deprived areas with heavier child population. These Hub sites will continue to be used for targeted services. The remaining 3 schools, where the child population is also high will be utilized for programs and services.
- There are many Francophone families in this catchment and immersion school programs are popular. OEYCFC programming here will include English and French Immersion.

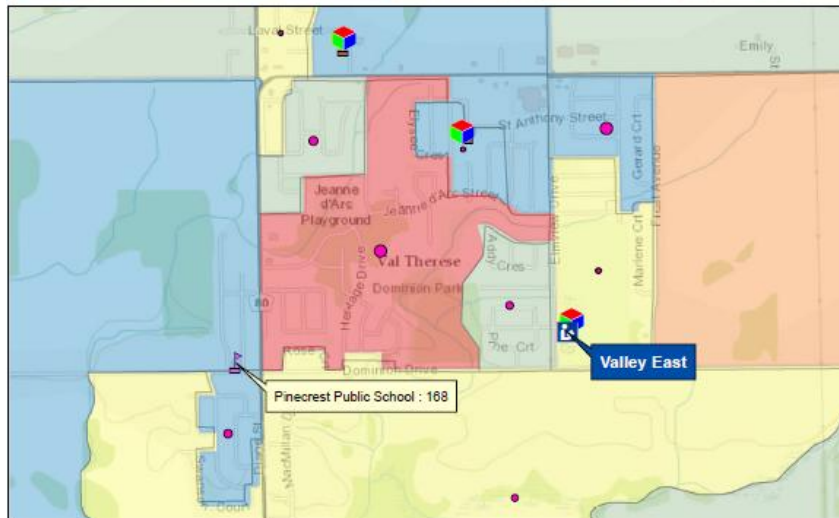
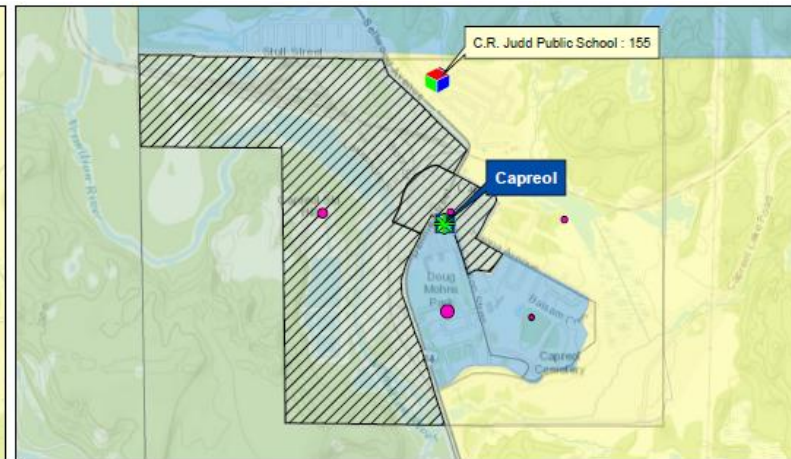




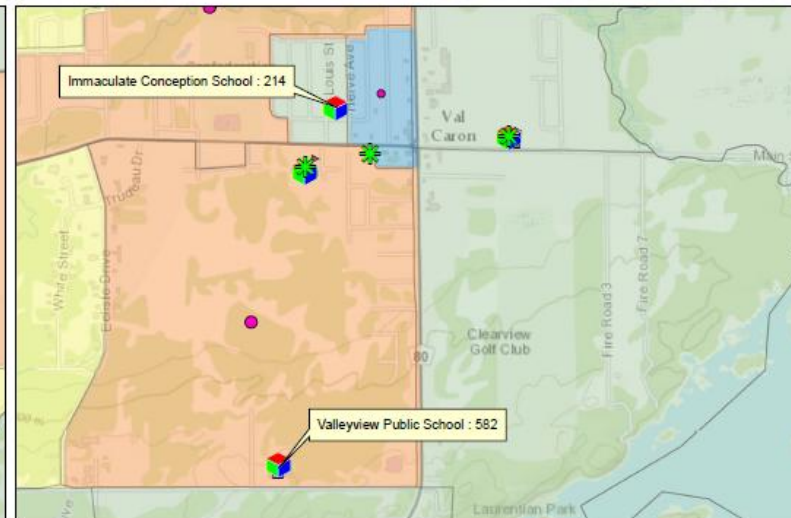
Hanmer



Capreol



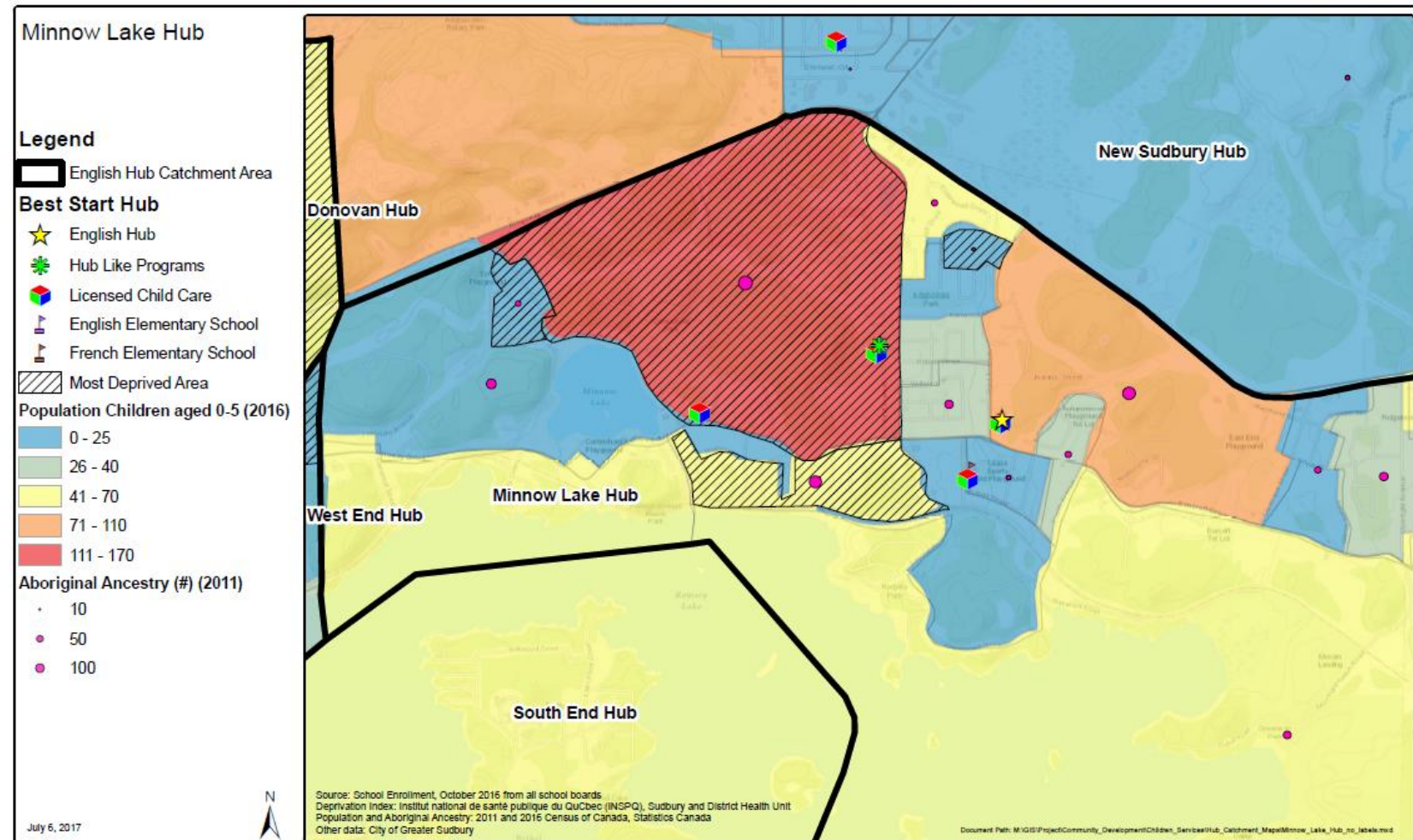
Val Therese



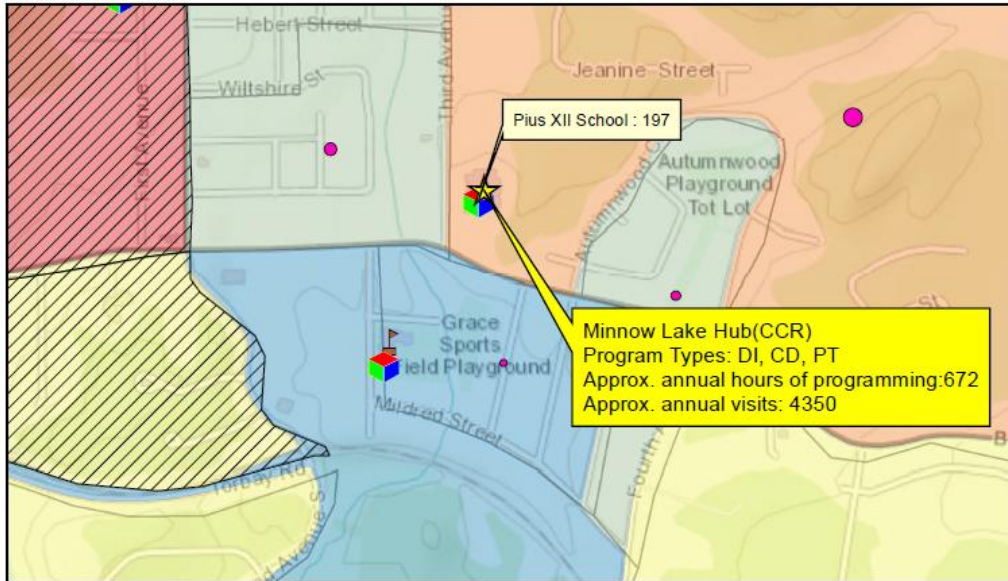
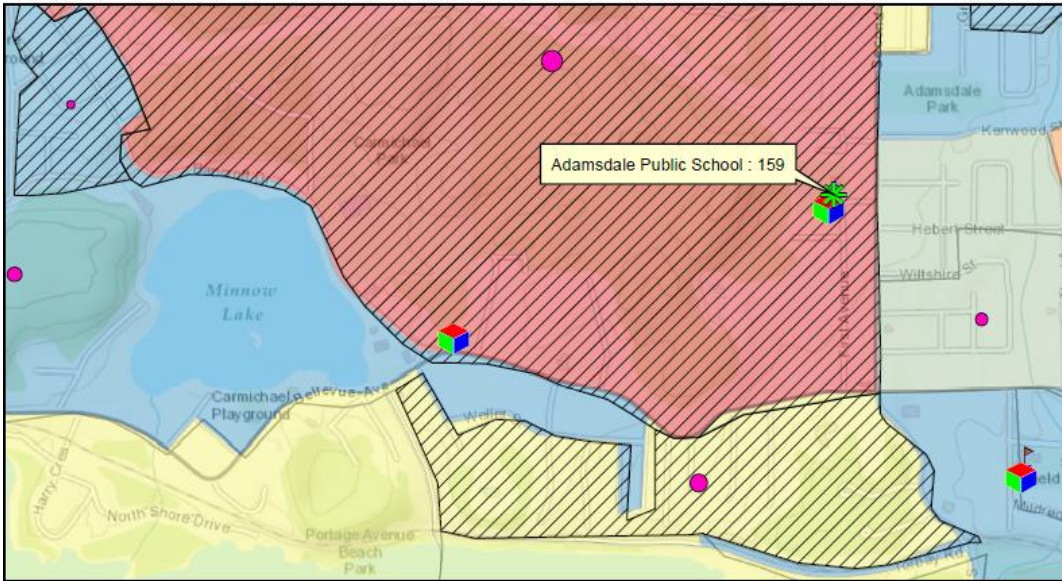
Val Caron

## Minnow Lake Catchment

- Presently there are both hub and targeted services within this catchment. The higher child population and identified deprived areas support the contribution of both within their current school locations, operating as OEYCFC.
- There are also “other community services” to consider in the planning of Minnow Lake.

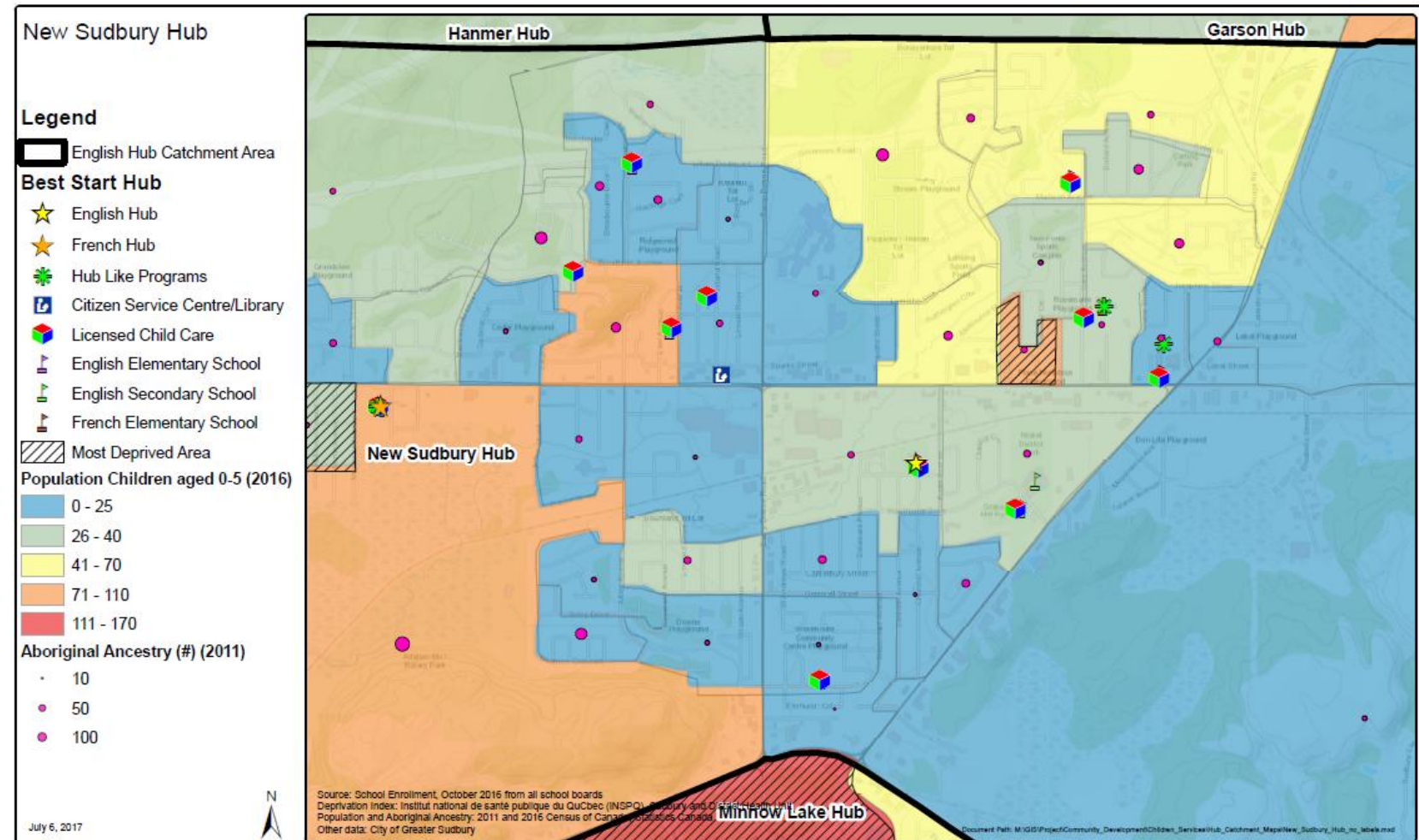




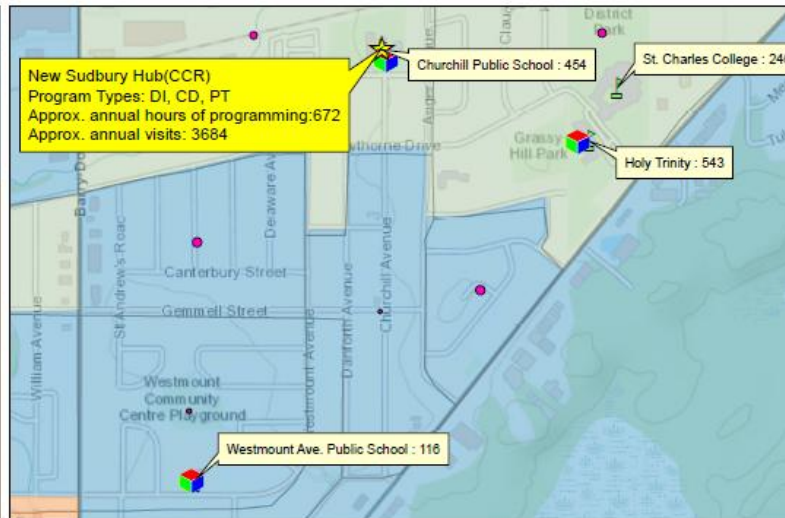
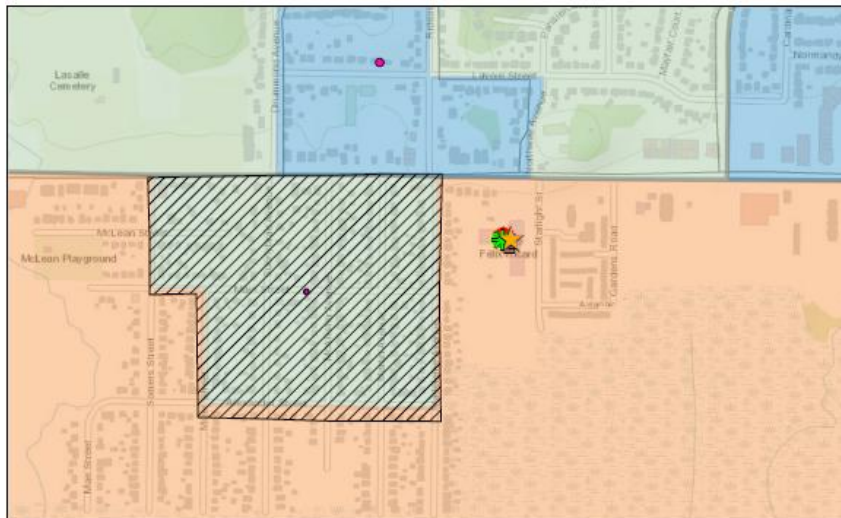
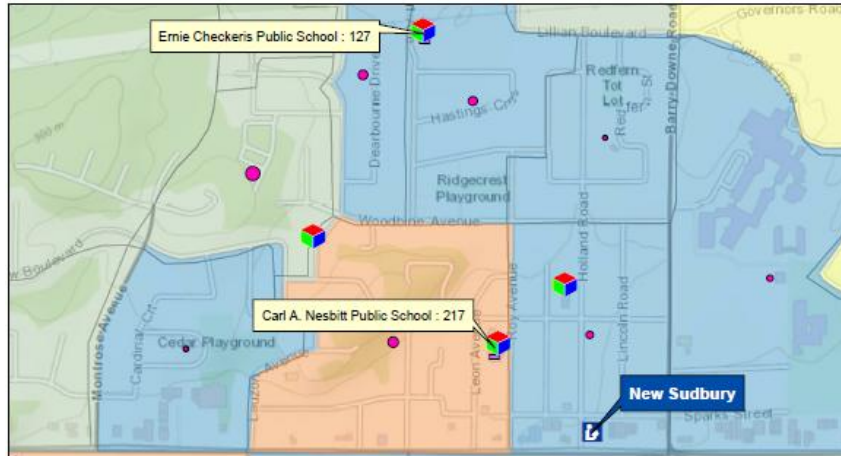


## New Sudbury Catchment

- This catchment has a high child population, many families living in poverty and covers a large geographical area. Luckily, there are several schools, child care sites and a community building and library. These additional sites will be considered for additional services.
- Targeted services will be established in the most deprived areas, using alternate space or geared - to - income housing as locations.



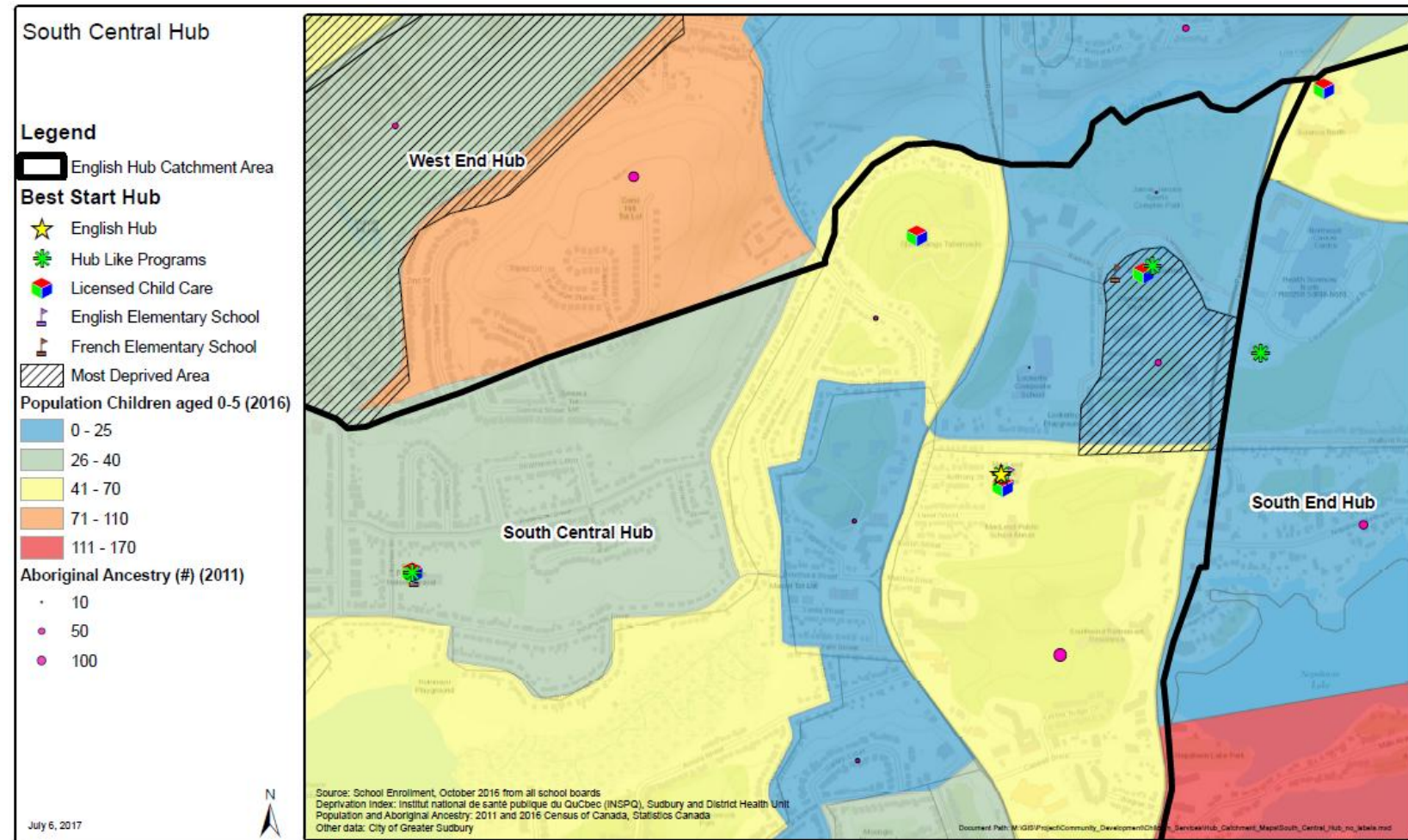




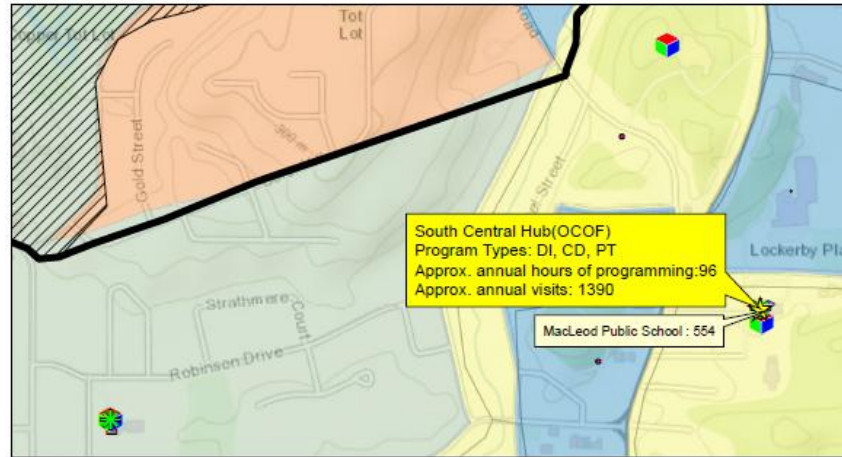


## Algonquin, Lockerby, Lo-Ellen and Robinson Catchment

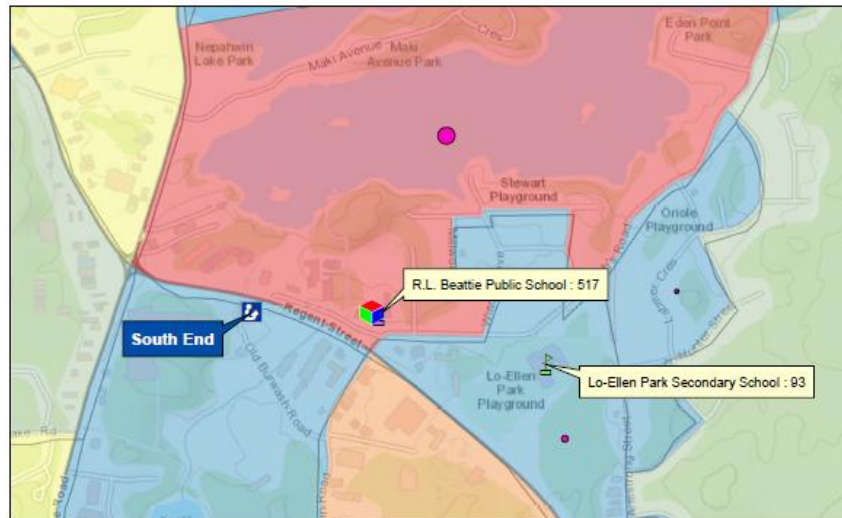
- These two existing hubs will be considered together, one for mainstream OEYCFPC programming and the other for more targeted programming. The mainstream services will be located in the two schools they presently occupy while the targets stream will provide access to services in specific community space, much like they are providing today.



Robinson



Lockerby



Lo-Ellen

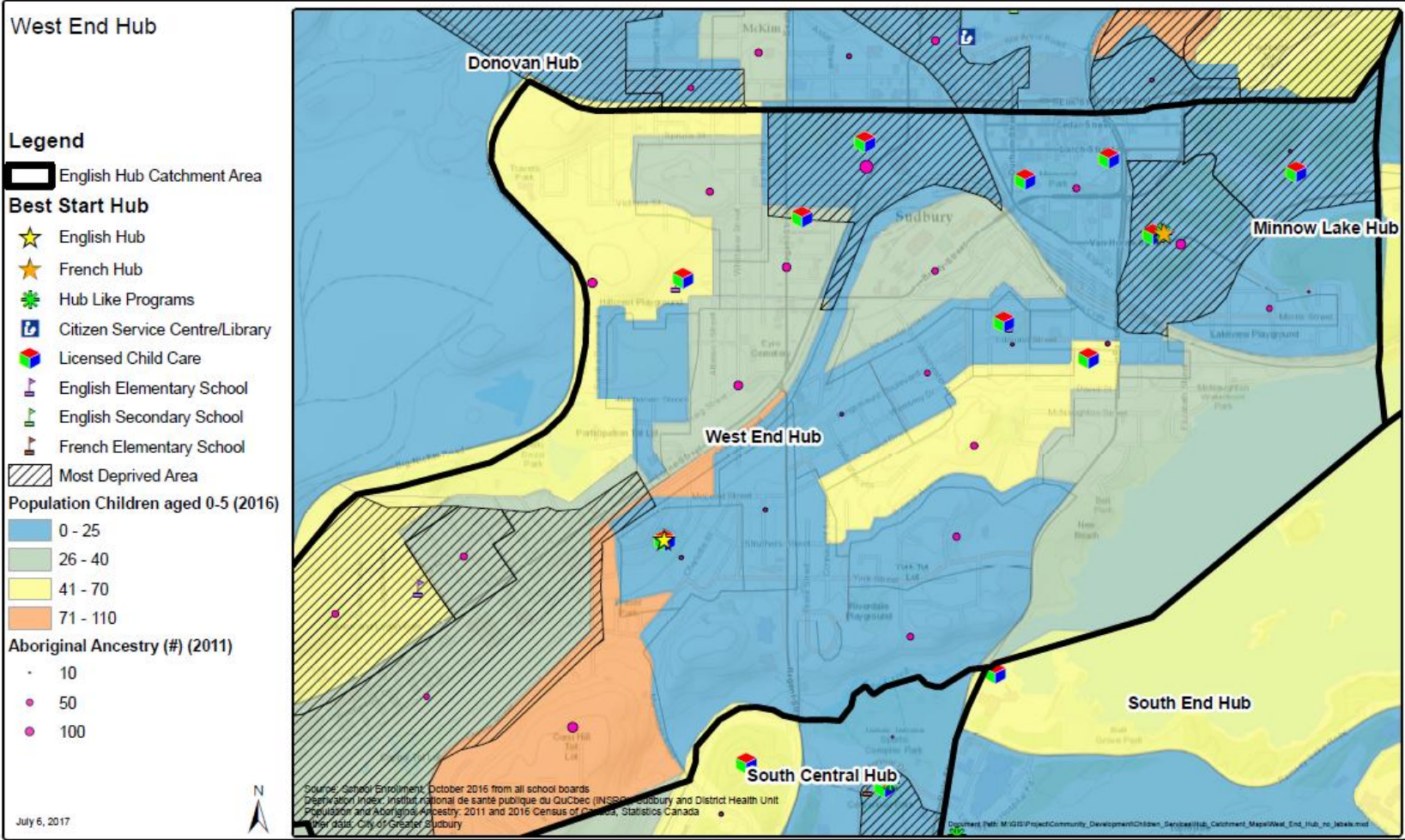


Algonquin

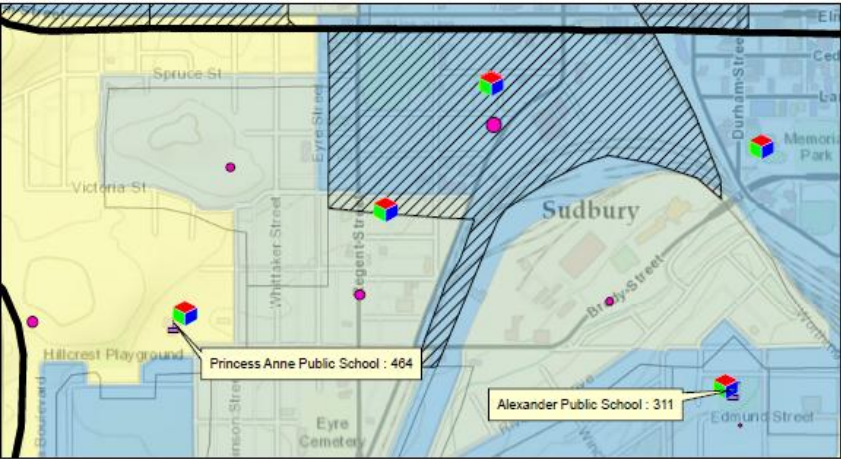


# Downtown, Gatchell and West-End Catchment

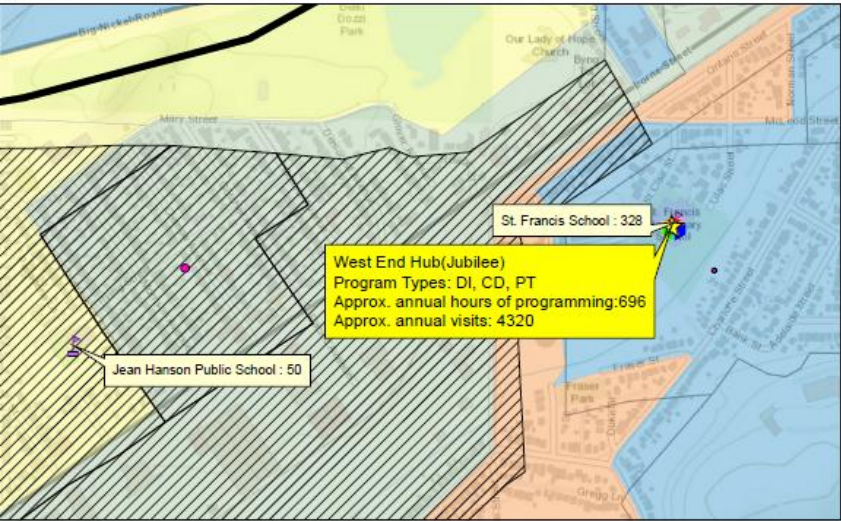
- The existing West End Hub is located close to the area that has combined deprivation and child population.
- There are two other schools and several child care sites within the area that can be utilized as alternate or outreach locations.



West - End



Downtown

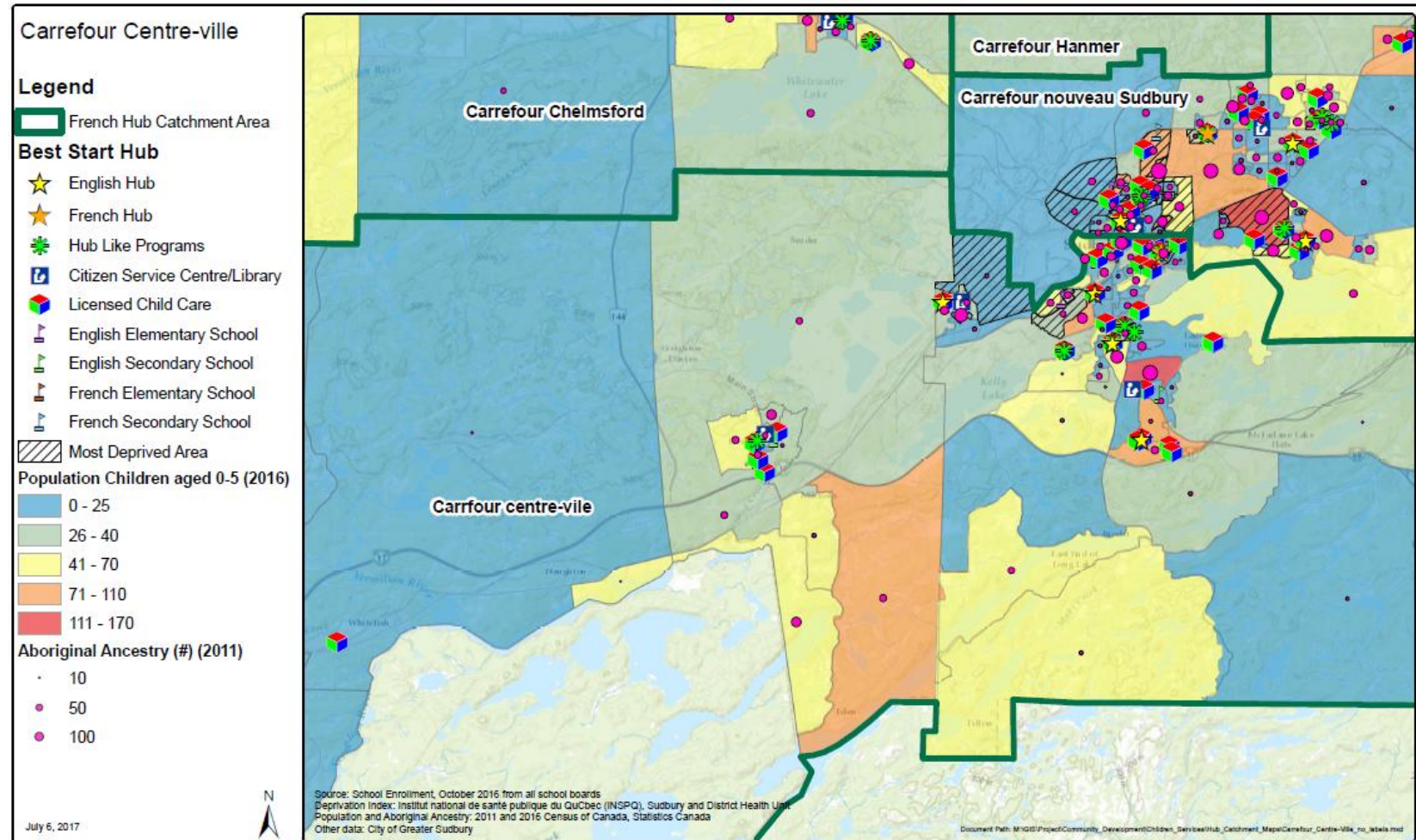


Gatchell



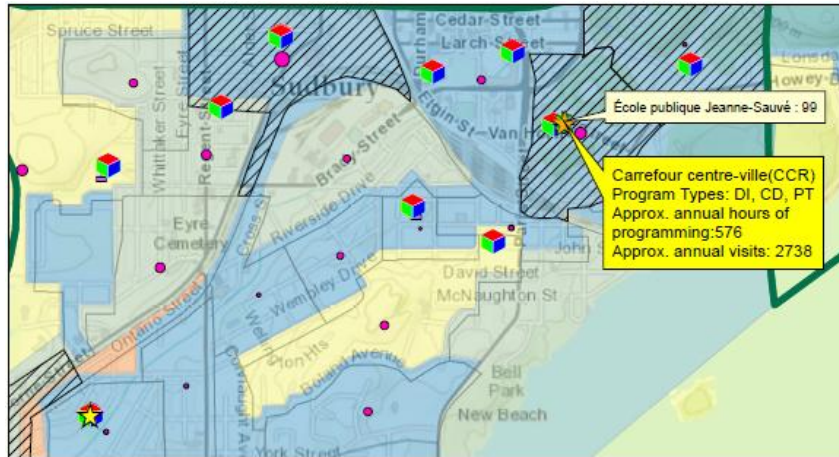
## Centre-ville, Copper Cliff, Lively and South End Catchment - Francophone

- This OEYCFC will have a large geographical area to service and the partners will drill deeper into the data to ensure Francophone services are accessible.
- This does include some areas of catchment deprivation which will be considered in planning as well.
- The focus of francophone services will be to provide programming in the current hub location and provide outreach to the other French schools.

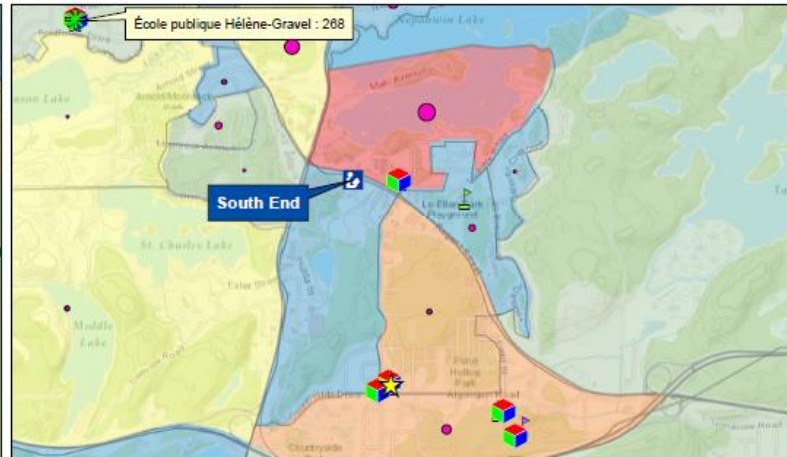




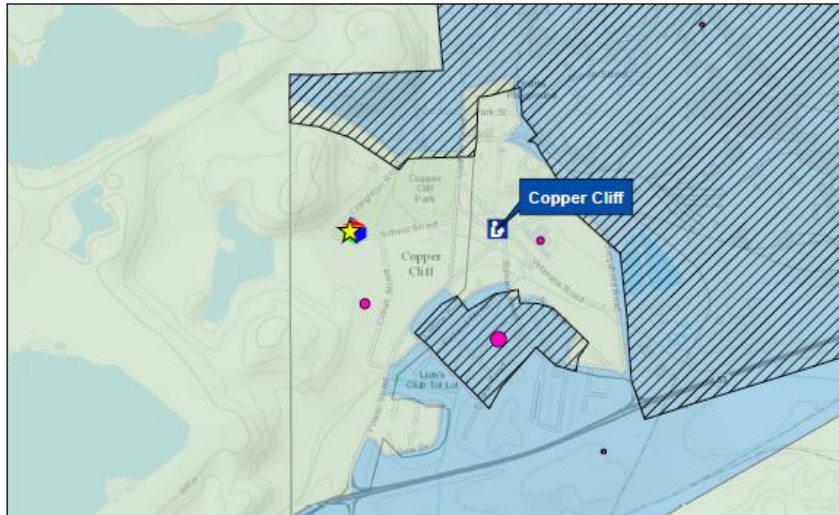
**Centre-ville**



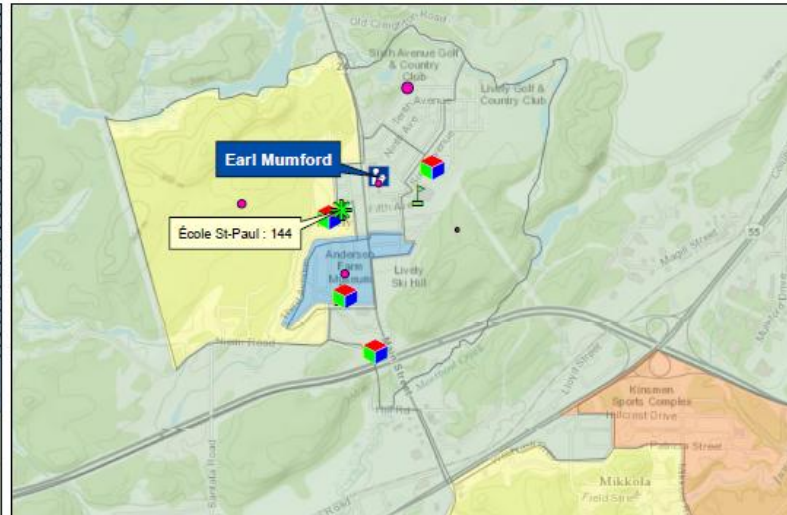
**South End**



**Copper Cliff**

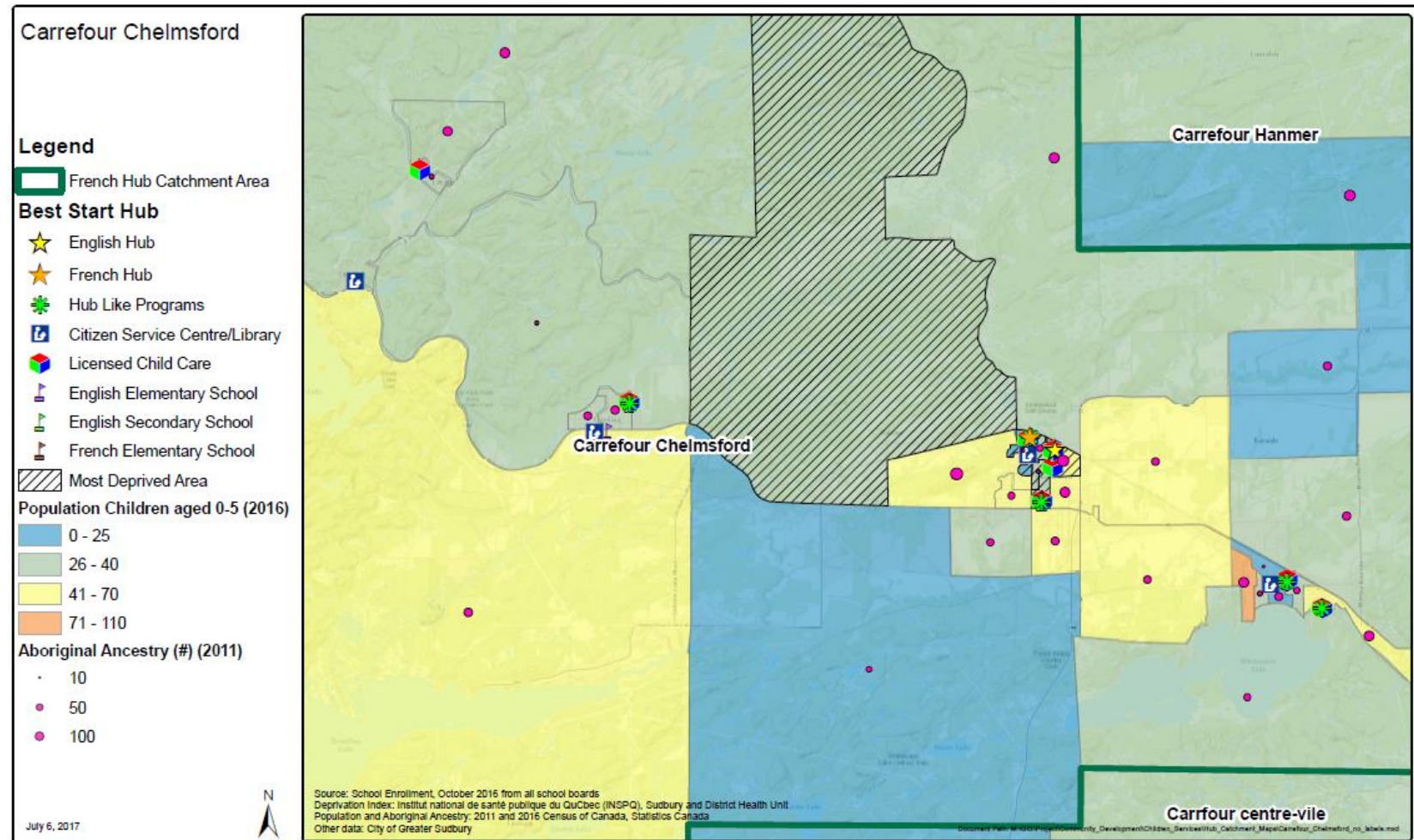


**Lively**



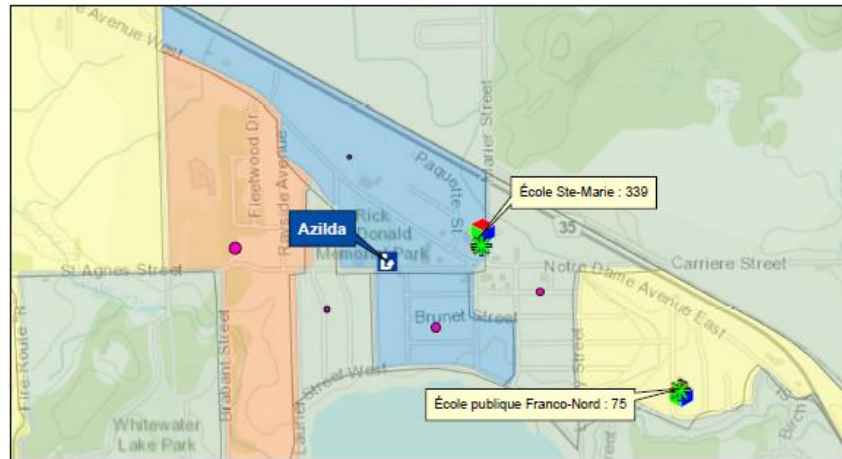
## Azilda, Chelmsford, Dowling and Levack Catchment – Francophone

- Francophone OEYCFC programs and services will continue at the current hub location within a school.
- Additional locations will include the three other French schools and four community centres.

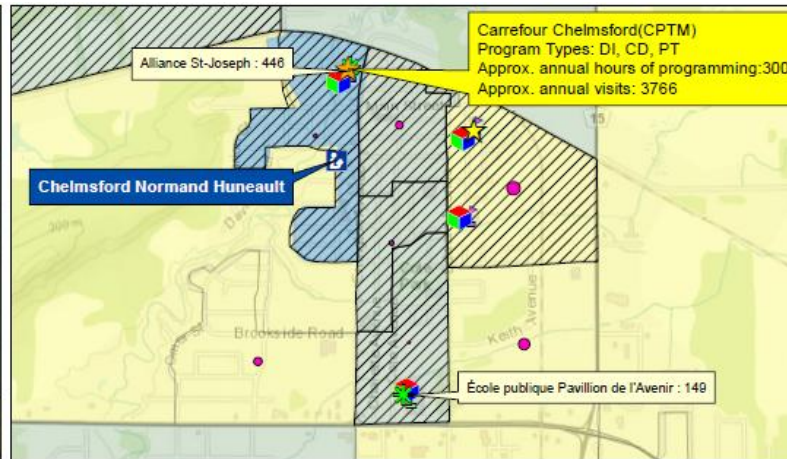




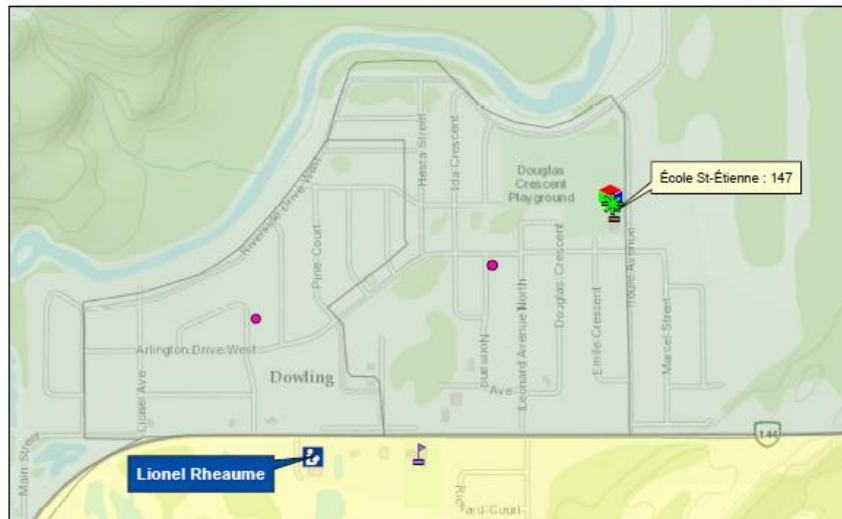
**Azilda**



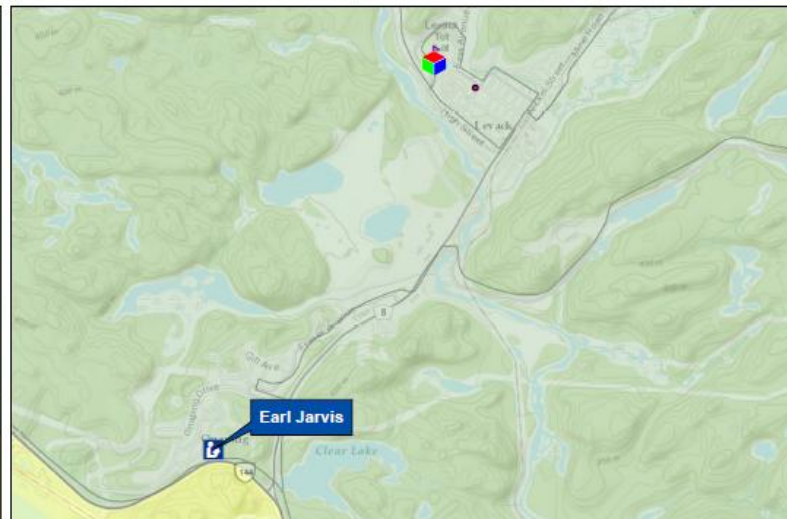
**Chelmsford**



**Dowling**

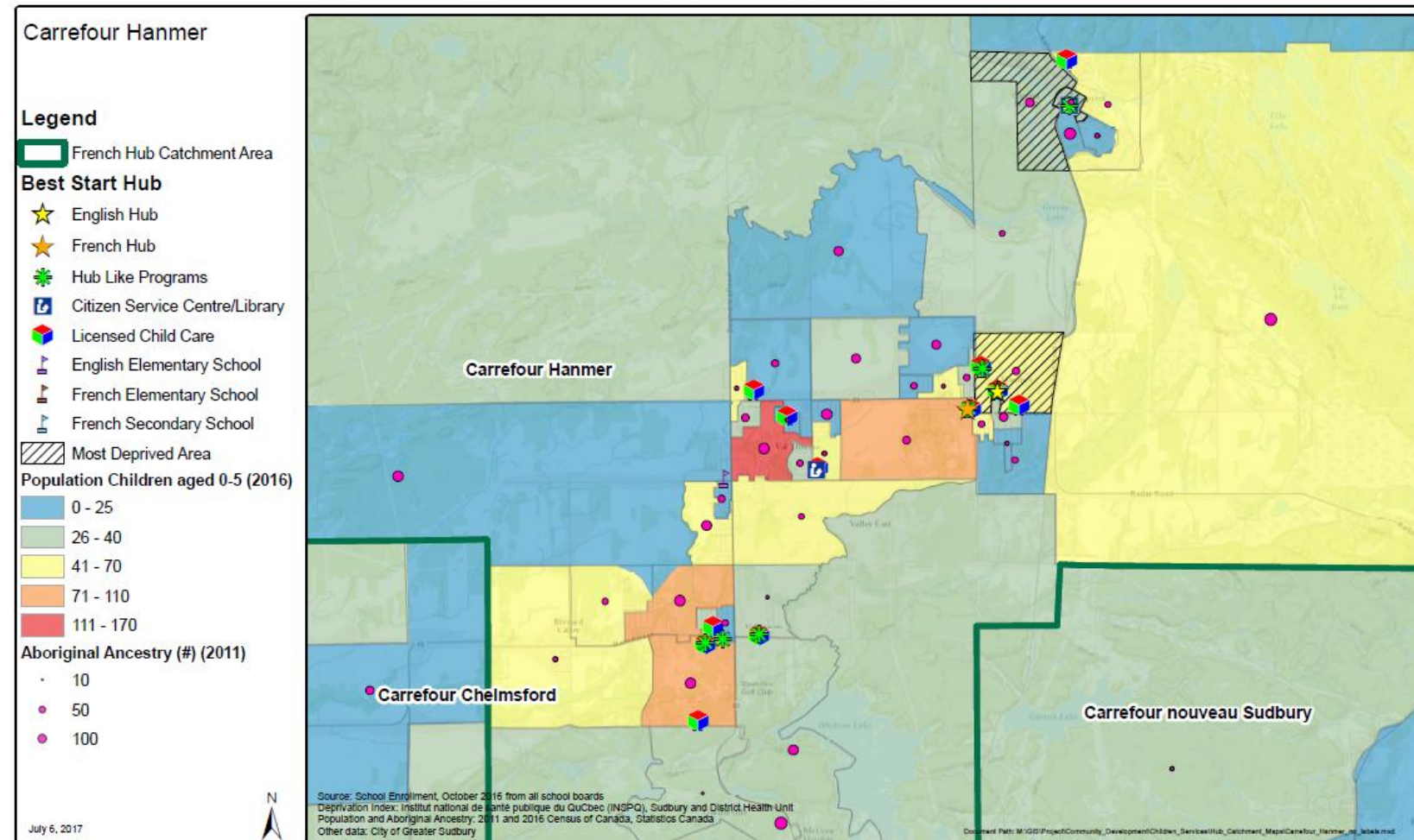


**Levack**



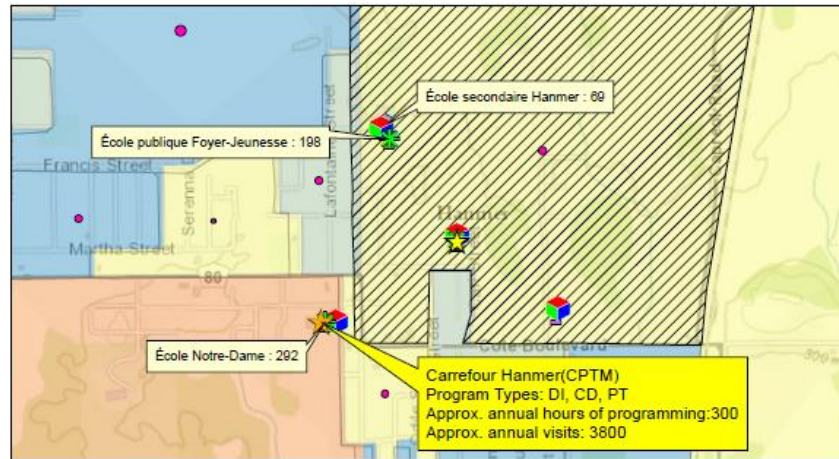
## Capreol, Hanmer, Val Caron and Val Therese Catchment - Francophone

- The child population in this catchment is high and services will continue to be distributed across the area, in the current Hub location and in the additional 6 schools.

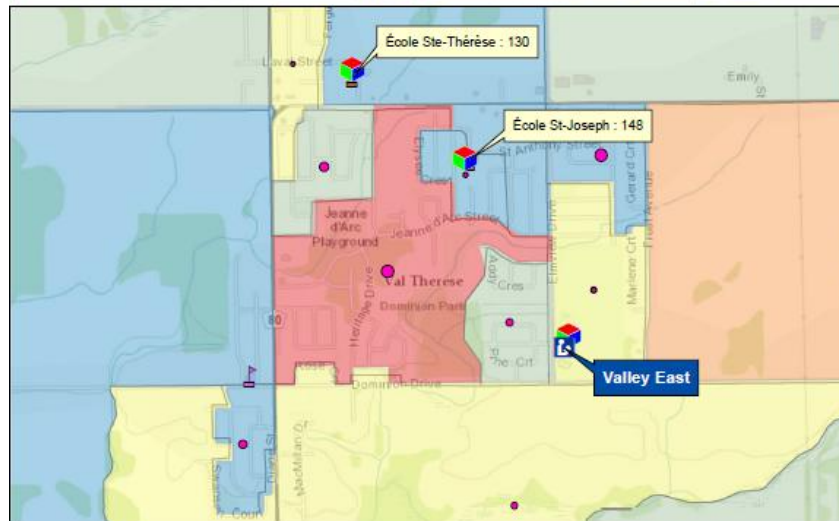
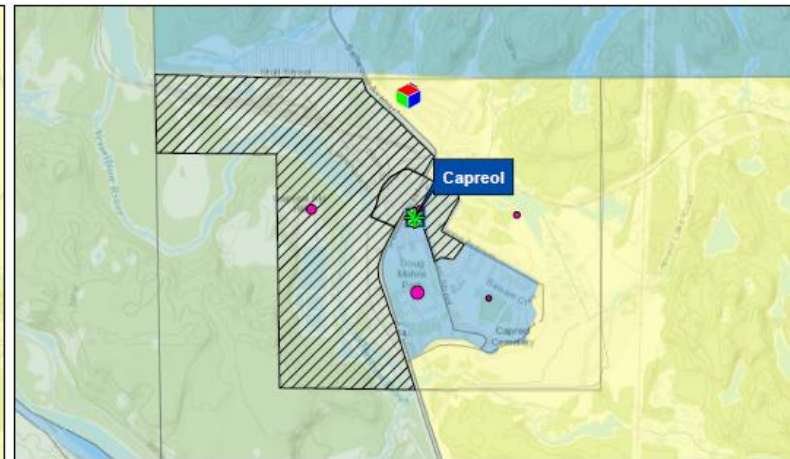




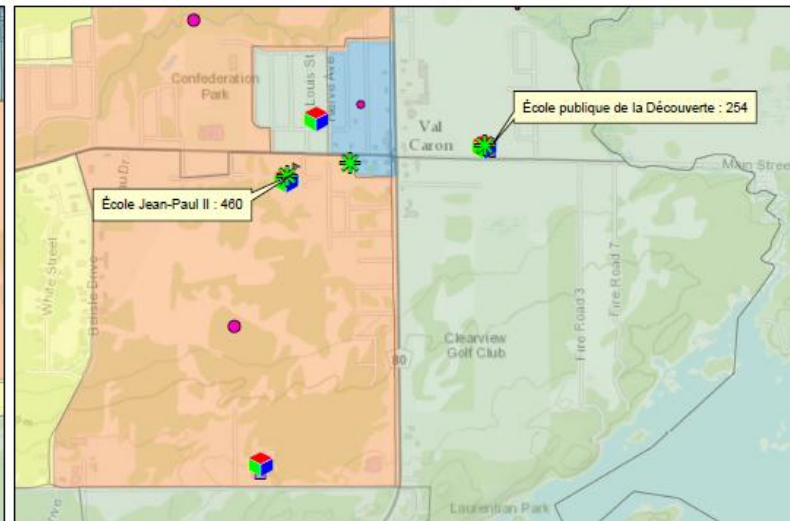
Hanmer



Capreol



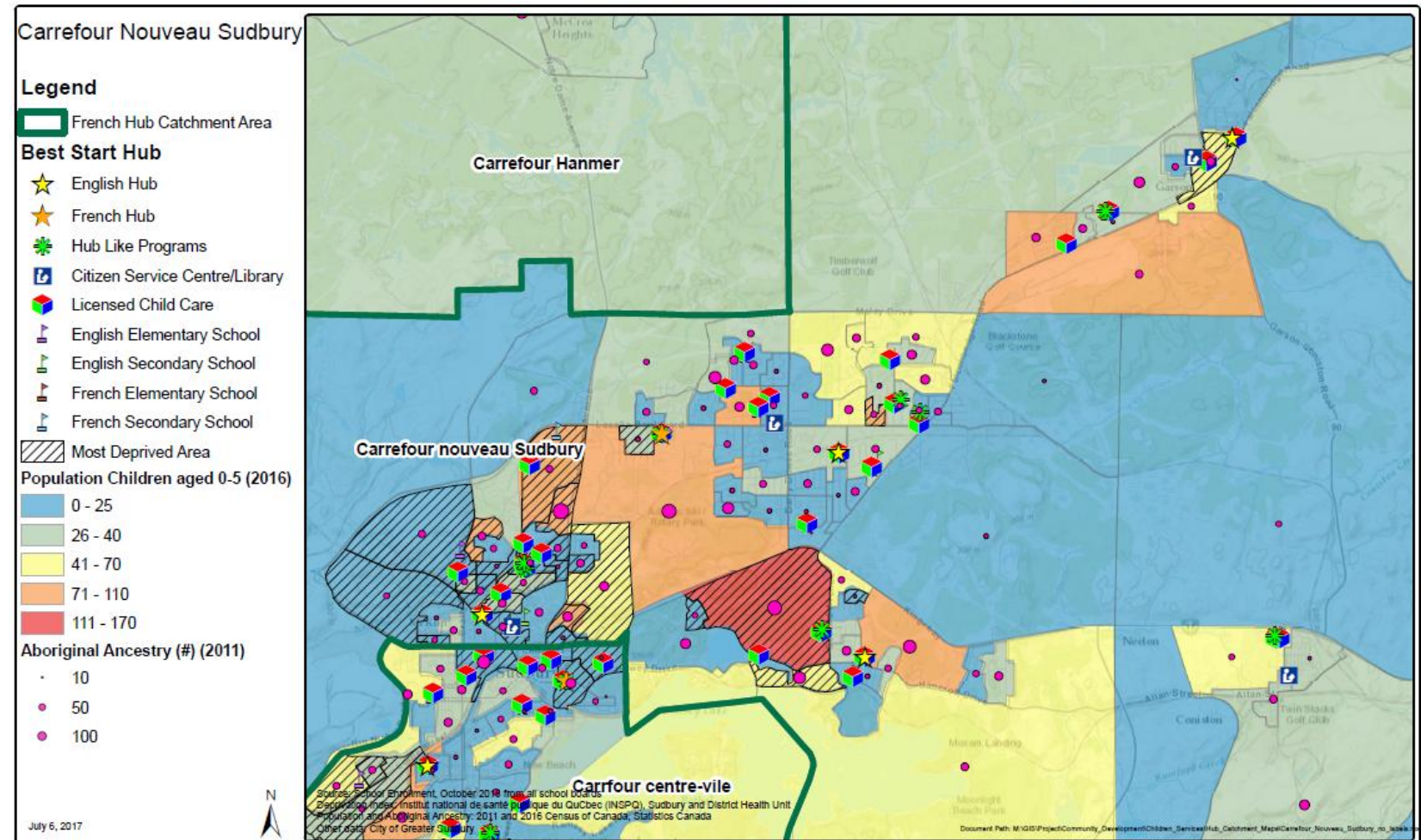
Val –Therese



Val Caron

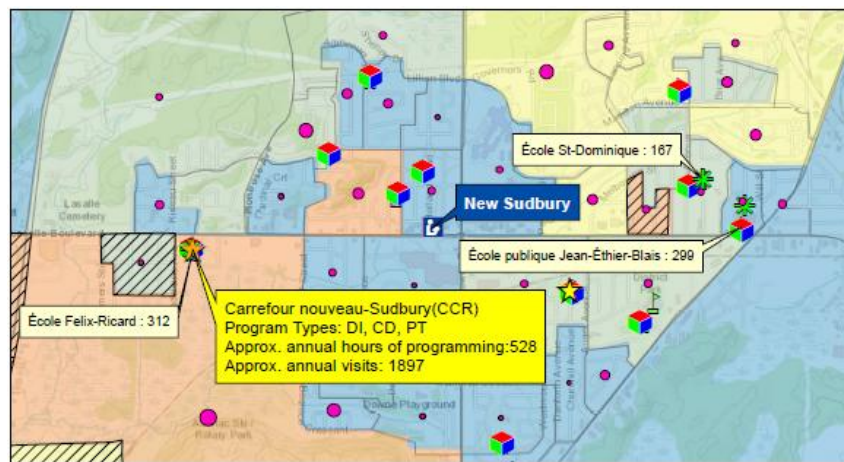
## Donovan/Flour Mill, Garson, Minnow Lake and New Sudbury Catchment - Francophone

- This catchment was extended to include Garson and Coniston as families from these areas access Carrefour Nouveau-Sudbury for Francophone services.
- With this extended catchment, partners will consider how best to service families from 7 area schools.

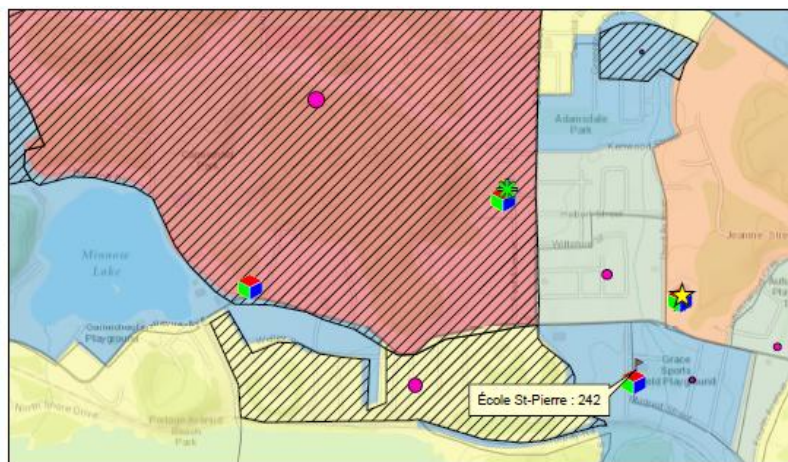




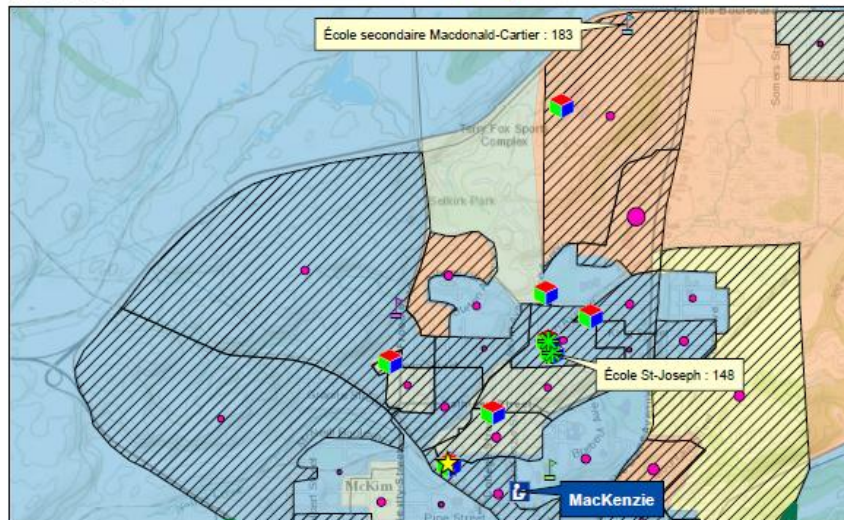
**Nouveau-Sudbury**



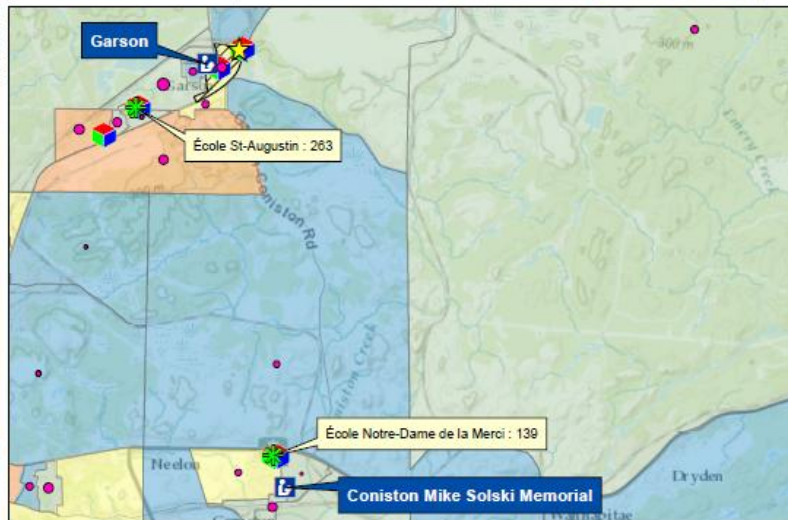
**Minnow Lake**



**Donovan/Flour Mill**



**Garson**



## Provider Profiles – Asset Based Collaborative Planning

For the most part, providers will remain consistent in each catchment area. All agencies are prepared to shift service provisions to align with the core services of OEYCFCs. All are committed to continuing as part of a system of services; work together to provide responsive, accessible flexible services to children and families with renewed intent and mutual respect.

Within the context of a system of services, providers, strengths and specialties are acknowledged.

The following profiles of each existing provider will help identify the strengths of those organizations to ensure families have access to responsive services.



*Better Beginning, Better Futures (BBBF) was created to participate in one of the most ambitious research projects on the long-term impacts of early childhood development programming ever in Canada. The BBBF model is designed to prevent young children living in low income, high risk neighbourhoods from experiencing poor developmental outcomes. BBBF provides English, French and Aboriginal programming. Young parents also receive targeted programs at BBBF.*

*Currently, BBBF operates two hubs: the Aboriginal Hub and the Donovan Hub. Serving this catchment and these specialized groups successfully are BBBF's strengths.*

*Presently, BBBF funding represents approximately 25% of Sudbury's investment in the early years. Considering this and the Donovan/Flour Mill service level, BBBF could continue to serve this catchment at the same level. Additional responsibility will be to provide community-wide outreach to areas of higher Aboriginal population.*

*Outside of the hubs, BBBF has focused on services for children 4 to 8 years old. The transformation of these programs to align with OEYCFC core services is currently happening. This organization has been amazingly open and willing to change/adapt.*





**Child & Community Resources**  
**Ressources pour l'Enfance  
et la Communauté**

*Child & Community Resources/Ressources pour l'Enfance et la Communauté (CCR/REC) is a charitable organization that provides services and community supports to parents, children and professionals to enhance and support the inclusion, integration, and wellbeing of children across the north. Formerly, the Ontario Early Years Centre, CCR operates seven hubs: le Carrefour centre-ville, le Carrefour nouveau-Sudbury, the Chelmsford Hub, the Copper Cliff Hub, the Garson Hub, the Minnow Lake Hub and the New Sudbury Hub which represents almost 40% of Sudbury's investment in the early years.*

*CCR hub consultants "live" Ontario's pedagogy. Hiring Registered Early Childhood Educators in all seven hubs and creating a culture of learning and reflection, ensures families are consistently engaged in their children's play, early learning is supported and connections are made regarding inclusion and the transition into school. CCR excels at the delivery of what will be OEYCFC core services.*

*CCR will be used by the system in the catchments they already work in to deliver core services in school settings.*

**LIVING ONTARIO'S PEDAGOGY**



*CPTM is a large organization offering French and English child care and family support programs and currently operates two hubs: le Carrefour Chelmsford and le Carrefour Hanmer. CPTM also provides French immersion programming.*

*This organization provides a variety of programming from community stores and physical literacy to car safety and cooking groups. CPTM believes in community and promotes the French language and culture in an easy fashion. CPTM has a focus on resiliency, relationships and tapping into children's natural sense of inquiry. The child is viewed within the context of the family, at CPTM.*

*CPTM is connected to the is community and has a specialty of understanding what families want, especially Francophone families and being responsive to that need.*

**BEING RESPONSIVE**



*Jubilee Heritage Family Resources is a dynamic organization that has grown from the Sudbury Women's Centre and the Daycare Committee of the Association of United Ukrainian Canadians. The result has been an amalgamation of women's equality and inclusive beliefs.*

*Jubilee offers child care (centre based, school sites, home, and Aboriginal) as well as currently operates two hubs: the South End Hub and the West End Hub. Jubilee views the family within the context of the extended family and community. This is reflected by offering programs such as community gardening and retirement home visiting. This organization is connected to their central catchment and has developed partnerships with the native health centre, Native friendship centre, Aboriginal Hub, theatre, schools, science centre and playground associations.*

*It is common to see Jubilee children and families in the community, walking, exploring or participating in the events of the day. Being community minded and their connectivity are Jubilee's specialties.*

COMMUNITY MINDED



**Our Children, Our Future**  
**Nos enfants, notre avenir**

*Our Children, Our Future/Nos enfants, notre avenir (OCOF/Nena) is one of the largest child care providers in the City of Greater Sudbury with both French and English sites and provides programs and services for families with young children. These programs target a specific population of families challenged with living in poverty or isolation through funding from Public Health Agency of Canada.*

*Many of the programs seek to alleviate some of the stress that food security places on families. They give short term support by providing food, milk, diapers, infant formula, clothing and transportation but strive to build capacity for long term solutions.*

*OCOF/Nena remains committed to securing a better future for children and their families through positive learning, socialization, parent education, nutrition and food programs and is willing to provide these programs and services in the most at risk areas. Within the local early years system, this will be OCOF/Nena's specialty and contribution.*

SUPPORTING THOSE IN NEED

## Section Five

# Communication Strategies

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# Multi-Pronged Communication Strategies

A multi-pronged approach is necessary when considering communication strategies, especially one that communicates such transformation. The City of Greater Sudbury’s OEYCFC Communication Strategies ensure open, constant, consistent and transparent communication with each of the key stakeholder groups. The following is an overview of the different communication strategies and progress to date:

Key Stakeholder	Activities	When	Progress Summary
Direct Contact Staff	Assess what they know/what questions they have	March -April	Completed March 14, OEYCFC Planning Group
	Information session/reflect on guidelines & core services	April	April 12, OEYCFC Planning Group
	Community of Practice – reflections (Wednesday Afternoons)	May, June, November	Completed May 3, May 31 and June 28, Contact Staff C of P Group <i>Additional date(s) to be planned from November</i>
	Tip sheets / Q & A (+ info for families)	September	Drafted June 28, Contact Staff C of P Group
	Reassess knowledge and adjust messages	October	Pending
Key Partners (Schools & Child Care, etc)	Information sessions	Monthly	Planning Network, second Thursday monthly
	Posters/Newsletter/Report Card	November	Pending
	Community of Practice – reflections on model, change management	July, October	Final draft presented July 13 <i>Final plan and Ministry feedback October meeting</i>
	Community Service Committee of City Council	Jan-Aug 2017	Information Report January 2017, Report and presentation September 17
Boards of Directors	Invite to October Community of Practice Give understanding of model, place in system, risk, impact and accountability, change management	October, February, June 2018	Pending
	Optional presentations	As requested	November 23, 2016, OCOF/Nena Board
Families / Public	Assess what they know/what questions do they have	April On-going	Completed May 3
	“did you know....” Emails, newsletter, eBlasts, facebook posts	Starting in September	Pending
	“coming soon” on website, posters, etc	October	Pending
	Face to face conversations	On-going	Pending
	Reassess and adjust	November	Pending





## Section Six

# Accountability Framework

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## Building On An Accountability Framework

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It is very important to create an accountability framework as work plans are being developed. Having a full understanding of the desired outcomes as well as qualitative and quantitative indicators ensures that all partners are striving towards the same vision, clarifies their responsibilities and expects regular reporting. It keeps partners engaged and accountable, and gives ownership of the plan and its success to the partners.

A thoughtful and well-planned accountability framework will align with ministry outcomes, set targets for set service levels, will measure impact and track quality improvement. It is the hope that standardized service reports, a comprehensive evaluation plan and a mechanism to demonstrate the impact of programs/services and progress towards outcomes will result.

From the Planning Network vision and mission, an overarching goal was developed that is to have equally invested partners planning a

progressively integrated system of service that “lives” Ontario’s early years pedagogy. Equally invested partners refers to partners who contribute to planning, share data and parental feedback as well as ensure communication within their organization that supports the work of the Planning Network. A progressively integrated system was defined as being inclusive, accessible, collaboratively planned, flexible, responsive and seamless. The Planning Network partners have placed the four foundations of Ontario’s pedagogy as central to their work because the ideas of belonging, well being, engagement and expression provide a valuable base for reconsidering the way this system serves families and works together.

The following **accountability principles** have been and will continue to be applied:

1. **Expectations** are predefined and understood.
2. Decisions are made in a reasonable way **informed by evidence**.

3. **Feedback** and criticism are embraced and criticism is viewed as an opportunity to improve. This doesn’t mean that all criticism or feedback is acted upon, but it should be considered.

4. Responsibility is accepted. This is not limited to meeting performance expectations, but also for the process in **achieving outcomes**.

5. Continuous improvement is institutionalized. Organizations must **continuously adapt** to environmental changes to ensure processes are efficient and effective.

### (Source 3)

Expectations are becoming clear with defined core services and outlined processes. Decisions to date on the transformation to OEYCFC have been based on the local needs assessment. The Planning Network for Sudbury Families continues to reflect on this process and invites feedback and criticism to challenge common thinking. The accountability framework, being developed will define the obligation to take responsibility for contributing to the process and achieving outcomes.

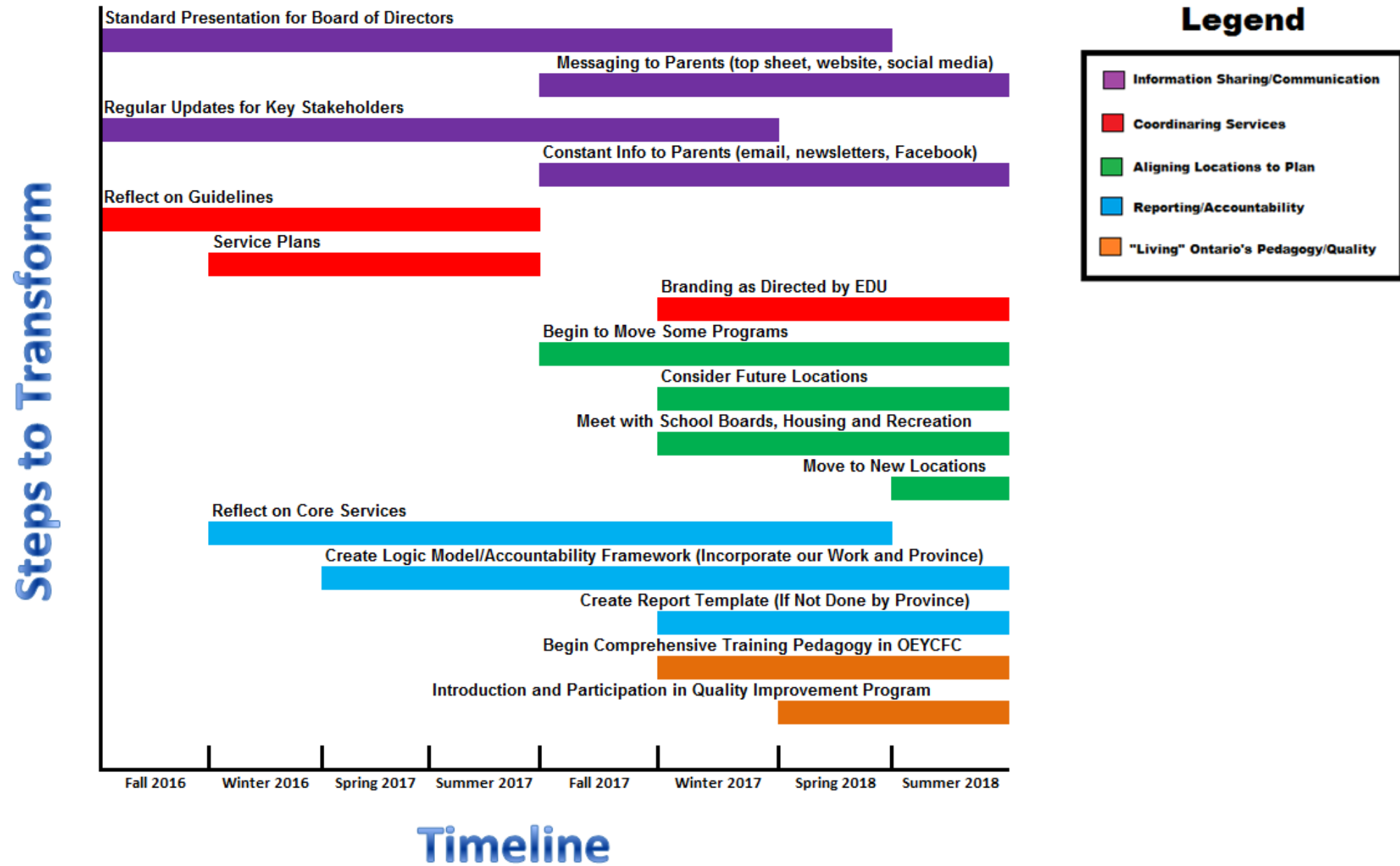
# Qualitative and Quantitative Indicators

To date, the OEYCFC Planning Group has considered and began to document the qualitative and quantitative indicators of the effort invested in program and service delivery. Further reflection will be needed to evaluate the effect or measure the impact within the context of quality improvement (documenting and accessing learning, changes in behaviour and measuring a cultural shift or circumstance). The following chart captures the work to date done on an accountability framework.

	QUANTITY HOW MUCH WE DO	QUALITY HOW WELL WE DO IT	
		OBSERVABLE	REPORTABLE
EFFORT	# hours Program mix # participants (adult & children) # of weekends & evening programs increased assessment skills # Warm referrals are being made Staff following up with families Strong relationships (parent-child, parent-staff, staff-child, parent-parent, staff-staff) Improved program quality Increased conversations and consultations Obvious trust Staff self-determination; professional growth % RECEs in program One child one plan Equitable (data based)	Welcoming environment; Families are greeted Inviting thoughtful environment; cheerful Strength Based / Age appropriate/family appropriate Resources are available Ready for any family with food, transportation, info Parents represented in the room Inclusive, culturally sensitive and language specific Documentation visible; Obvious intentionality Various ways to share information are used Families participate fully Parents use early learning language; Parents engage in meaningful conversations are comfortable with knowledge Families feel at home, help themselves Evidence of nutritional and physical literacy Practices that promote resilience Increased reflective practice Parents are more engaged in their child's play	Family orientation Parents return to programs Staff mentoring and on-site support Staff give and receive authentic feedback Quality student placement; Parents request consultations Families express themselves Parents have knowledge of play based learning Families have an understand our vision Staff seeks training, professional learning; Staff is confident and has a sense of self The website is used as a hub of information Social media presence Staff is familiar with partner services Programs are responsive to specific needs Parents help make decisions Increased staff motivation, skill development, capacity
	LEARNING	BEHAVIOUR	CIRCUMSTANCE
EFFECT IS ANYONE BETTER OFF?	CLIENT -PARENT & CHILD		
	PROGRAM -PROFESSIONALS		
	SYSTEM -COMMUNITY		



# Transformation Plan



# Appendix A

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## Sudbury's Early Years System Vision:

Reflections on Collective Leadership,  
Early Years Pedagogy and Authentic Practice

Planning Network for Sudbury Families 2016



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Community Champion

## Introduction

This document was prepared by members of the Planning Network for Sudbury Families, formerly the City of Greater Sudbury Best Start Integration & Planning Network to describe our continuing journey of building an integrated system of services for children and families. These services are focused on early learning and development that support families in building rich, healthy relationships and creating welcoming environments. It is meant to be a living document, giving us direction yet still allowing reflection, responsiveness and flexibility.

The process of preparing this document included reflecting on the journey and telling our story to date. We are celebrating our progress, reflecting on new research in early learning, and further developing our vision based on best emerging practices. It is not meant to prescribe the exact path we will take, but rather sets the direction and encourages the exploration of new ways of thinking and keeping our focus on building authentic relationships with children, families and partners.

All through this document, we have provided examples of our present work to illustrate and strengthen our narrative. It should be noted that these examples are true and happening but are not yet common practice throughout our community. Though our vision is practiced in many pockets throughout our community, it is our hope and plan that our Network can lead service transformation that will be reflective in best practices across settings throughout our community.

This document is meant for all those who influence the lives of children in our community – specifically professionals from education / early learning, health, family support and interventions. It can be used as a guide for all professionals in building relationships and supporting leaders in crafting and directing their collaborative efforts, clarifying expectations and identifying priorities. It encourages us to create communities of practice and challenges us to think broadly about a system model and philosophy. It identifies the contributions each partner can make to the system and to influence internal organizational change. Our goal is collective leadership for systemic change in the way we view and work with children, families and with each other.

### A Note about Terminology

**An Integrated System of Children and Family Services:** When we refer to this System we are referring to the system in the broadest sense. Licensed Child Care programs, Best Start Hubs, Family Resource / Pre and Post Natal Support programs and Schools are early learning programs. Also included in this system are health, recreation, and specialized health and developmental services.

**Early Learning:** When we refer to early learning we are referring to any time from birth to 12 years old when children experience meaningful learning. It includes all programs and environments designed for children that focuses on learning through exploration, play and inquiry, includes families as participants or contributors and plays an important role in supporting children's learning, development, health and well-being.

**Professionals:** When we refer to professionals we are including all those who influence the lives of children in our community – professionals who work directly with children and families as well as leaders and support staff from education, health, family support, prevention and intervention.



## Chapter 1 – The Evolution of our Thinking

### Our Past – *This is our story.*

Professionals in Greater Sudbury have a long history of working in collaboration. The following **milestones** demonstrate our major accomplishments and projects:

#### 1999

- Early Years Challenge Fund
  - Creation of Ontario Early Years Centres
- Release of The Early Years Report by Fraser Mustard and Margaret McCain

#### 2000 - 2004

- Sudbury District Catholic School Board develops “Blueprint for Learning”, a pilot project implementing the vision of having seamless school days combining kindergarten and child care and engaging families in a school community
- Northern Framework is written to guide the integration of municipal child care and children services
- Existing planning groups are brought together to form the Best Start Network

#### 2005 - 2009

- Development of the first Best Start community plan
- Child care expansion creates 44% increase in spaces, far exceeding the Ministry target
- Municipalities received Best Start funds based on the child care expansion
- Selection of Hub locations happens collaboratively at the Best Start Network
- City of Greater Sudbury hires 5 Best Start staff dedicated to the Best Start initiative and expansion
- 12 Hubs are open to families!
- Standard data collection for Hubs is used (CIMS)
- Each school board assigns one representative to the Best Start Network!
- The school boards were given \$14,000 per hub within their schools for minor capital expenses
- College of Early Childhood Educators was established
- Child care expansion in schools continues!
- Child Care Registry is established
- Research Network is created to connect researchers and community projects

- The Hubs become the “venue” for a variety of services
- Child Care Resources (now, Child & Community Resources) includes training opportunities for Hub staff in the training calendar

#### 2010 - 2014

- Creation of an Aboriginal Advisory Committee
- Sudbury participates in Community Action Research / Community Integration Leader Project 2011
- Aboriginal child care program is created
- Child & Community Resources develops the Consultative Leadership Team Model which was adopted by the City of Greater Sudbury in 2013
- Best Start Network designated 2011 ‘A Learning Year’ to review membership, processes and projects, redefine integration, and identify the core functions of the system
- The Best Start Network is renamed ‘The Best Start Integration & Planning Network’
- Consultative Quality Improvement Program is launched by the City of Greater Sudbury and supports improvement through mentoring and consultations
- Our System of Hubs now includes 15 Hubs
- Sudbury participates in Community Action Research / Community Integration Leader Project 2013
- The Best Start Integration & Planning Network develop Neighbourhood Teams
- Child care moves to the Ministry of Education
- An extensive Capacity Building Professional Learning Plan is developed with key partnerships with both community colleges, professional associations, special needs partners and school boards

#### 2015 - Present

- The Child Care and Early Years Act comes into effect
- Ministry of Education mandate CMSMs to become Early Years System Managers

Since 2005, the Best Start Network, now the Planning Network for Sudbury Families and its committees have made great progress meeting their shared mission to promote healthy childhood development by supporting families and children through a progressively responsive, flexible, comprehensive and seamless system.

Over the years, there has been significant research which has contributed to provincial policy and pedagogical approach in early years legislation and practice. From 1999 to 2015, publications such as the three *Early Years Studies* by Fraser Mustard, Margaret McCain, *Early Learning for Every Child Today* by the Best Start Expert Panel on Early Learning, and *With Our Best Future in Mind* by Charles Pascal were all formative of the early learning landscape of today. Full Day Kindergarten Program, Modernizing Child Care in Ontario, *Ontario Early Years Policy Framework*, *Think, Feel, Act and How Does Learning Happen?* from the Ministry of Education have been adopted as program expectations across the province.

Using this research, we are ready to take another look at how we work together to extend and expand our understanding of early learning, more specifically, what we want to accomplish in our programs and the shared outcomes we want for families. Most relevant to our system is *How Does Learning Happen? Ontario's Pedagogy for the Early Years* (HDLH) – a professional learning resource guide about early learning and relationships with young children and families. Our work with this document has and will continue to have a significant impact on our collective leadership. We believe that the four foundations upon which HDLH is based are universally applicable across services for clients and students as well as our professionals in their workplaces.

In the past, the Best Start Hubs have been independently central to our model. With this new approach, we could no longer view the work of the Best Start Hubs in isolation outside of the service system. In 2013, we launched a collaborative and thoughtful system review unlike any others we have attempted to date. It took time, intention, reflection, openness, willingness and trust. It has been transformational, shifting our thinking and making us reconsider our practice together. HDLH and its focus on relationships has inspired us to continue this review and work together to articulate a shared vision of equally invested partners planning flexible and seamless services throughout the community.

Because of this, there is an additional responsibility to know families and the neighbourhoods in which they live. All professionals working in each neighbourhood are invited to participate in collective leadership and building a sense of responsibility for children and families in a seamless, neighbourhood based system.

We continue to reflect on the services we provide as a community and our role in collectively leading this system. HDLH inspires us to question our methods and practices in order to consider, "As we question, research, reflect, respond and co-construct our understanding of the world around us with children and families, we gain new perspectives and new and more complex questions arise."<sup>1</sup> These more complex questions have led us to deepen our understanding of how to cultivate authentic relationships and best serve children and families; HDLH will inspire our continued evolution of thoughts and practices. It asks us to consider and reflect upon our image of children, families and each other. It reminds us that professionals, parents and children are capable and competent and full of potential. Our approach to working with families and each other needs to evolve to reflect that understanding.

1. *How Does Learning Happen? Ontario's Pedagogy for the Early Years*, page 5

## Our Present –

### *Embedding the Four Foundations of 'How Does Learning Happen?'*

*How Does Learning Happen?* describes “four foundational conditions that are important for children to grow and flourish: Belonging, Well-Being, Engagement, and Expression. These foundations, or ways of being, are a vision for all children’s future potential and a view of what they should experience each and every day.”<sup>2</sup>

We have placed the four foundations of Belonging, Well-Being, Engagement, and Expression as central to our work because they provide a valuable base for us in reconsidering the way we plan and serve children and families, and work together as partners.



2. *How Does Learning Happen? Ontario's Pedagogy for the Early Years*, page 7.



## Belonging

Belonging refers to a sense of connectedness to others, an individual's experiences of being valued, of forming relationships with others and making contributions as part of a group, a community, the natural world.<sup>3</sup>

### What this means for us:

We cultivate authentic relationships and connections to create a sense of belonging among partners and between children, adults, and the world around them. Professionals build meaningful relationships with children and families, connecting with them and recognizing their uniqueness. All programs and services create environments where children and families can be themselves and feel accepted. We actively look for opportunities to reduce barriers to access, provide opportunities for peer support, encourage voluntary participation, build equity and respect for diversity and, ensure safety and security.

It is imperative that, as a system, we develop practices and environments that respect and support inclusion and a sense of belonging for all children and their families. Our Network is committed to meeting the needs of families while striving to be inclusive and help reduce social inequities. Knowing the make-up of the neighbourhood served and creating a sense of community is critical to this way of practice. Building trusting relationships and encouraging participation in community programs is paramount for all families to have a sense of belonging.

## A Note on Inclusion

We believe "When educators (professionals) believe that all children (and families) have the right to participate and when they use inclusive approaches, they are more likely to find ways to reduce barriers, understand how each child learns, and create environments and experiences that are meaningful and engaging. Those in leadership roles in early years programs play a critical role in supporting staff, accessing supports, and creating a culture that ensures inclusive practices."<sup>4</sup>

In our work together on networks, committees, task groups, group studies, and in staff teams, we value the contribution of each individual and of their discipline. We create environments where each member of the team can feel equally invested in the success of the program and/or project. Committee chairs, agency leaders and the system manager set the tone, by seeking consensus, developing shared goals, focusing on objectives, and the role of each member of the team.



3. *How Does Learning Happen? Ontario's Pedagogy for the Early Years*, page 7.

4. *How Does Learning Happen? Ontario's Pedagogy for the Early Years*, page 36.



## Well-Being

Well-being refers to the importance of physical and mental health and wellness. It incorporates capacities such as self-care, sense of self, and self-regulation skills.<sup>5</sup>

### What this means for us:

We work with families to nurture children's healthy development and support family well-being. We work to build a sense of self, community and wellness for both children and their parents. We offer and link to programs and supports to meet the full range of health and welfare needs of the children and families in our programs. We ensure that the links are created between education and health and we promote wellness, resilience, prevention and lifelong learning.

We believe that in order for professionals and partners to foster the well-being of families, we must ensure that they have the opportunities, support and tools that empower them. We are respectful and kind to each other in our work together; choosing times and location settings that work for the group, providing healthy food and snacks, and always making people feel welcome. We value the time and contributions of our colleagues and staff and make working together enjoyable, collaborative and productive. We make a special effort to recognize the contributions of our partners with appreciation events. These events give individual and group praise and lift the public image and perceived value of the professions within early learning which again can contribute to their professional well-being.

We provide high quality responsive professional learning opportunities for all of our partners and staff. We believe these opportunities build confidence and capacity and therefore contribute to their professional well-being.

## Engagement

Engagement suggests a state of being involved and focused. When children are able to explore the world around them with their natural curiosity and exuberance, they are fully engaged. Through this type of play and inquiry, they develop skills such as problem solving, creative thinking, and innovating, which are essential for learning and success in school and beyond.<sup>6</sup>

### What this means for us:

We provide environments and experiences that engage children in active, creative, and meaningful exploration, play, and inquiry and involve families in a way that is inclusive, respectful and authentic. Parents are also engaged as essential partners in planning and influencing programming and services. They are engaged in services through regular communication and having meaningful influence over programming and common practice. It is also important to engage parents in their children's experience by supporting families to extend their child's learning to the home setting and by understanding and being excited about their children's growth.

We engage a range of partners and welcome each to bring their experiences, expertise and perspective to the table and to actively participate and contribute in our work together. As partners and colleagues we empower each partner to be actively involved in bringing forward and exploring new approaches to challenges and ideas.

5. *How Does Learning Happen? Ontario's Pedagogy for the Early Years*, page 7.

6. *How Does Learning Happen? Ontario's Pedagogy for the Early Years*, page 7.

## Expression

Expression or communication (to be heard, as well as to listen) may take many different forms. Through their bodies, words, and use of materials, children develop capacities for increasingly complex communication. Opportunities to explore materials support creativity, problem solving, and mathematical behaviors. Language-rich environments support growing communication skills, which are foundational for literacy.<sup>7</sup>

### What this means for us:

We create environments and activities that nurture relationships with children and families, allowing them to express themselves freely through words, actions and the use of a variety of materials. Families are often asked to share their views, opinions and feedback. Their voices are heard and valued. Ideally, they are engaged in planning and involved in reciprocal communication with professionals and other families.

Seeing children as capable and powerful communicators from birth onwards means recognizing them as active social partners who are able to initiate and respond to communication exchanges.<sup>8</sup>

There are many participants at our planning tables and of the multi-disciplinary teams. Great effort has gone into building trusting relationships where all participants have opportunities to contribute to program development, partnership agreements and community planning. We keep agendas open and allow space for ideas to come forward. We respect partners' abilities and experience to build the level of trust in our groups. We create a safe place for new ideas, reflections and even challenges. We will ensure that each contribution is welcomed, and ideas are valued, however they are expressed. We use a variety of ways to allow our colleagues and staff to express themselves, in roundtable discussions, brainstorming, through online discussion groups and through social media. We also actively check-in regularly with survey tools, small group or private discussions.



7. *How Does Learning Happen? Ontario's Pedagogy for the Early Years*, page 8.

8. *How Does Learning Happen? Ontario's Pedagogy for the Early Years*, page 41.



## Our Future – *The Journey Continues: Building Authentic Relationships*

Underlying the four foundations, Belonging, Well-Being, Engagement and Expression, is the development of authentic relationships. Authentic relationships must be present at every level – between funder and funded, between system partners, between and within agencies, and between professionals and the families they serve, between families being served, and between the children in any program.

As our community continues to embrace this new pedagogy and the four foundations, we appreciate the importance of building relationships and how our images of both the child and the parent impacts the work we do with them. Reflecting together on our past practices as well as on our vision for the future allows us to value the work we already have done and helps us focus more clearly on the work ahead of us. We recognize the importance of showing up with open dispositions – with a clear voice and trust.

### In the next two chapters, we will examine:

- How we work and reflect together, embracing a collective leadership approach and strengthening our commitment to providing seamless, responsive services efficiently, through authentic relationships and understanding our partners, families and neighbourhoods (Chapter 2), and
- How we lead the creation of rich learning environments and authentic practice based on a strong belief in how children learn, how family health and stability is fundamental to setting the stage for life-long learning and the importance of building authentic, caring relationships between our professionals and children and their families (Chapter 3).

We are pleased with and proud of the significant progress we have made on this journey because of our willingness to question the status quo. Our questioning has led us to deepen our understanding of how to cultivate authentic relationships, make connections and best plan for children and families. This document articulates our journey and will inspire our continued evolution of thoughts and practice. It asks us to remember and reflect on our image of children, families and of each other. It reminds us that professionals, parents, and children are capable and competent and rich in experience. Our approach to leading the work with families and how we collaborate with each other needs to evolve to reflect that understanding. The process of our collective reflections has become a 'community of practice'; a new way to plan and lead which we have labeled 'collective leadership'. We continue to build our professional relationships and define our individual and collective roles in planning together at both system and neighbourhood levels.

As we review the impact of our collective leadership, we note a significant change in practice within many of our organizations. This document will identify tangible actions that we believe will move us closer to becoming the integrated system in our vision. We are intentionally 'growing our leaders' and supporting professionals in continuous reflection and professional learning. As a group, we are exploring program standards and accountability measures in an effort to provide consistently flexible and responsive services and make the concept of community schools a reality.







## Chapter 2 How we work together – Collective Leadership

In our community, professional partnerships are built on trust and mutual respect, building shared leadership and collective impact. To us this means more than combining resources, implementing programs together or making specific contributions to a process or event/activity. It means reflecting on our practices together, considering intent and uptake. It means using our past experience, trusting our partners and knowing what families need and how children learn. Our collective leadership is based on these professional partnerships and how we interact on a regular basis. We are called upon during these times of such significant change, transition and growth to reflect on how we plan to lead together.

### Our Partners

In our experience, collective leadership builds on individual organizations having both a specific role to play and a contribution to make. These partners also actively participate in joint planning to align services more seamlessly, with common pedagogy, and valuing a variety of professionals. The following is our model described through a basic definition of the roles of the key partner groups and description of the contributions each makes to the system.



*Diagram: Child Care Centres, Hubs/Family Support programs and Schools as early learning specialist programs form the closest supports for families. They are supported by, and work with specialized health and child development partners to ensure families have access to any service they need. The System as a whole is supported by a planning Network locally the Planning Network for Sudbury Families, Neighbourhood Planning Teams and the System Manager through planning, policy and funding. The Integrated System includes all of the people, organizations and networks that contribute to helping young children grow and flourish.*

## Early Education / Early Learning, Schools and Family Supports

Licensed Child Care, schools and Family Support partners have similar shared contributions to the system, including but not limited to:

- Creating an environment where families truly experience every door as the right door
- Working in partnership with other service providers to implement and support childrens' individual plans across services
- Collaborating with partners to support referrals and transitions for children between programs (ie. Best Start Hub to child care to school)
- Early screening, identification and referrals as necessary
- Providing leadership in pedagogical understanding and support
- Building capacity within the field of early learning locally
- Sharing their professional learning opportunities with partners.

### 1. Licensed Child Care

Licensed Child Care provides high quality, inclusive, licensed early learning and care environments and programs for children from birth to age twelve. Professionals from these agencies include Registered Early Childhood Educators as well as other qualified staff. Together these agencies have been actively transforming the way they plan and deliver their programs, thoughtfully considering and incorporating into their practice the new pedagogy described in *How Does Learning Happen?*, meeting the *Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice for RECEs*<sup>9</sup> and legislation<sup>10</sup>; developing leadership capacity in their agencies; and working to promote public awareness on the value of early learning and early years professionals.

### Community School Concept

"Schools are a traditional meeting place for community residents and the community school concept builds on that relationship. The community school model is based on the idea that children are better able to achieve their educational and developmental potential when there is a working relationship among family, teachers, local service agencies and the general community. Community schools can strengthen the parent/school relationship and encourage a wide range of activity in a neighbourhood. Parents, community, students, and service delivery agencies can come together in the community school's welcoming environment, nurturing a greater sense of inter-dependence and community spirit. These schools provide gathering places where adults and children are provided opportunities for educational, social, cultural and recreational activities."<sup>11</sup>

9. College of Early Childhood Educators (CECE), *Code of ethics and standards of practice*, 2011.

10. Ministry of Education, *Child Care and Early Years Act*, 2015.

11. Manitoba Education, Retrieved from: <http://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/cspi/documents/brochure.pdf>.

## 2. Schools

School environments provide high quality, welcoming, safe and inclusive education and supports for children and their families. This comprehensive service starts with a successful transition to full day kindergarten, moving through the elementary grades and finishing by supporting a successful transition into high school.

School boards support and promote the value of FDK teaching teams, embracing the strength of each of the professions and providing programs where children are fully engaged in learning. Schools also work with a range of partners both in and outside of school hours to provide a well-rounded education and care and continuum of supports for children and families.

Though we believe programs and services should be offered in a variety of settings within a neighbourhood to improve access and awareness of supports, we will reflect on the concepts of community schools and Ontario's community hubs.

## 3. Family Supports

This broad sector includes a range of free programs and services for families including Best Start Hubs (which are presently funded by Ontario Early Years Centre, and Family Support/resource Program, funding through the Ministry of Education and the City of Greater Sudbury), Family Resource programs (CAPC and CPNP funded by Public Health Agency Canada), Better Beginnings Better Futures programs (funded by the Ministry of Education), and the Public Libraries.

These programs provide high quality, welcoming and responsive early learning and family support environments and programs through a variety of professionals. These agencies have been actively transforming the way they deliver and plan their programs by thoughtfully considering and incorporating into their practice the new pedagogy and the needs of families. They provide consistent core and responsive services and are flexible with moving resources from one neighbourhood to another to allow services to be delivered where they are needed.

### Community Hubs in Ontario

([www.ontario.ca/page/community-hubs](http://www.ontario.ca/page/community-hubs))

When people think of community hubs, they think of places where people come together to get services, meet one another and plan together. We've heard that community hubs are gathering places that help communities live, build and grow together. No community hub is like another, as each brings together a variety of different services, programs and/or social and cultural activities to reflect local community needs. It is this diversity of activity that allows community hubs to play a critical role in building economic and social cohesion in the community.





### Specialized Health and Child Development Services

These partner agencies, which include, but aren't limited to Special Needs Inclusion services, Sudbury District Health Unit, Wordplay/Jeux de mots, Health Sciences North, Children's Treatment Centre, Child and Community Resources, the Children's Community Network, and Child and Family Centre provide distinct types of services, each of which plays a distinct role in the system yet has common contributions which include, but are not limited to:

- Accepting and referring clients to the appropriate community services and programming, providing that 'every-right-door' experience
- Providing quality, timely and accessible services and programming to community children and their families
- Creating a seamless approach when linking children and families to community services
- Providing consultation and assessment in the early years setting to create secure and supportive environments.

#### 1. Assessment, Referral and Intervention

Our Special Needs Inclusion model works with the agency Leadership Teams to establish yearly work plans, which include services, supports and referral information/documentation, goals/action plans, and professional development in an effort to support quality programs and to achieve successful inclusion. Children with diverse abilities are fully immersed into our early learning and care programs and schools. Our professionals work alongside community partners to ensure children's individual needs are being met. Partnerships with these agencies ensure realistic goals are established and followed through in achieving success.

Ontario's Special Needs Strategy marks the beginning of a new way of delivering services to children and youth with special needs and their families across children's agencies and other service providers, including health service providers and district school boards. The objective of the Special Needs Strategy is that all organizations from the children's services, education, and health sectors will collaborate in order to provide a coordinated and seamless service experience for children and youth with multiple and/or complex special needs and their families.

#### 2. Prevention Education

These partner agencies also provide health promotion and prevention strategies that help to build capacity among partners. As such, they identify topics related to healthy child development, prevention and screening and family well-being, based on community needs and their own agency mandates. They develop and provide consultation, tools and materials, programming and training to early learning professionals and families.

Their contributions to the system include, but are not limited to:

- Creating educational tools and materials
- Designing and/or delivering health related workshops or supports
- Preparing and delivering learning modules or other training for early learning professionals, parents and other adult influencers
- Reviewing and consulting on information prepared for families; and helping link the children and families they work with to early learning settings and specialized services

### The System Manager – Policy, Planning and Funding

The Children Services Section of the City of Greater Sudbury, as the Children Services System Manager, has a mandate from the Province of Ontario to manage the system of child care and early years services. The CMSM leads community planning and consultations with community partners serving children and families.<sup>12</sup>

Their contributions to the system include, but are not limited to:

- Coordinating the efforts of the partners and assisting in defining roles and contributions
- Clearly defining program standards and standard levels of services and incorporating these standards into annual contracts; developing consistent measurements / data elements / accountabilities
- Engage the Ministry of Education in supporting partnerships more fully by simplifying funding processes, changing the reality of tenant – landlord agreements, aligning health and fire regulations, and further defining the system manager's role
- Using a Consultative Leadership Team Model to support quality improvement and inclusion which includes mentoring, extensive professional learning and support in transfer to practice
- Supporting organizational growth and strategic planning
- Formalize processes and protocols to identify family and neighbourhood needs and coordinate responses
- Using local demographics and service levels to determine appropriate and flexible services, ability for providers to change locations and frequency of programs in order to provide equitable programming across the community
- School and child care playgrounds are being reconsidered and more nature playscapes are being created. Our System Manager is working to engage and inform city parks in this movement.



12. Ministry of Education, *Early Years Policy Framework*, 2013.

## Planning at the System Level – *Harnessing Collective Leadership*

Our concept of collective leadership is about reflections and conversations, meaningful collaborations, agreement in direction and the group's ability to navigate together and stay focused on high quality services. Our community has established committees which have a defined structure and identified priorities. There is a high level of trust, confidence and hope at these tables and they are continuously evolving to meet the planning and leadership needs of the system.

We have experienced great successes in planning through our collective dedication, determination and intent to have authentic and courageous conversations and ensuring every partner has a voice. We have gotten to know our partners well and allow them to be unique and authentic while collaborating; we encourage reaching beyond our individual expertise and regularly challenge each other. We believe in being attentive to emerging ideas and therefore use trial and error processes often. Mistakes made become opportunities to reconsider.

Through this process of sharing information and experiences with the group, we learn from each other, and have an opportunity to develop ourselves personally and professionally through these consistent interactions. We are able to take risks, take joint responsibility and have become communally resourceful.

Our committees have become a community of practice as described by Wenger, McDermott, and Snyder in 2002 "A community of practice is a group of people who share a concern or a passion for something they do and learn how to do it better as they interact regularly over time"<sup>13</sup> Communities of practice are powerful catalysts for enabling us as professionals to improve our practice and system as a whole, encouraging shared leadership, presenting an abundance of opportunities to consider in strengthening our relationships further. We believe this is a cycle of learning that helps us to meet challenges collaboratively with confidence and keeps us adjusting our practice to reflect new learning.

As we reflect on how to evolve our practice and build relationships, we have looked back to our *Best Start Network Terms of Reference and the Best Start Integration and Planning Network Strategic Plan 2012–2015*. We continue to base our planning on the needs and

priorities of the families in our community, on evidence including best practices, community and parent experiences, data and evaluation. Partners continue to contribute and collaborate on strategies and initiatives yet are focused on people and relationships, not just services.

We developed a vision of an integrated system of services. Our community believes that integration is where service providers being indiscernible to families, where services are seamless and where every organization provides a "door" / access to the system.<sup>15</sup>

We no longer expect families to 'fit' into the system. Instead, we want a system of responsive services based on knowledge of the local families and an established relationship with them. We have been moving towards this practice since 2013 when our Best Start Hub professionals adopted a "100 cups of coffee" approach. The idea was to engage families where they live and play, spend time with them, get to know them more fully, make connections and create relationships. This initiative resulted in this shift in our thinking. With this shift away from our 'one-stop shop', we began to understand families better in the context of their neighbourhood. Together partners could then strive to understand the needs of families and the uniqueness of the neighbourhood they serve. Conversations concerning equity across neighbourhoods, responsiveness, standard levels of service and high program standards continue and we again look to our history to guide us.

Leading Change in the Early Years describes collaboration in a similar way, as "where practitioners willingly pool their ideas and resources to work towards finding a mutually acceptable solution ('Let's work it out together!'). Collaborative approaches to conflict resolution rely on high levels of trust, open and assertive communication and co-operation. Collaborative 'win-win' solutions respect and integrate the needs of all concerned, validate and listen to the viewpoints of all team members, incorporate the ideas of a greater number of contributors and are more likely to achieve meaningful and consensual solutions. A growing sense of respect for and goodwill towards team members is an important outcome of this approach."<sup>14</sup>

13. Curtis D., Lebo D., Cividanes W.C.M., and Carter M., 2013, *Reflecting on Communities of Practice*, page 14.

14. Rodd J., 2015, *Leading Change in the Early Years, Principles and Practice*, page 98.



## Communities of Practice

Many Network initiatives provide good examples of collective leadership where partners contribute to a single purpose or work toward a common goal. The best examples include:

- The Leadership Team Consultative Model was created by Child & Community Resources (CCR) and has been adopted by the City of Greater Sudbury (CGS) to ensure both successful inclusion and quality improvement across all child care and family support agencies in our community. Leadership Teams establish yearly work plans, which include services, supports and referral information, goals/action plans, and professional learning plans. This program requires organization to select a 'Quality Designate'. Four to six times throughout the year this group of Designates is brought together, often with each Designate bringing a colleague or a critical friend to reflect and share ideas on common practices or topics of interest. This group has become strong and supportive of each other, and the smaller teams from each organization have experienced community of practices internally, thus building momentum and capacity within each agency.
- The Child Care System Review was a yearlong collaborative planning effort in response to the new population funding formula which left the City of Greater Sudbury with a drastic reduction in funding. The success of this group included standard allocations and requirements in a General Operating Grant (GOG), Fee Subsidy and Special Needs Resourcing, and more importantly, a community of practice was created and used for all planning since.
- The Professional Learning Plan was created through several significant contributions made by community partners. The development of new programs is an investment of time and energy far beyond what is allocated by the Ministry of Education Capacity Building funding.
- The [www.sudburyfamilies.ca](http://www.sudburyfamilies.ca) community calendar contains hundreds of programs and events that partners contribute or 'post'. On this website, there are also topics which were written by 'local experts'. Soon related topics will be linked to the calendar events for easier access.
- System-wide tools and resources are used in quality, inclusion and screening. Our Committees make recommendations on tools and resources within their scope of expertise. We also share resources, often organizing a community of practice around a specific book or article.
- Neighbourhood Team participation is a large commitment of time and continued support. Many partners have invested many hours in the creation of the team and the reflection of the neighbourhood needs. This investment has resulted in increased responsiveness to children and family needs on a local level.
- Transition to School teams consisting of a diverse group of specialized service providers and school boards created a plan for transition to school for children with special needs. This seamless plan resulted in a singular process for all providers and boards to work with families.



Our latest collaborative project – the thought that went into the transformation we are experiencing and the writing of our vision and model has been an opportunity to build on some of the learnings from these examples and recent research on early learning. It was an opportunity to reflect on How Does Learning Happen? and to articulate our values and principles.

What makes the writing of this document such a good example of 'harnessing collective leadership' is that this task started as a Hub review, to determine if Hub programs and services were impactful, delivered in the 'right' location and accessible/ responsive to families of the neighbourhood. The Hub Managers were asked to develop an

implementation plan incorporating very specific Network recommendations to move, close or change services being delivered. Hub Managers at this point had become more reflective and thoughtful in their practice. They began to consider these recommendations and how they aligned with our mission of a 'progressively integrated system'. They considered the big picture and broader system before brining a new discussion to the full Network. Together, we began to articulated a vision where families can expect high quality, responsive services delivered in a unique way in each neighbourhood. In doing so, we challenged the status quo, demonstrated high engagement, strong partnerships and multi-level collective system leadership reflection.

## Planning at the Local Level

### – Building Collective Leadership through Neighbourhood Teams

Service Planning at the neighbourhood level while being connected to the system is possible when service providers have:

- A full understanding of local families and their neighbourhood
- Ability to respond to emerging needs, adjust/align programs or services to uniqueness
- A process to link information back to the Network to initiate systemic change.

Professionals who work in the neighbourhood know the families in that neighbourhood and are invested in providing them with the local services they need. Neighbourhood Teams were created in 2012 to engage local professionals and service organizations in working together to respond to neighbourhood

needs. A mandate of these Teams was to use local knowledge and connections to identify needs and strengths, provide that no-wrong-door experience for their families, ensure responsiveness and maximize resources by reducing overlap and overcome gaps with local solutions. While working to understand local families, creating a sense of community and belonging also became another focus.

As we build leadership capacity and a shared responsibility, and put our vision into practice in our neighbourhoods, the Neighbourhood Teams will continue to evolve. We have a great opportunity to enhance our understanding and implementation of the four foundations as we continue our work in neighbourhoods, and develop collective leadership at the grassroots level.







## Chapter 3 - Leading Authentic Practice

Chapters 1 and 2 have explained the evolution of our thinking and our collective leadership in planning, but what impact do these have on our practice with children and families? We believe that our values and vision are transforming and influencing our daily practice within our programs. We have been exploring and learning new ways of practice that make our pedagogy obvious, thereby leading authentic practice.

Our early learning community is a multi-disciplinary cooperative; there is a belief that families' needs must be met from diverse professional practice. Varied social services, health promotion, mental health, parenting support, healthy child development,

early identification, intervention, early learning and education are all represented in our community of practice. Ontario's Early Learning Pedagogy is not exclusive to early learning settings and school classrooms alone. The four foundations are universally applicable to all family service programs and professional interactions.

As planners, we believe that we can lead authentic practice within our organizations through exploring our values and beliefs, and aligning our practice to our system vision. Our reflections on our image of the parent and family, and the child are paramount to this model as is our desire to lead authentic practice.

### Image of the Parent and Family

Our image of the parent has been evolving. We have always thought of parents as the most powerful influence and the first teacher to their children but our practices often did not reflect this belief in our practice. Most programs and services were implemented through an expert model, an approach we have shifted away from. We believe parents are capable, competent, rich in experience with their child and our practice reflects these beliefs. We are shifting our practice to focus on developing authentic relationships with parents, understanding and respecting their uniqueness and engaging them in regular reciprocal communication. We are moving to supporting parents in their own health, well-being and stability because we know that in order to support early learning and healthy child development, we must serve the family as a whole.

### Image of the Child

We have embraced Ontario's image of the child as "competent, capable of complex thinking, curious, and rich in potential. They grow up in families with diverse social, cultural, and linguistic perspectives. Every child should feel that he or she belongs, is a valuable contributor to his or her surroundings, and deserves the opportunity to succeed. When we recognize children as capable and curious, we are more likely to deliver programs and services that value and build on their strengths and abilities."<sup>16</sup>

16. *How Does Learning Happen? Ontario's Pedagogy for the Early Years*, page 7.

## Pedagogy

Pedagogy is “the understanding of how learning takes place and the philosophy and practice that support that understanding of learning”<sup>17</sup> *How Does Learning Happen: Ontario’s Pedagogy for the Early Years* is a guide or resource for all professionals working in the early years.

Similarities in curriculum and pedagogy have been identified throughout the time that child care, Hubs and schools have been co-located and working together but only recently have there been efforts to co-ordinate early learning curriculum, share successes, and support further development of pedagogy and best practice.

Early learning professionals in our community strive to offer a play based, emergent curriculum that encompasses a variety of learning styles to meet the needs of all children. Educators and other professionals observe, document and interpret children’s learning in order to understand, support and extend their thinking as well as assist in attaching meaning to their experiences. The children are provided with opportunities to engage in ongoing research projects and emergent activities inspired by their environment, community, family, and lived experiences.

The movement of studying, understanding and experimenting with this pedagogy is being lead by those who work most closely with groups of young children in child care, Full Day Kindergarten and Best Start Hubs. They have started to share their experiences and are generating energy and excitement with partners. They make children’s learning visible in different ways to further their understanding and engage families and partners in the joy and wonder of early learning.



17. Ministry of Education, 2007, *Early learning for every child today: A framework for Ontario early childhood settings*, page 90.



## Supporting Professional Growth, Well-Being and Learning

As a community, we support authentic practice by creating opportunities for professional growth, well-being and continuous learning. There are two ways that we do this. One is by implementing an extensive professional learning plan designed for us to learn together in communities of practice and the other is working to stabilize the profession of RECE's with recruitment and retention strategies.

1. Collectively, we are responsible for our professional learning plan which is intended to build skills and competencies. This movement was initiated with the municipally funding designated for 'Capacity Building' for licensed child care. These collaborative learning opportunities are now provided across the early years sector, in an effort to sustain a learning community and build capacity across the profession.

The planning of these opportunities is responsive and fluid. Several community partners facilitate learning opportunities. This plan is aligned with the Leadership Teams and the Quality Improvement program. We believe that this combination of efforts is building capacity of our current and future leaders. It is exciting and empowering to all those who participate. We have created energy and momentum in our community around continuous professional learning.



2. There are diverse professionals working within our Network to create the integrated system of services for children and families, yet none have been as intensely affected by change as Registered Early Childhood Educators (RECEs). For this reason, there is a focus on this specific professional.

In Sudbury, only half of those working in child care are RECEs. We value their unique expertise and have intentionally worked toward recruiting more people to the field and retaining those presently working in early learning. We have actively recruited ECE students from high schools and from those already working in the field. We have the only viable post-secondary Early Childhood Alternative Delivery (ECAD) Program in all the province. In the City of Greater Sudbury, there is 17% of our current child care workforce attending training.

We also publicly value and recognize the work RECEs and those who work in early learning. Annually, volunteers from the child care sector organize an event that gathers professionals together to celebrate the valuable work they do and the raising reputation of the profession. Agencies often also celebrate internally and encourage families to show appreciation to the educators working with their children.

These are exciting times for professionals in our community and our practice is being transformed.



## Chapter 4 – Our Final Reflections

As the Network begins its strategic planning, the focus will be on 'streamlining' strategic priorities, making the system more efficient and effective by focusing on actual processes and expectations that will realize the strategic goals set out. We will strive to bring our collective practice in line with those priorities.

The Network will continue to embrace the most recent research and build authentic relationships with children, families and partners. We will strengthen our collective leadership and recognize ourselves as leaders of change. We realize that:

*"When leadership of change becomes a collective responsibility, different pathways open up for achieving desired outcomes; consequently, those leading change should focus on strategic plans and ends, rather than methods and means. Making change happen rarely comes about through a single plan or a simple solution. Sustainable change arises out of action that varies in novelty, scope and magnitude. Consequently, those leading change need to keep an open mind and remain flexible, tolerant and willing to learn as they relinquish control and encourage collective responsibility for leading change to the early years settings."*<sup>18</sup>



18. Rodd J., 2015, *Leading Change in the Early Years, Principles and Practice*, page 111.

We believe we are heading in the right direction and look forward to the next steps in our journey. While envisioning our community in the future, this model will explore and define program principles to help create accountability measures and ensure the provision of flexible and responsive services by:

- Living the four foundations of Ontario's pedagogy. Thus, strengthening and supporting our **pedagogical leaders**, to enhance quality programming and to create and support learning, environments that will engage and empower professionals and families.
- Utilizing a **collective leadership** approach that will create and sustain **authentic partnerships** which, in turn will contribute to the planning and implementation of the programs and services to meet the needs of our children and families.
- As we **build leadership capacity** and a shared responsibility, and put our vision into practice in our neighbourhoods, Neighbourhood Teams continue to evolve. We have a great opportunity to enhance our understanding and the implementation of the four foundations as we continue our work in neighbourhoods, and develop collective leadership at the **grassroots level**.
- We will explore aligning common program standards, service levels and accountability measures in a way that creates **responsive and flexible services**. As we reflect on our vision and this commitment, we will consider how we can determine standard levels of services, how we can provide flexible responsive services, changing locations and frequency of programs to be more equitable across the community and how we can identify agency roles and be accountable to our funders and to each other while providing what families need.
- Though we believe programs and services should be offered in a variety of settings within a neighbourhood to improve access and awareness of supports, we still think schools remain central to our model, and will strive to incorporate the concepts of **community hubs and schools**. Our school board partners are active planners at our Network, there is child care in most of the schools within Sudbury and all 15 of our Best Start Hubs are in schools. Some schools have written agreements so information can be exchanged between school, child care and sometimes hubs. Principals are asked to share their positive experiences and become champions for integrated services and programs.
- In our reflections, we will consider the whole neighbourhood as **multiple settings and environments for our programs and services**. We will continue to reflect on how our neighbourhood settings, be it a school, playground, park or trail, be reflective of the children and families of that neighbourhood.
- As a community, we will continue to support this pedagogy by creating opportunities for **professional growth, well-being and continuous learning**. Collectively we take responsibility for providing professional learning opportunities which are intended to build skills and competencies and contribute to our overall growth and well-being as individual professionals and as a group.
- We will support the **continued modernization of child care** and early learning, and contribute to policy and processes that reflect our pedagogy.

## Conclusion

Collaboration will continue in order to strengthen the principles of the model. Long term reflection and evaluation will be required to realize the long-term goals and the future direction of the system model in our community.

The Planning Network for Sudbury Families is pleased with the direction being taken to further integrate services for children and families. The Network does however, realize that true integration is not a destination but rather a journey.

We are proud of the collaborative work we continue to do and for the many connections we have made with families and community. We understand there are many areas that we will need to continue to reflect on improving and that some changes will be the catalyst for more significant transformation. We look to this model to put structure into the constant flex and reflection we are experiencing while focusing on relationships with partners, families and the children we work with.

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## Appendix B

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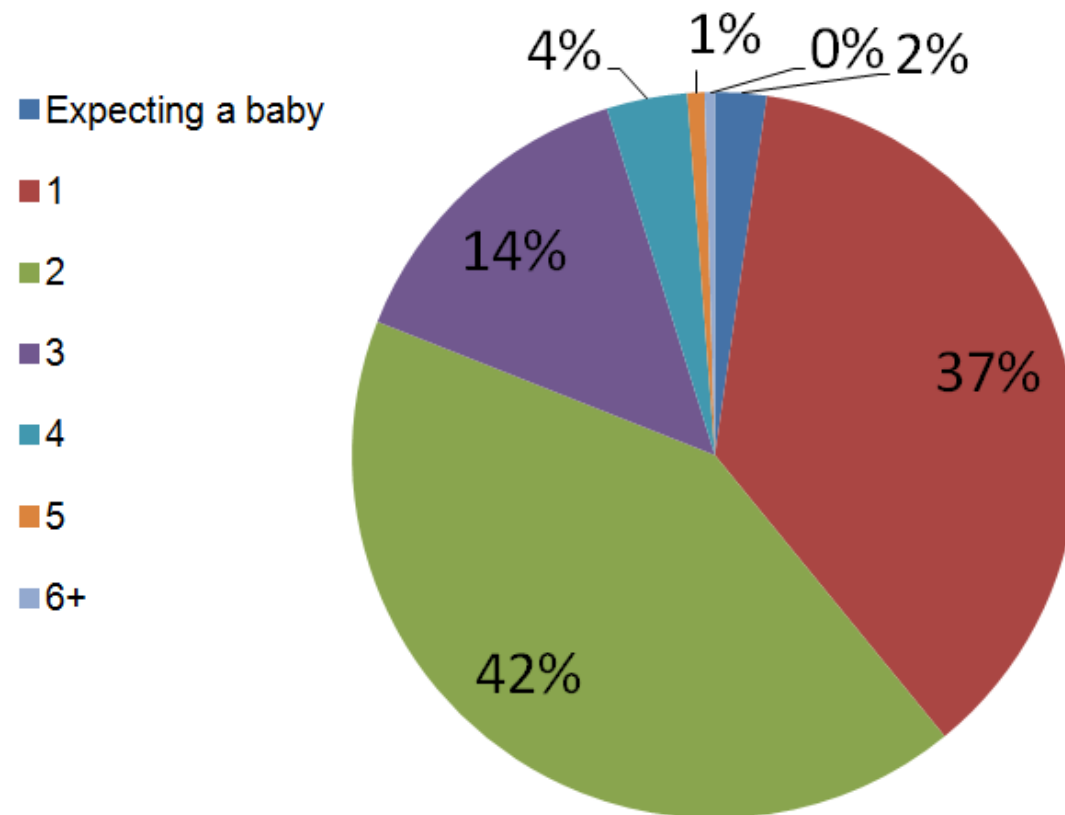
## Respondents - Snapshot

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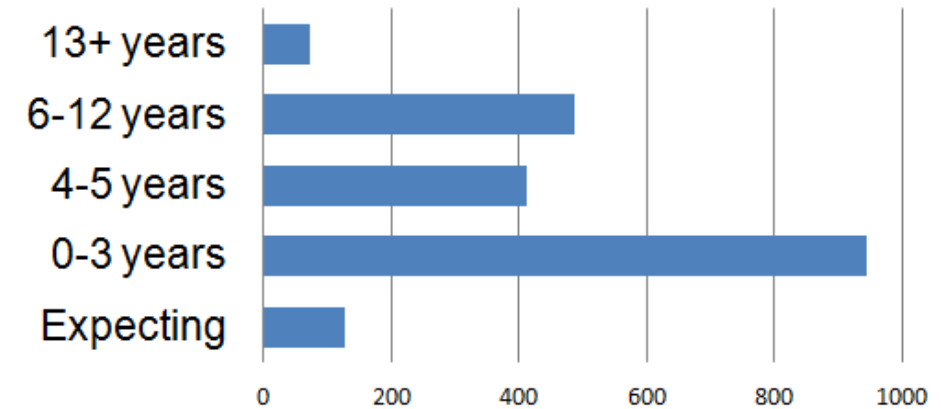
- 1266 respondents
- 86.2% Female, 12.6% Male, 0.3% other
- Family Structure:
  - 82% Two Parent/Guardian Family
  - 17% Single Parent/Guardian Family
  - 1% Other (blended, shared custody, multi generational)

## Number and Age of Children of Respondents

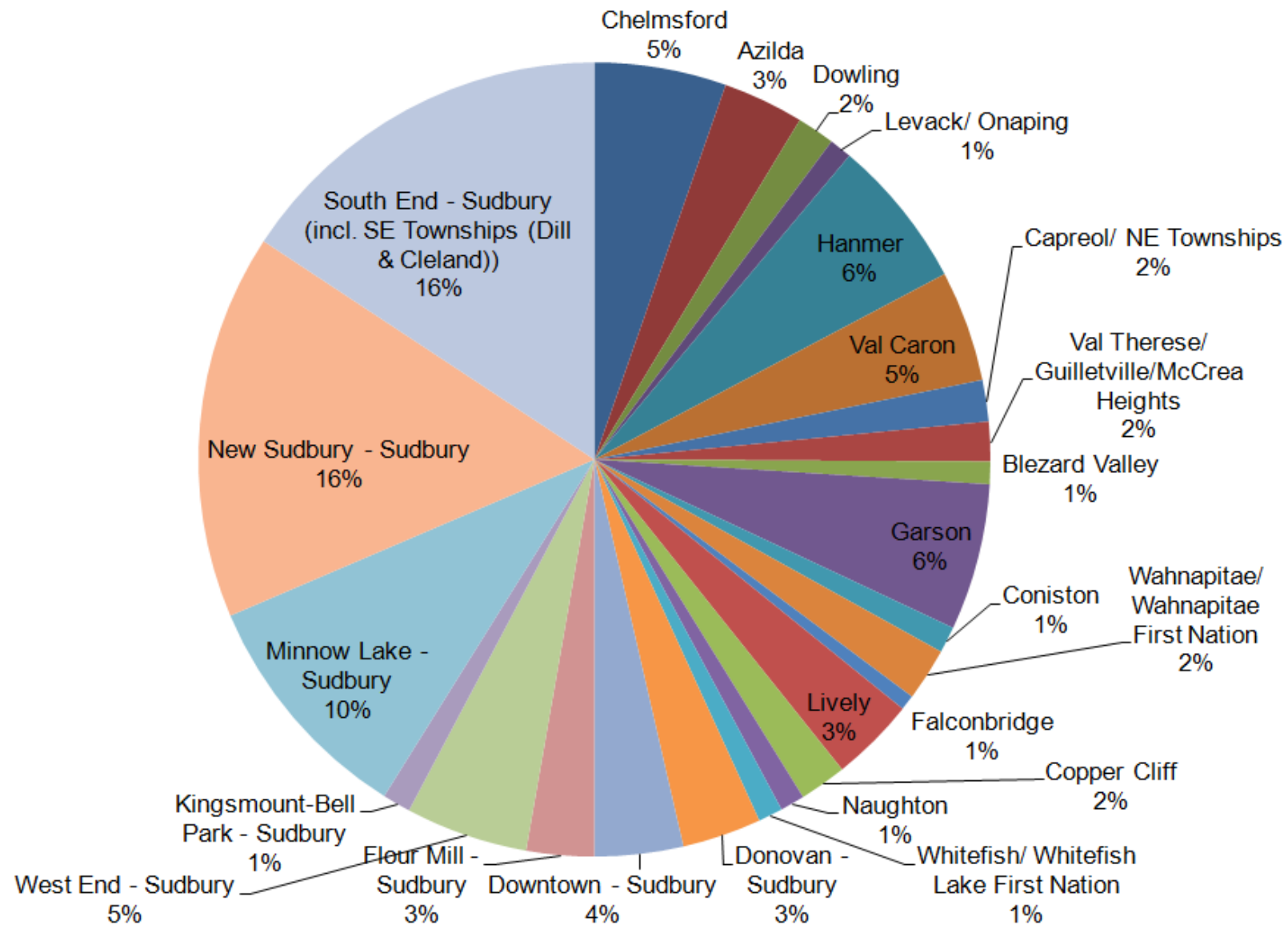
**Number of Children at Home**



**# of Repondents with Children at home- by Age Group**



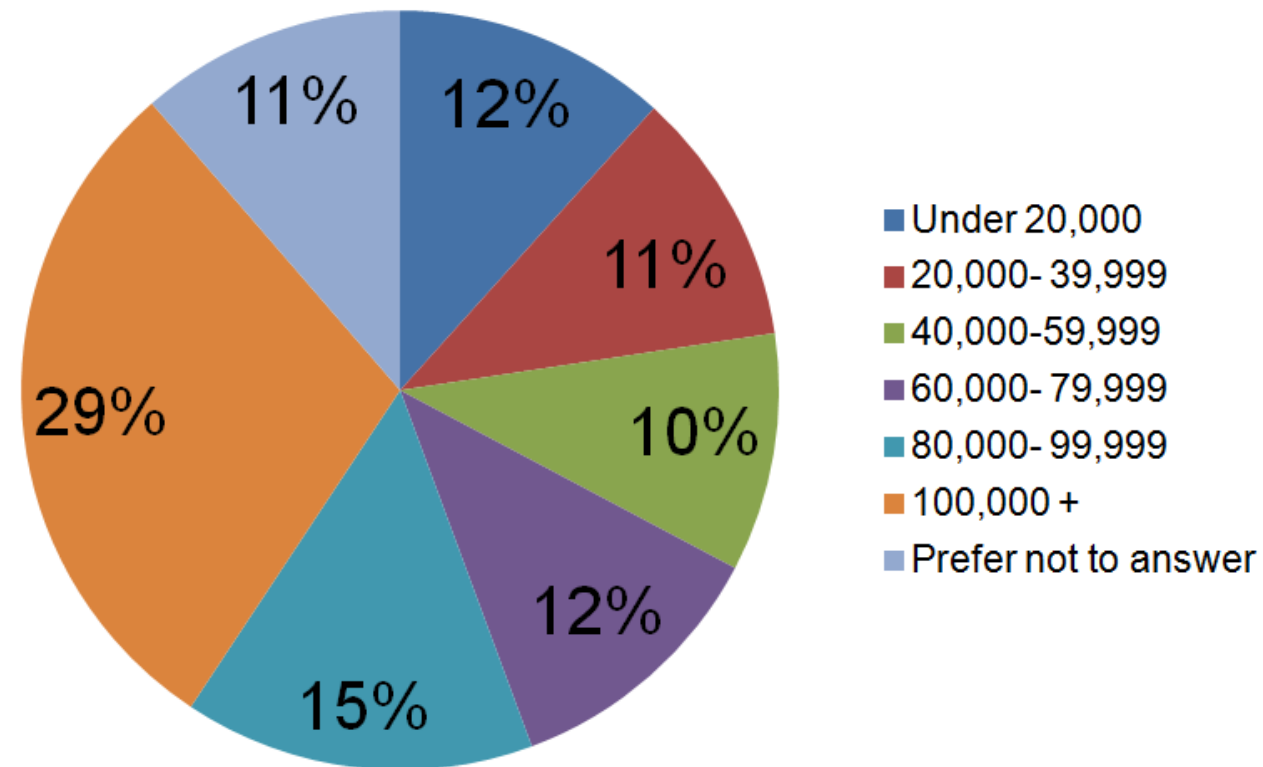
## Respondents by Neighbourhood of Residence





## Respondents – Family Income

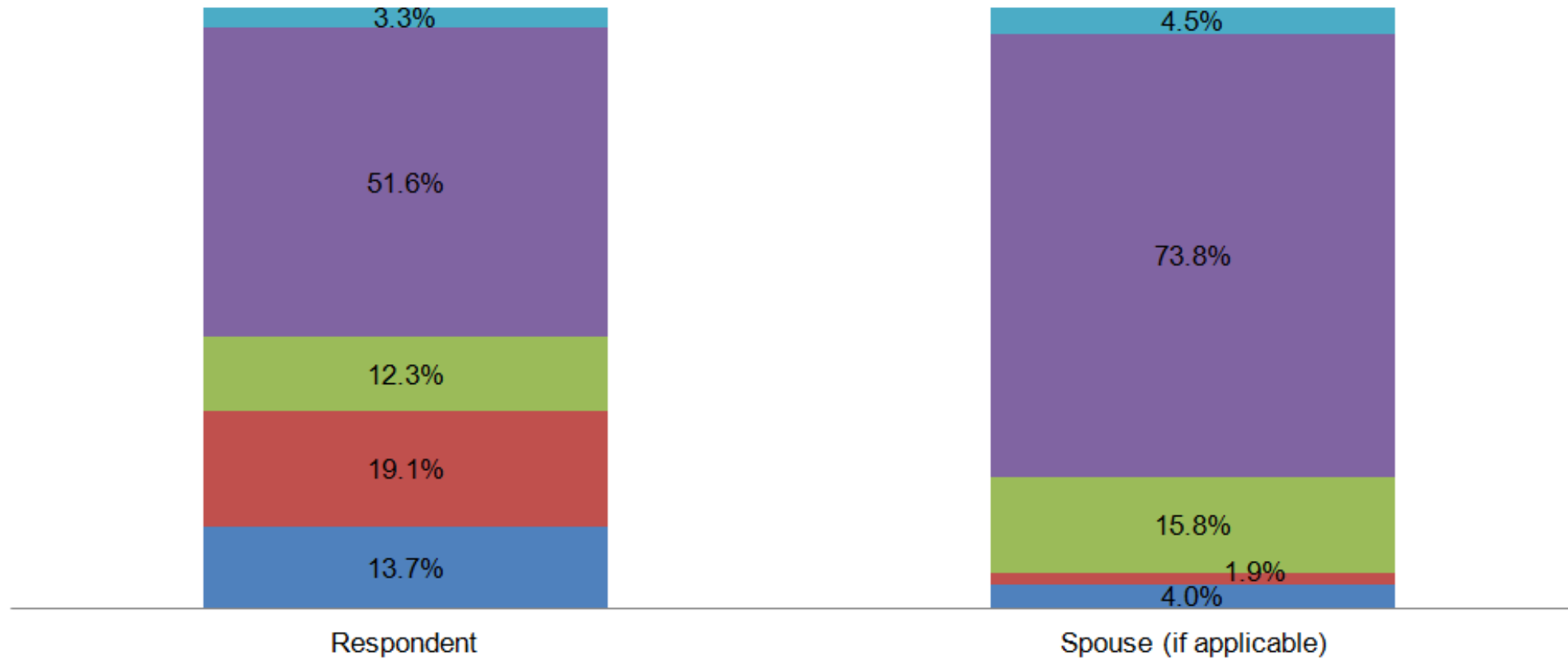
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## Respondents – Work/School Status

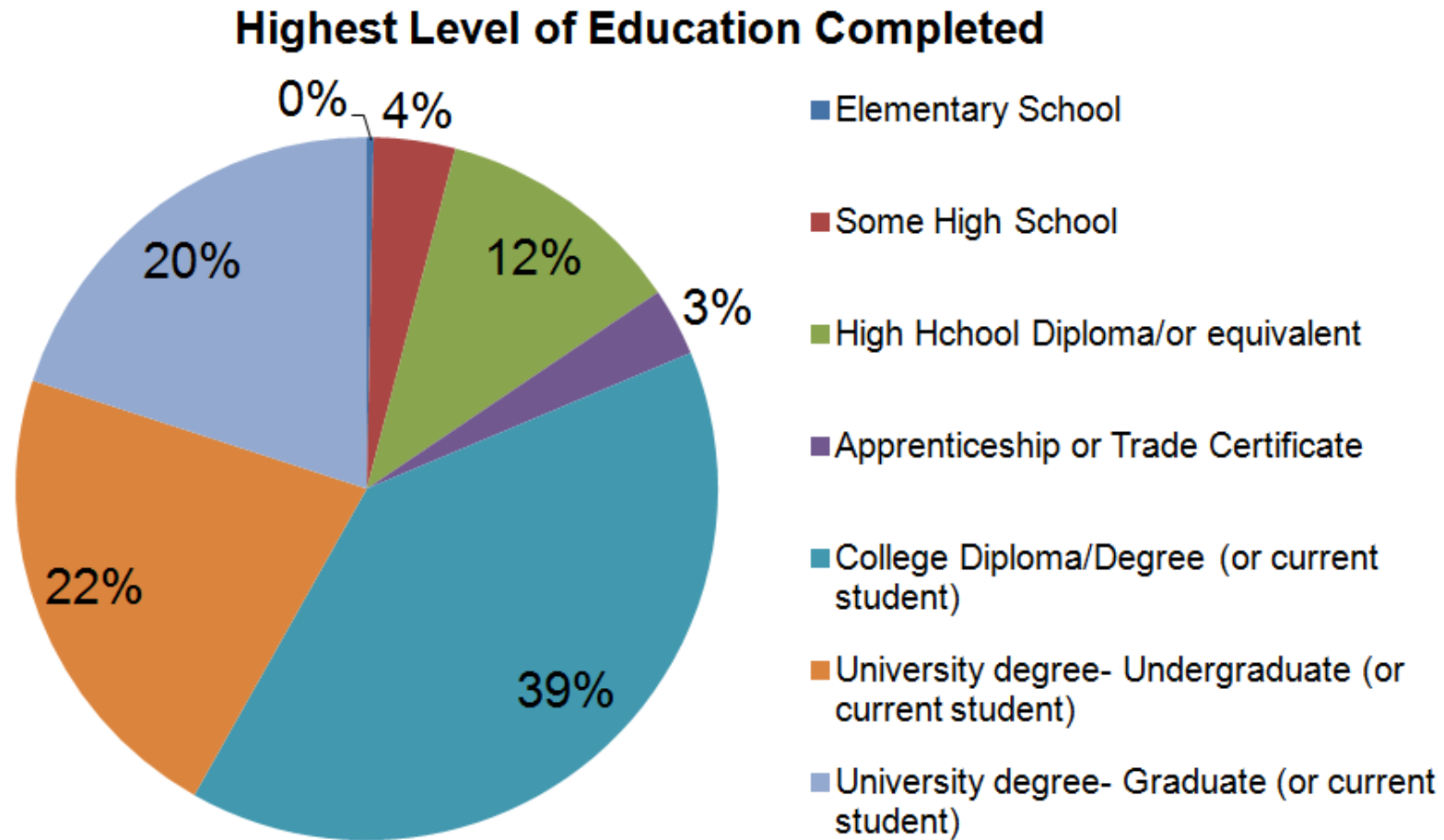
- Stay-at-home.
- Working/school part time or varying shifts.
- Temporarily at home- illness, unemployment.

- Maternity/parental leave.
- Working/school full time regular days.



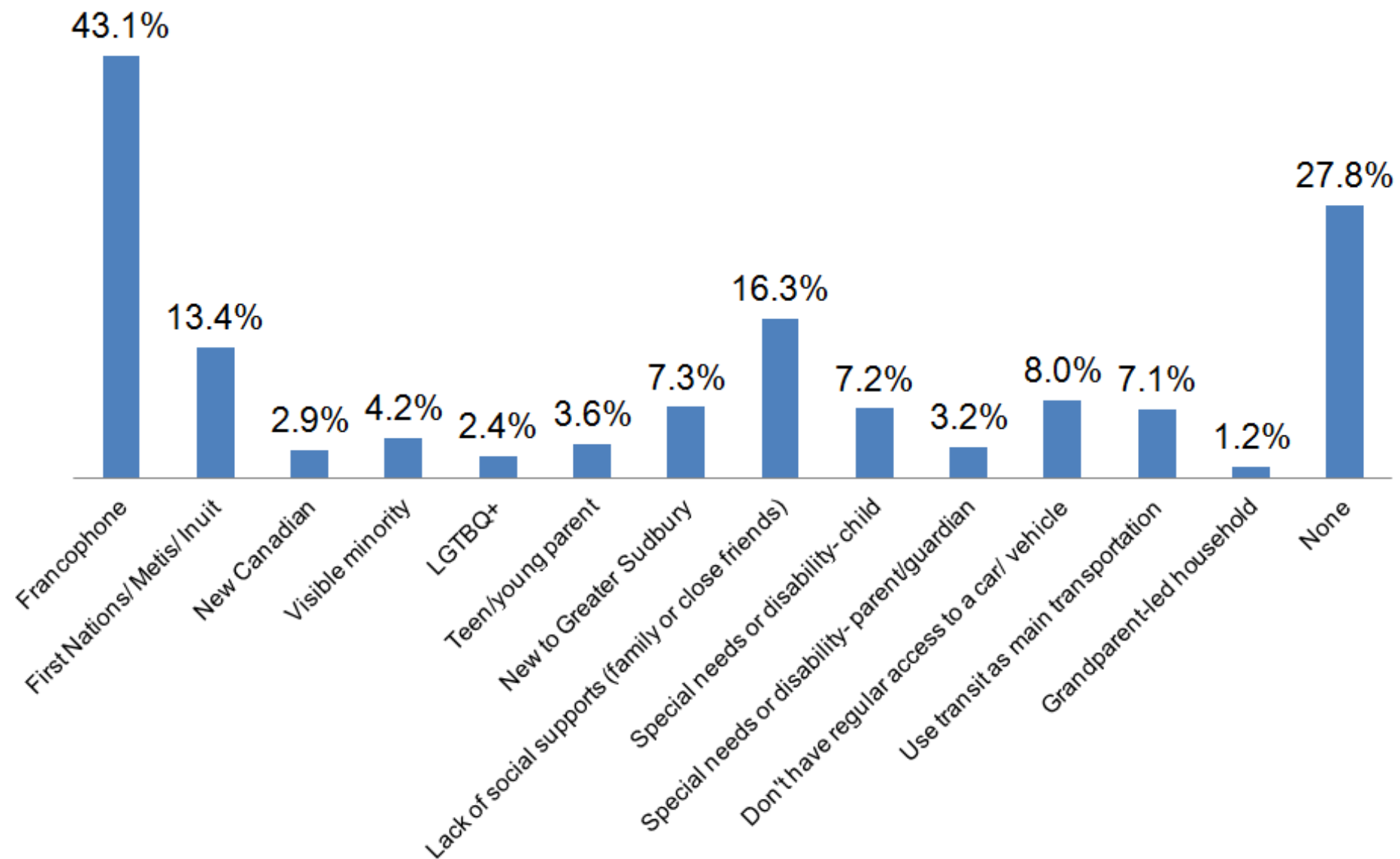
## Respondents – Education

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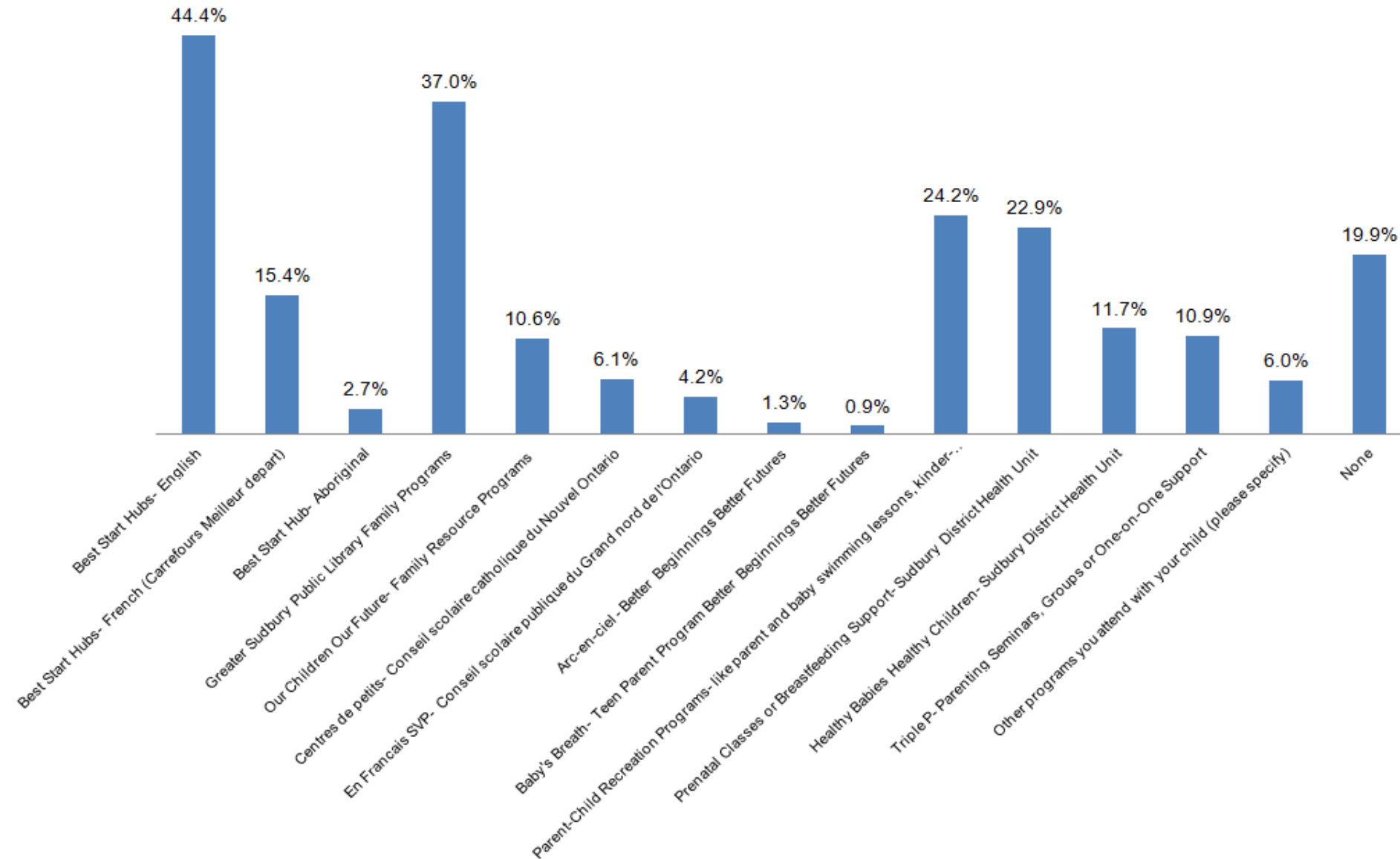




## Characteristics that Apply to Member(s) of Respondent's Household

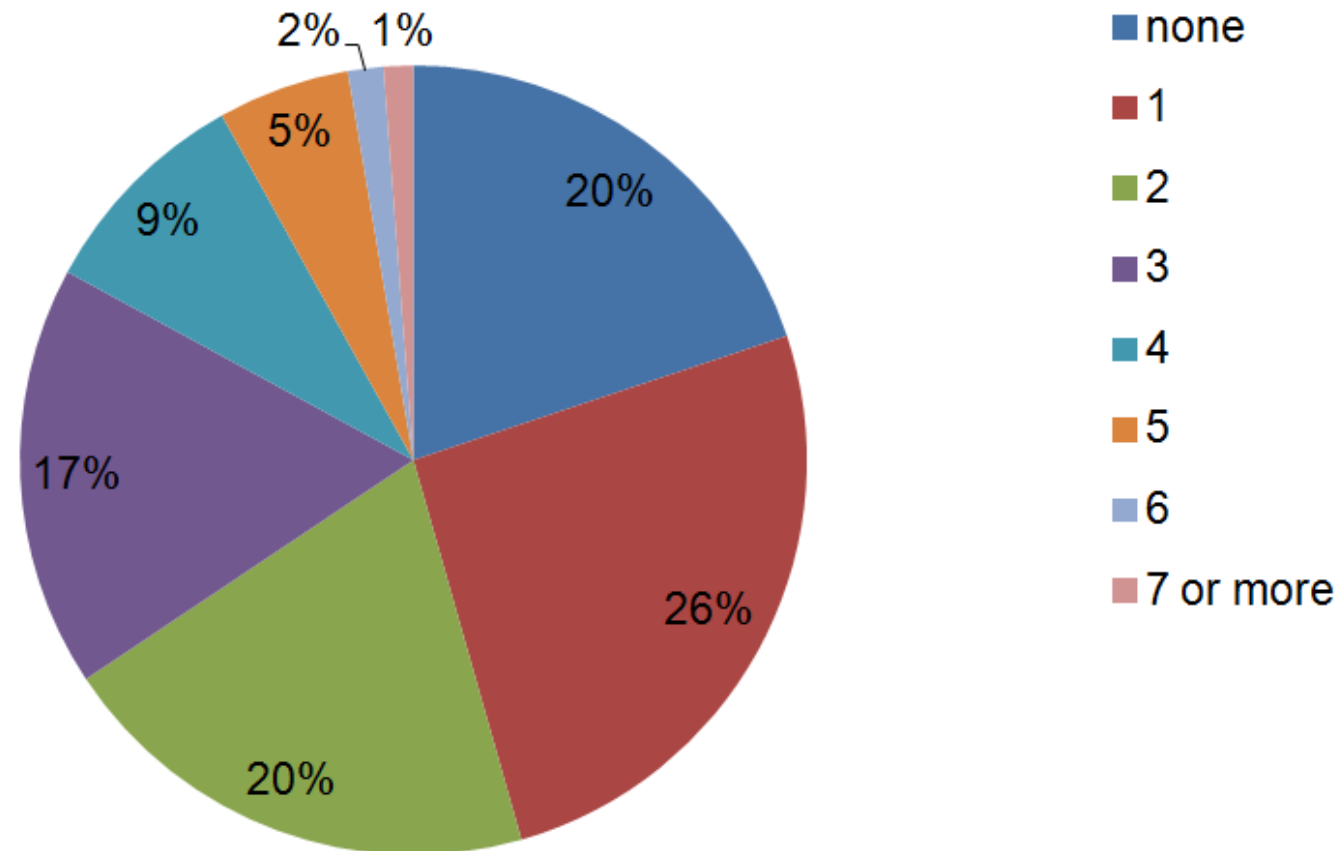


## Family Programs Attended in the Last Three Years



## Number of Services Used per Respondent (Average 1.98)

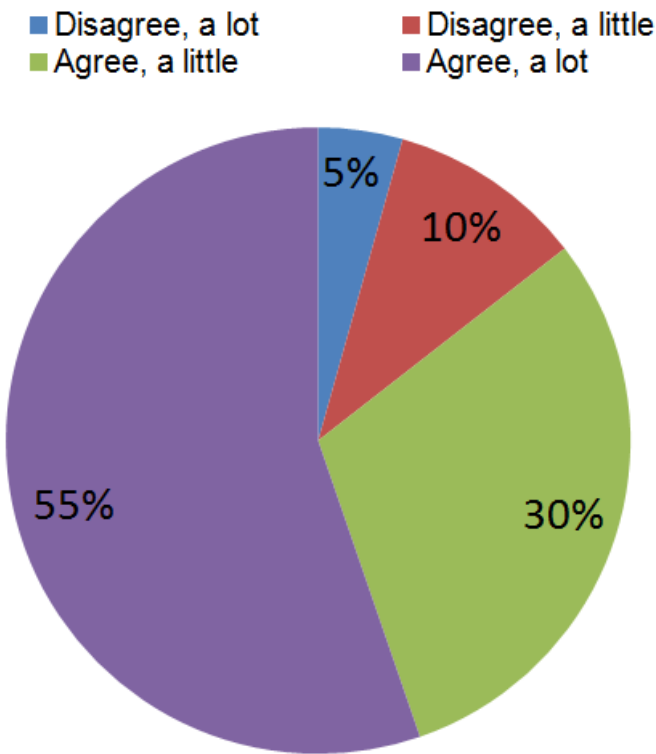
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# Experiences Using Programs – All Programs Combined

It's easy for my family to attend this program (times, location, transportation, language).  
55% Strongly Agree

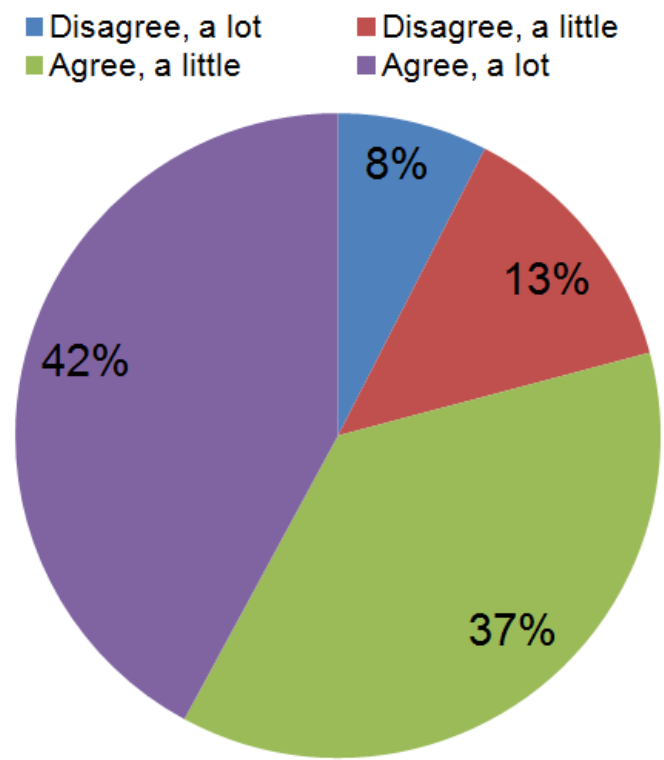


**Comments (301):**

- “It is hard to get any programming out this way that is outside of working hours”.
- “They do home visits which is convenient”.
- “Would be nice to see activities in the evening/weekends”.
- “I don't drive we car pool or bus it but make it work”.
- “Need to offer different start times not all babies toddlers wake up before 9am”.
- “When I was on mat leave, it was easy to attend. Now that I am working full time, it's not nearly as easy”.

# Experiences Using Programs – All Programs Combined (Continued)

By attending this program, I learned about other services and supports that helped my family.  
42% Strongly Agree

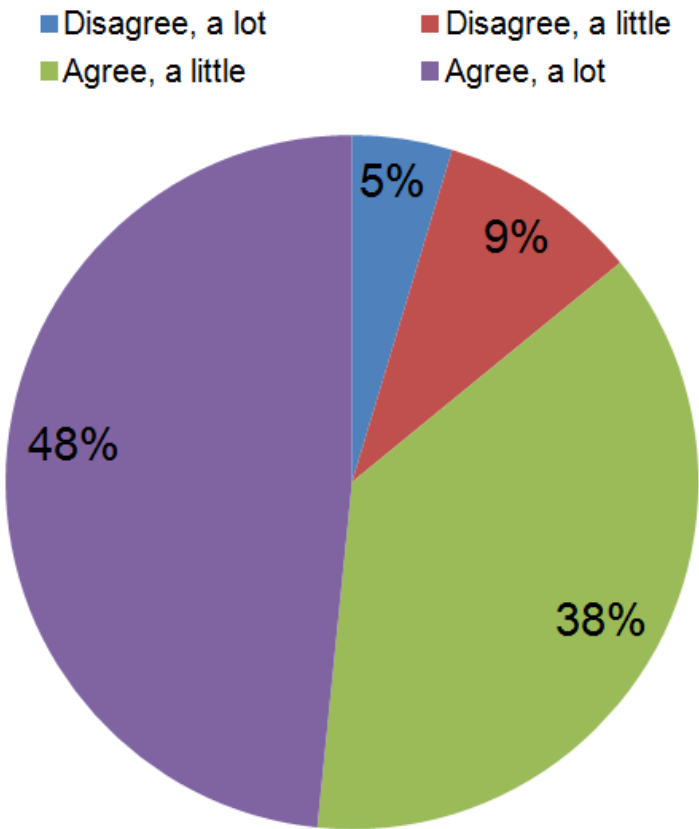


Comments (121):

- “Lots of support and tips from program and other parents that helped along the way”.
- “I was only there for 1 reason and was not looking for other supports”.
- “A lot was available if need-be and a lot of activities”.
- “They were very informative and provided options for help with diapers, milk or formula if ever needed”.
- “The hubs you learn the most from because they are the most interactive and the most frequently attended”.

# Experiences Using Programs – All Programs Combined (Continued)

My family has a sense of belonging and connection there.  
48% Strongly Agree

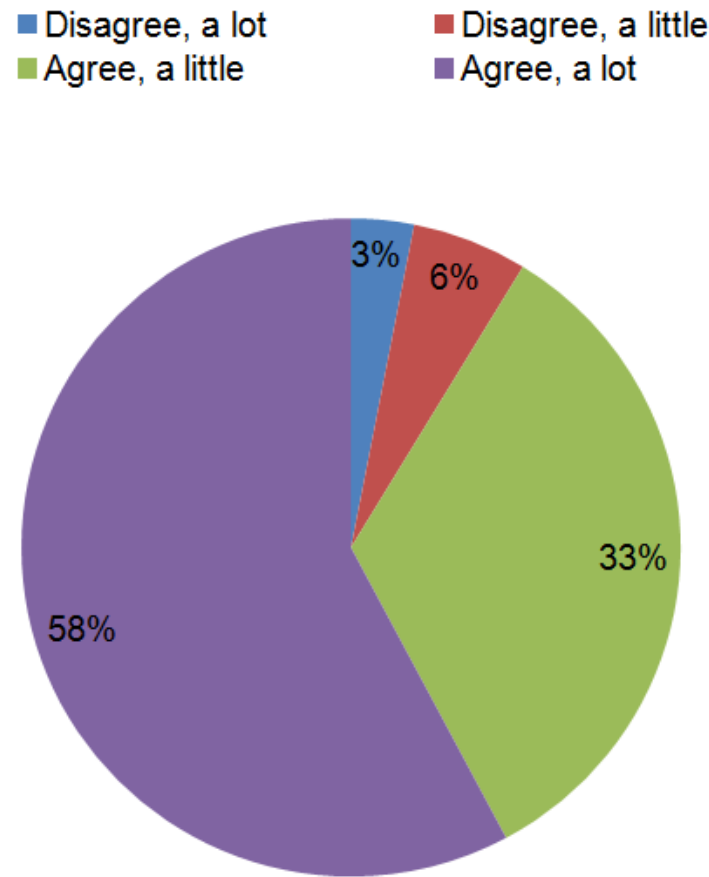


Comments (132):

- “I was made to feel comfortable and welcome”.
- “No real connection but felt welcome and enjoyed going”.
- “If you don't go all the time you feel like a bit of an outsider. It was great for my daughter but only ok for me”.
- “Awesome to be around people from same ethnicity, its gives me a sense of community, away from my home community/first nation”.
- “I felt very supported during my visit and felt comfortable knowing I could access support if needed”.
- “I am shy and it has taken nearly 7 months for me to get comfortable. There was a big staff change a few months ago”.
- “It all depends on who the leader is and how welcoming and inclusive they are”.

# Experiences Using Programs – All Programs Combined (Continued)

My family's unique needs are met there.  
58% strongly agree



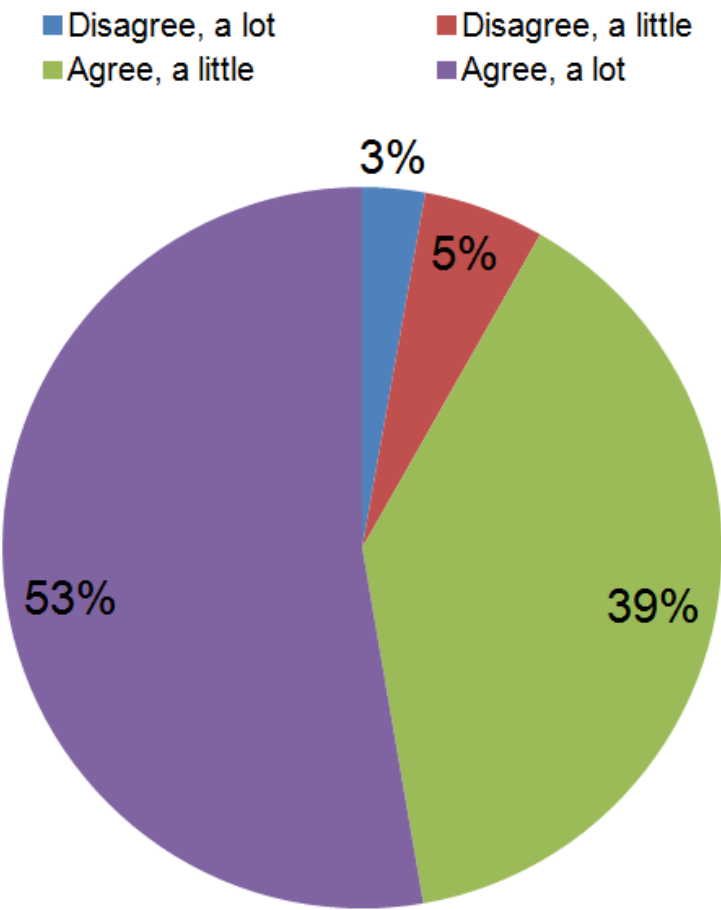
Comments (81):

- “As a low income family they provide so many things that help you get ahead like there infant food cupboard, and food security program”.
- “My youngest needed to interact with younger kids his age and his speech has gotten much better”.
- “LGBT is not common as a family dynamic in Sudbury compared to our previous city and often people or staff are surprised and sometimes awkward”.
- “We are practicing Muslims and I am wearing the face covering in presence of men. At the Hubs, I was embraced with love by the community”.
- “One of our children is autistic and often the environment of the best start hub and recreation programs are not environments that she is successful in”.
- “My unique needs are two shift working parents, and they were not met...”.



# Experiences Using Programs – All Programs Combined (Continued)

This program helps/helped improve my family's health and well-being.  
53% Strongly Agree

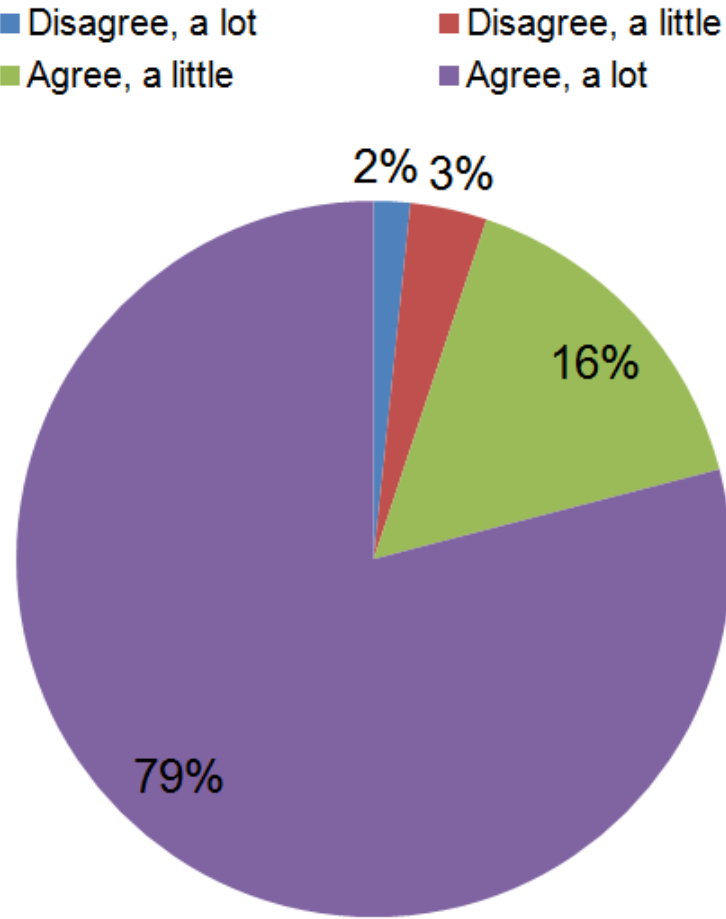


Comments (89):

- “Having a reason to get out of the house when my baby was really young was good for my mental health”.
- “Great programs that worked for us and a new look on fresh strategies to try”.
- “Mentally and physically my kids are learning. I love that I don't see my children constantly on a electronic device”.
- “We cannot afford daycare and I believe social interaction with other children of a similar age is very important to my child’s development”.
- “Time set aside to connect with your child, makes you aware of what your children needs to work on”.

Experiences Using Programs – All Programs Combined (Continued)

This program is inclusive and accepting of everyone.  
79% Strongly Agree

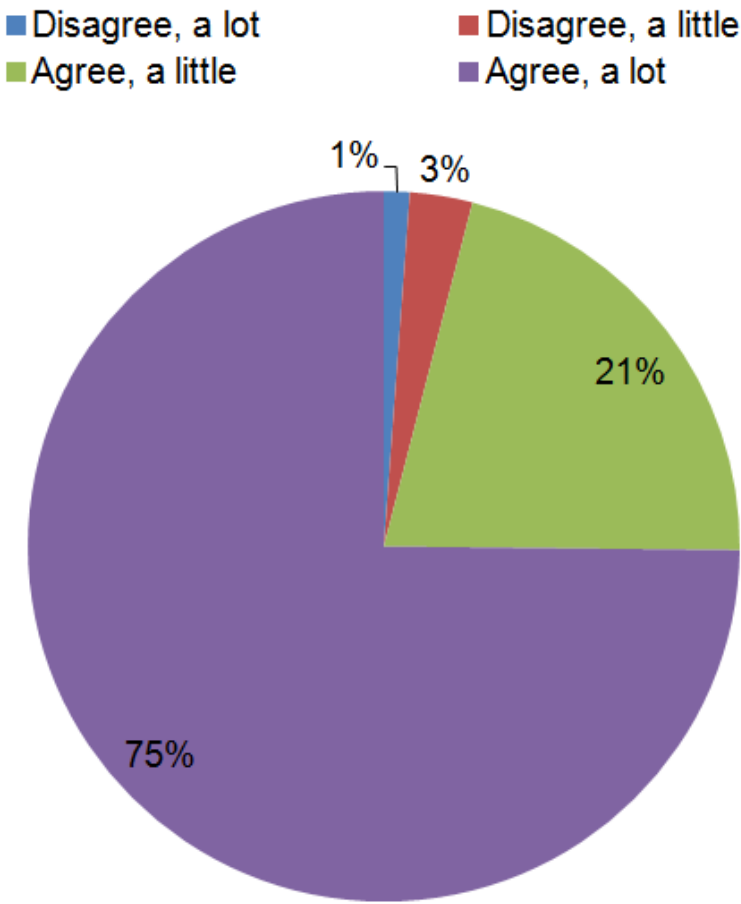


Comments (63):

- “I see all kinds of people from different walks of life”.
- “Not accommodating for working parents”.
- “I feel welcomed and it's a neutral place to be”.
- “Since day one I never felt judged and they accepted my family and I with open arms”.
- “When you have a child with special needs, it's hard to relate most of the program. But I did find some helpful advice”.
- “I never felt like I was included/accepted by the other people/parents at the hubs. It feels very clique-y”.
- Staff are very welcoming at the hubs. However, some families are less accepted by others - plus size moms, very young mothers and fathers seem to have a harder time making friends”.

Experiences Using Programs – All Programs Combined (Continued)

This program provides lots of opportunities for children to actively participate in exploration and play.  
75% Strongly Agree

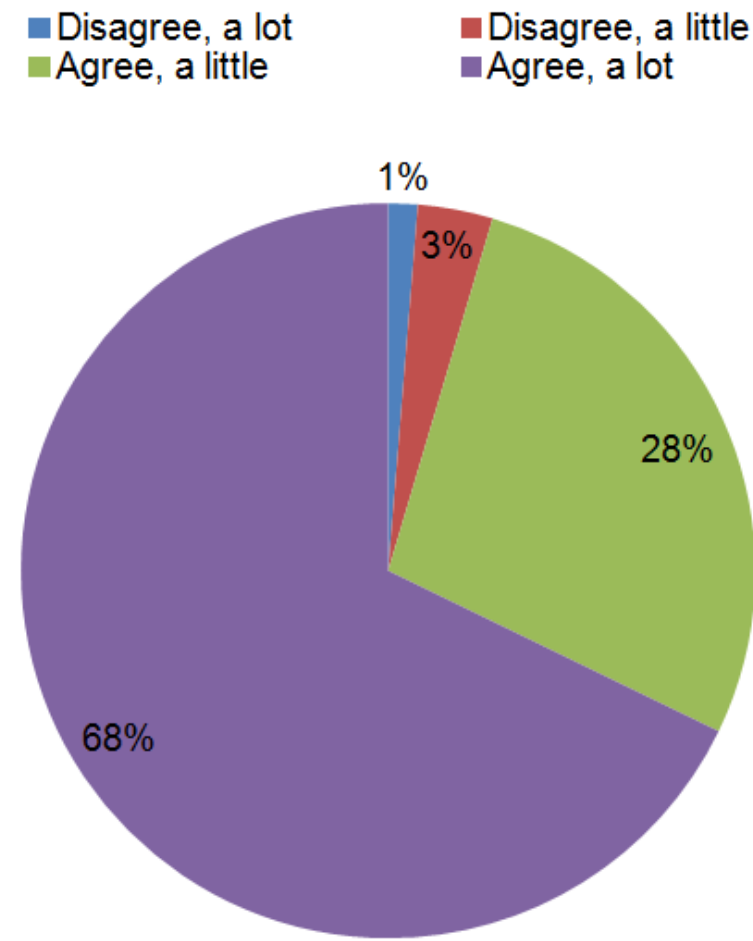


Comments (# N/A):

- "...always seemed to be organized in a way that offered a range of activities for children to actively participate in exploration and play".
- "The hubs could have done pre organized crafts or activities".
- "Lots of toys singing and bonding".
- "Most of the play is designed to observe the level the children are at & test new skills".
- "It depends a lot on the leader/ facilitator. Some are much more control-oriented than others".

Experiences Using Programs – All Programs Combined (Continued)

This program encourages children to express their ideas and feelings in a variety of ways (language, art, movement).  
68% Strongly Agree



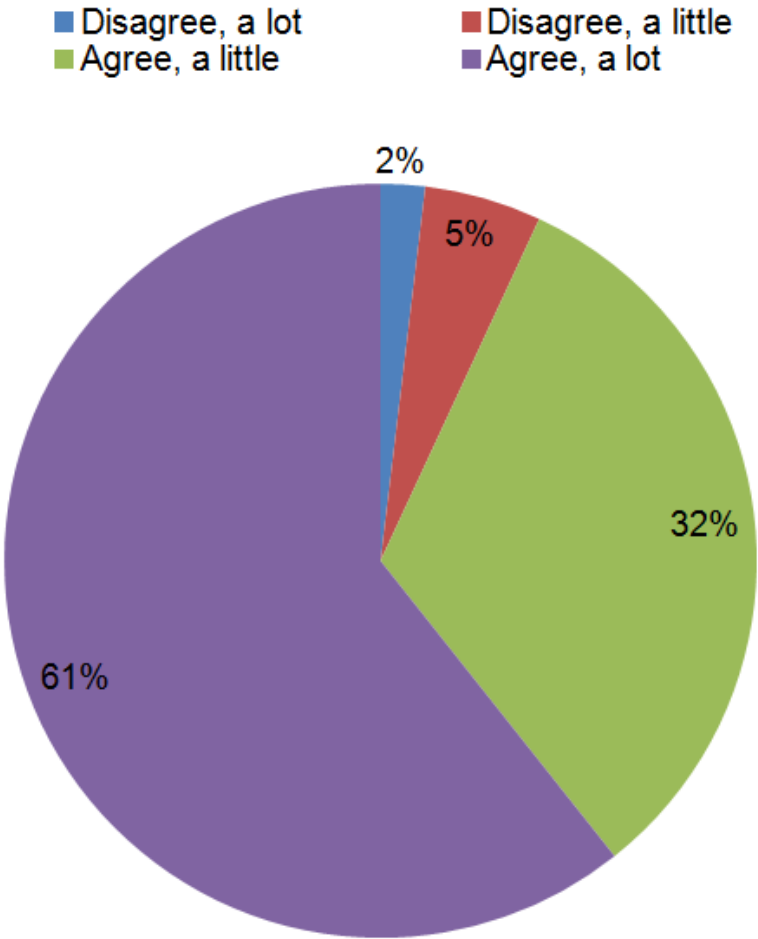
Comments (39):

- “As a parent, all we can do is provide options and let them explore their preferences. These affordable options provide free choice play, physical, social, literacy and the list goes on!”.
- “These programs allows the kids to discover and interact with new people and surroundings ”.
- “The baby is too young to express herself. However she is often smiling when in these environments”.



# Experiences Using Programs – All Programs Combined (Continued)

I have a voice and am heard by staff there.  
61% Strongly Agree

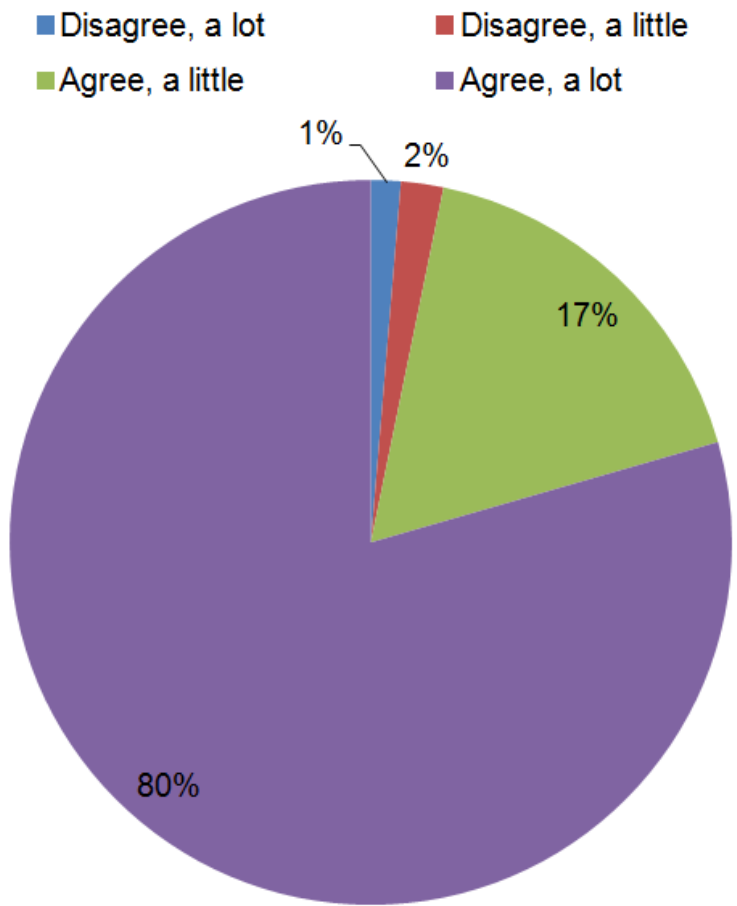


Comments (41):

- “They took my thoughts and feelings into consideration and they let me know that I was in charge!”.
- “A lot of the programs are directed by higher ups who are less accessible”.
- “It's not that I'm not heard as much as I don't always speak up”.
- “The instructor is always asking and listening”.
- “...no help or teaching given for parents choosing to formula feed their child”.

# Experiences Using Programs – All Programs Combined (Continued)

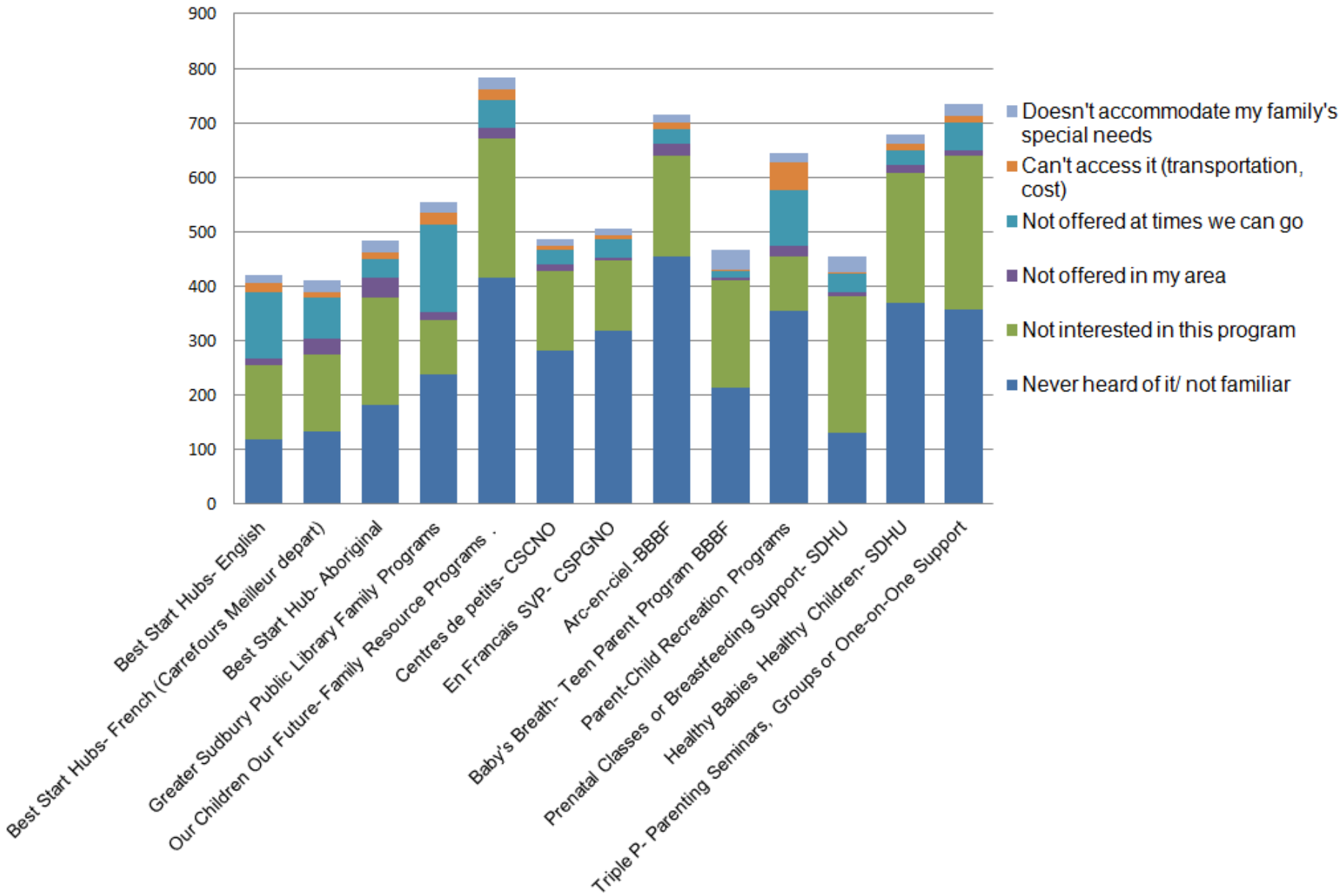
I would recommend this program/service to a friend.  
80% Strongly Agree



Comments (44):

- “I can only recommend to friends who have no jobs and have the ability to get there”.
- “I always tell all my friends who are pregnant or have babies of all the programs I attend”.
- “I would encourage moms to get out and access these in ways to prevent post partum and find support in others”.
- “Very helpful. Everyone is so nice and friendly. Good information”.
- “I think it is a great program for children to interact with others in their age group. There are many grandparents who take the children to these programs. It allows the children to play yet have some structure that may not be otherwise at home”.

# Main Reason Programs Not Used – All Respondents



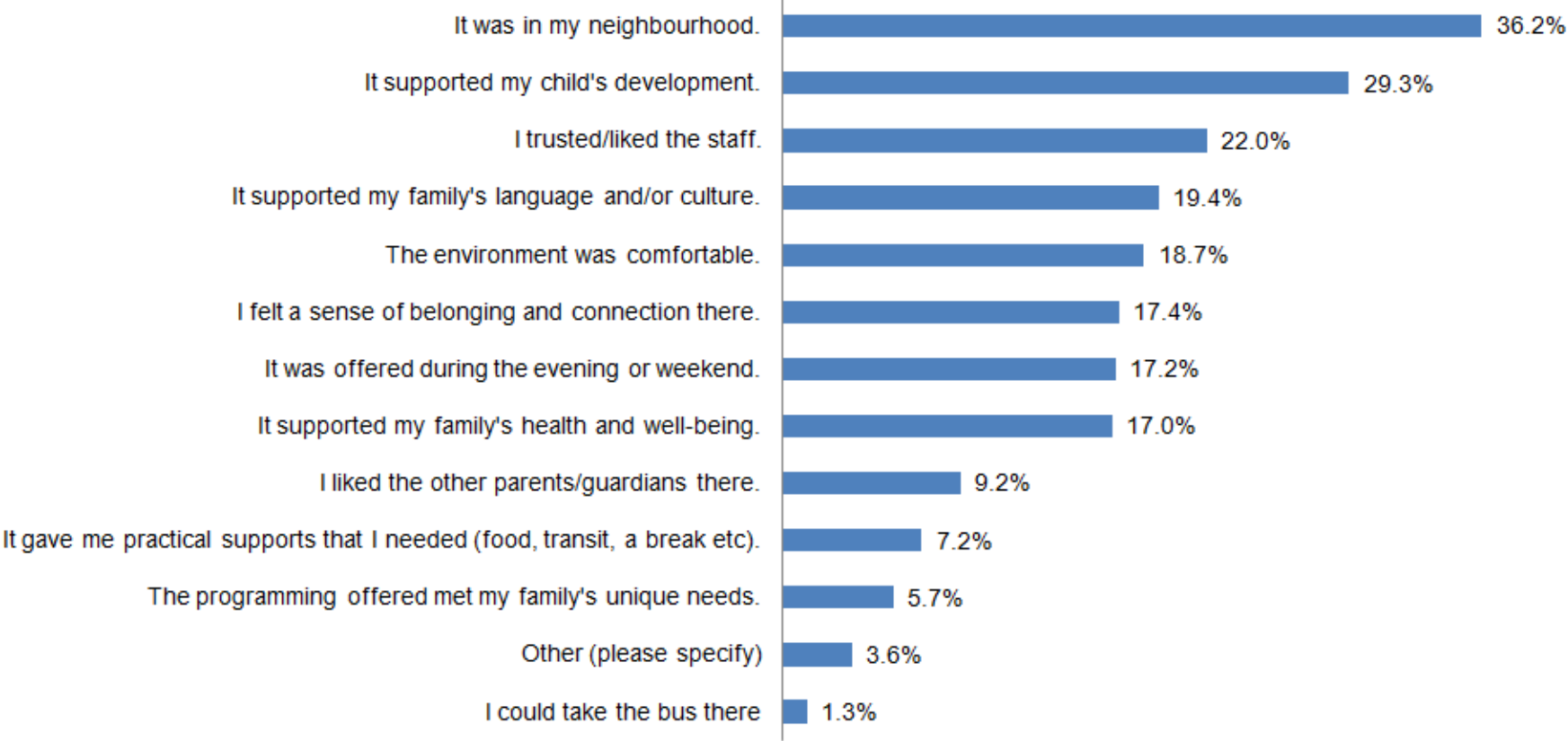
## Reasons Programs Not Used - Comments

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- "...just felt like I never needed help from any of these places. I feel that these places are needed for those who really need it, and I feel I'm okay and don't need their help"
- "...it was full when I tried to go"
- "Many programs are not geared towards children my age (7&8). Transportation is also a huge factor. When I did bring my children to programs within the city limits, it took about 4 hours of transportation time on the bus"
- "Most things are offered during the week during the day when my son is at daycare and I am at school so we can not participate in any of them."
- "Haven't heard of most places. Interested in knowing more."
- "A lot of these I have heard of but don't know how to learn more about them."
- "I had a very hard time leaving the house for long periods of time. My baby was extremely fussy and colicky. I would do quick errands and back home. I was too scared to bring a screaming baby to anything other than the house."
- "Most of these we don't go because we are already always on the move or because I had lots of family support. "
- "I feel there's a lack of information regarding programs that would fit my family. Your website is confusing. I'm sure there have been programs that my family could attend but everything I see is geared to babies imo."

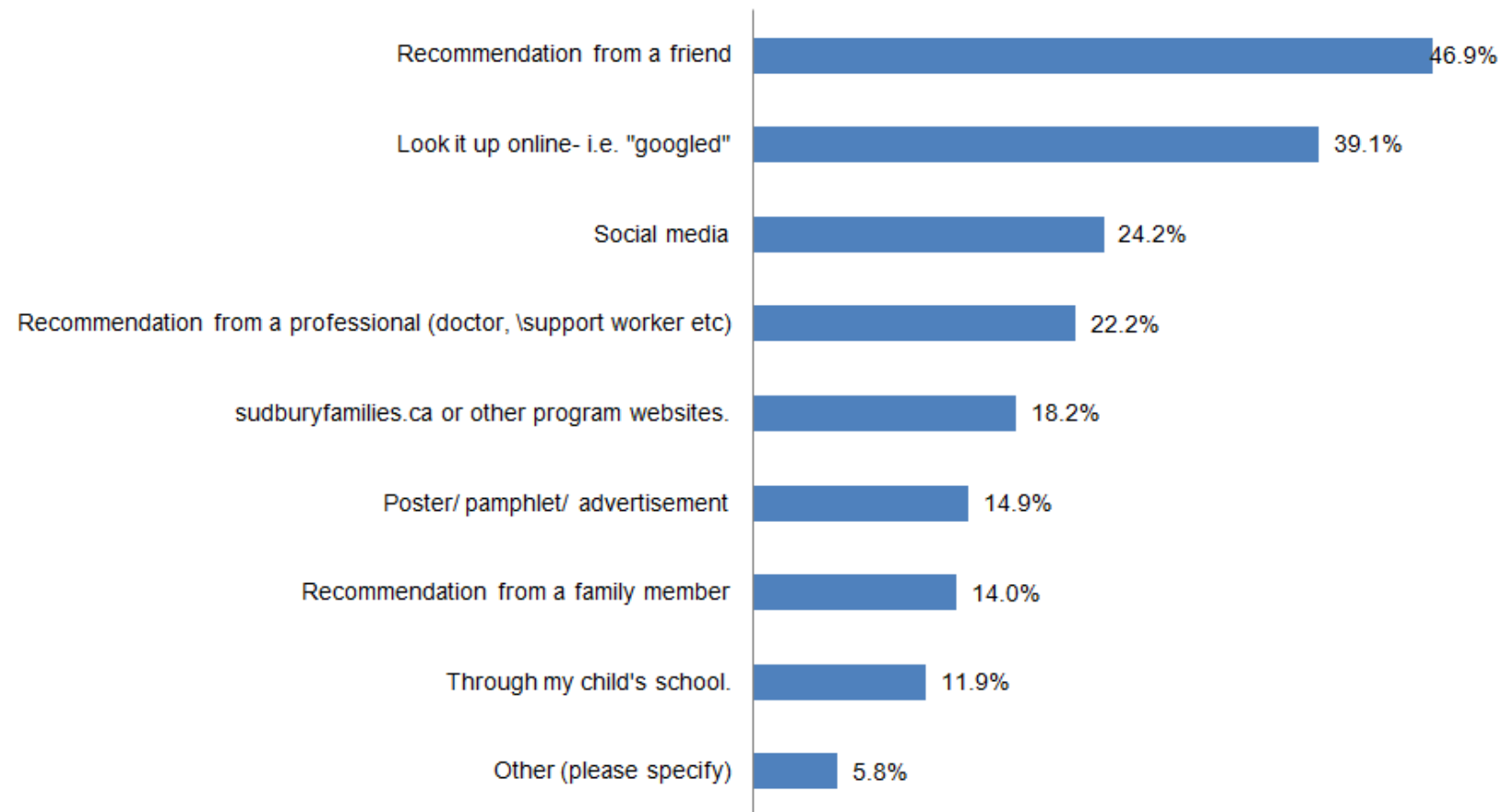


## Important Factors in Choosing Family Programs (Respondents could choose top three)



**Other answers provided:** attended with a friend, to meet other families with small children, the only ones I knew about, the time was convenient, it addressed my learning need

## How do you find out about Family Early Years Programs and Prenatal and Parenting Services



**Other answers provided:** through work, childcare centre, Ontario Works worker, midwife, Facebook

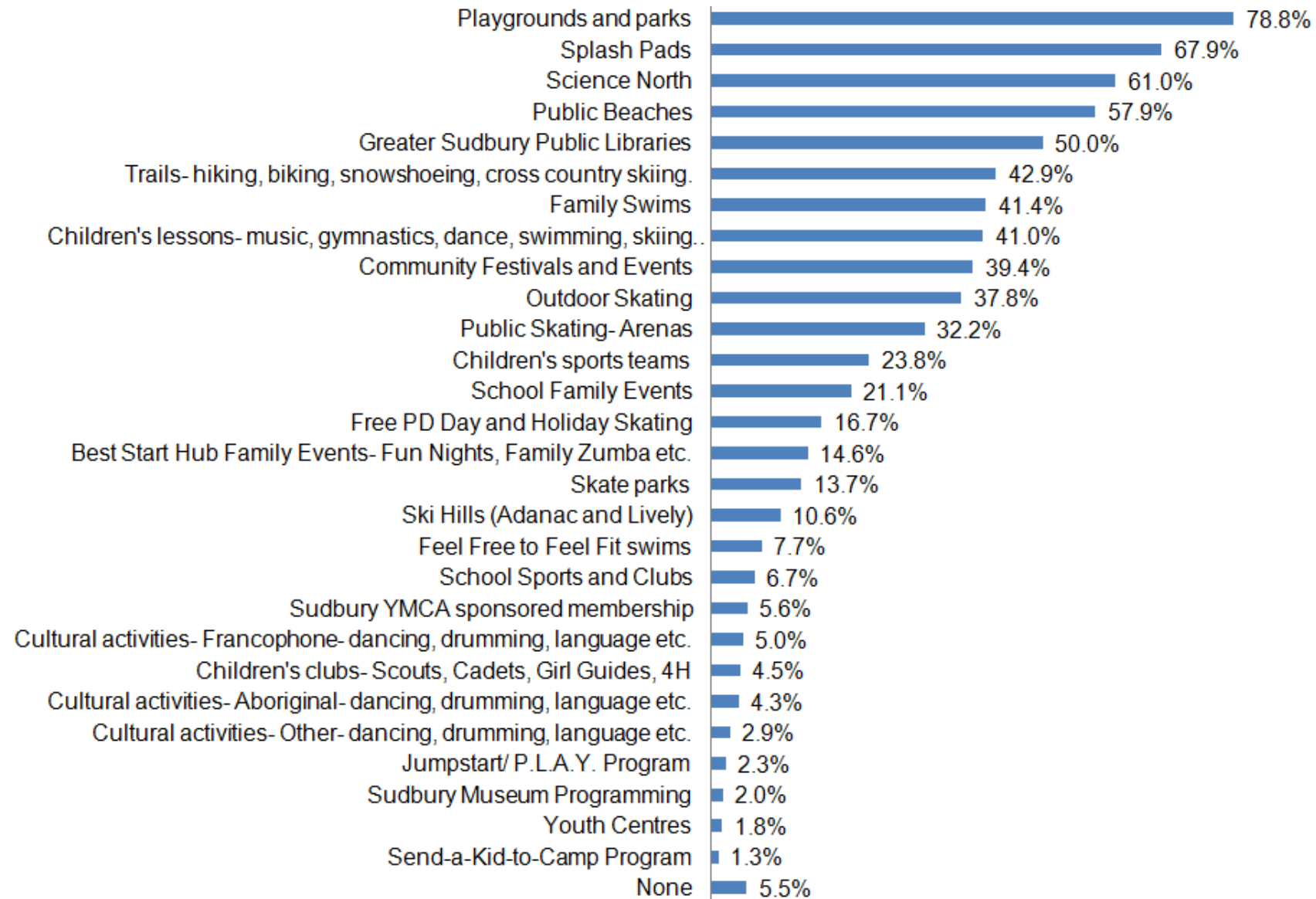
## General Comments - Themes

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- 42 comments “Thank You”- impact and importance of programs
- 19 comments about promotion: “I had no idea all of these programs existed”
- 17 comments about the schedules: want afternoon, evening and weekend times
- 5 comments about access: intimidating, costs, waiting lists
- 4 comments about lack of programming for older kids



## Regular Use of Other Community Services and Programs – All Family Services Respondents





## Front-Line Focus Groups

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- 2 Sessions held in November
- 19 participants
- 7 agencies-
  - Better Beginnings Better Futures
  - Sudbury and District Health Unit
  - Our Children Our Futures
  - Child and Community Resources
  - Carrefour Meilleur départ,
  - Jubilee Heritage Family Resources
  - Conseil scolaire catholique du Nouvel-Ontario



## What We Heard

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### ***What's the most important thing you offer?***

Welcoming environment, health promotion, social connections, child development, connecting families with services

### ***Why do families use these services?***

Free, supportive, easy (no set-up/cleaning), to get outside of the home

### ***What are the unmet needs of families?***

Transportation, physical activity space, shorter wait lists, services in outskirts, school readiness/drop-off programs

### ***What barriers are experienced by families?***

Program capacity, accessibility, school sites (religion/ past experience), program hours, social discomfort

### ***What types of families served - any changes?***

All types - blended, grandparent, care provider, international, supervised CAS visits, disengaged parents, overly cautious parents

### ***What works for attracting families?***

Events, incentives, social media, word of mouth, child focused sites, caution that reaching capacity may be a consequence.

### ***General***

Shared space is still a challenge, English speakers at French sites, infrequent outreach in outlying areas



## Appendix C

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# Focus Group

## Needs Assessment Front-Line Staff Focus Group

November 21-22, 2016

12:30–3:00, C-12

### SUMMARY

Total participants: 19

Agencies represented: Better Beginnings Better Futures, Sudbury and District Health Unit, Our Children Our Futures, Child and Community Resources, Carrefour Meilleur départ, Jubilee Heritage Family Resources, Conseil scolaire catholique du Nouvel-Ontario

#### 1. Based on your experience, what are the most important services that you offer?

- Safe and secure setting
- Trustworthy, non-threatening, informal, welcoming environment
- Connect families to services – starting point
- Provide meals, snacks/health promotion
- Parent socialization/ social connections
- Child socialization/ child development
- Parents connecting with parents
- Parents learning how to interact/ play with children - modeling
- Normalizing parenting/ sharing struggles
- School preparation/ teaching time
- Continuum of service - from hub to school
- Food security
- Free services

#### 2. What do you think are the reasons that families are coming to your services?

- Daycare is costly
- Programs are free/ can pick-and-choose locations
- Parent break/ time away from home/ sanity
- Child socialization/ physical activity/ learning
- Parent support/ supportive environment/ families supporting families
- Food/ baby supplies
- Show-up without set-up
- Point-of-contact/ support for immigrant families

#### 3. What do you think are the unmet needs of families served in the early learning environment?

- Transportation –despite transit tickets/taxi vouchers
- Transit can be expensive if tickets not provided
- No transit service in some areas
- Funding to expand sites/days/outreach
- Physical activity – some sites do not have gym access
- Wait lists for referred services
- Programs for children Grade 2-4
- Limited programs in outlying areas – once/twice per month
- No school readiness – often requested by families
- Request from parents for drop-off programs/ build resiliency before school

**4. What barriers do families with young children experience?**

Program capacity – need to turn away families  
Some sites are too busy/ noisy for families  
Stairs/ parking at some sites a challenge – not accessible  
Schools are a barrier to access for some – negative experiences/religion of school site  
Transportation – distance from bus stop/ bus times/ access from outlying areas  
No sites at social housing units  
Limited/ no evening/weekend programming  
Social discomfort – judgment by/of others  
Language barriers – use creative communication/games

**5. What kind of families are you working with? Are families changing?**

Single moms/mothers on maternity leave – peer support, coffee, time away  
Some fathers - after mothers go back to work, laid-off, injured, contracted part-time  
Grandparents/ parenting grandparents – learning new parenting techniques  
Blended families  
International families  
Supervised parent/child access visits  
Child care providers using services/programs  
Parents cautious about child use of utensils, glass, tools  
Parents unnecessarily assisting skill competent children – putting on coat, tying laces  
Disengaged parents – increased use of cell phones

**6. How can services better attract families or what has worked well to attract families?**

Promotion/ advertising  
Informing clients of program options during prenatal visits  
Promotion through childcare sites/schools/ health care providers  
Events/celebrations/ incentives/ food  
Auto-reply to parents in intervals  
Word of mouth, social media  
Programs promoting other similar programs  
Caution: some sites reach capacity, more advertising is not always needed

**7. Is there anything else you would like to share that we've missed?**

Shared space with other programs a challenge – requires regular set up/take-down  
Many Anglophones at French sites/programs  
Difficult attracting fathers  
High-risk families have other priorities than school readiness  
Programs are meant to be all-inclusive, universal  
Ride share was effective at bringing in families  
School readiness programs are an unmet need  
Supporting parents directly supports children  
Best practice: scheduling private one-on-one visits at sites with reluctant parents  
Infrequent program dates in outlying areas ineffective  
Adverse weather/social benefit payment dates = reduced attendance



## Sources

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## Sources

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Source 1 – Drawn from The City of Greater Sudbury. About Greater Sudbury, at <https://www.greatersudbury.ca/live/about-greater-sudbury/>, accessed 8 May 2017.

Source 2 – Drawn from The State Government of Victoria. Effective Engagement, at <http://www.dse.vic.gov.au/effective-engagement/developing-an-engagement-plan/a-model-for-engagement>, accessed 22 November 2016.

Source 3 – Drawn from Business & Technology Resource Group (BTRGroup.com), Establishing Accountability Framework: 5 Principles to Follow, at <http://www.btrgroup.com/establishing-accountability-framework-5-principles-to-follow/>, accessed 5 July 2017.