

# AGENDA

Thursday, December 7, 2023 at 6:30 PM

*Board Meeting Via Zoom Video Conference*

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1. **CALL MEETING TO ORDER.**
2. **TRADITIONAL LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT.**
3. **DISCLOSURE OF PECUNIARY INTEREST.**
4. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**
  - 4.1 November 9, 2023
5. **DEPUTATIONS & PRESENTATIONS.**
6. **REPORTS:**
  - 6.1 Chair
  - 6.2 Chief Administrative Officer
  - 6.3 Chief Financial Officer
7. **OUTSTANDING ISSUES.**
8. **NEW BUSINESS:**
  - 8.1 Child Care & Early Years Plan Update 2023
9. **IN-CAMERA: 1**

THAT pursuant to Section 38 of the District of Parry Sound Social Services Administration Board's *Procedural Rules*, the Board moves to an In-Camera session in order to address matters pertaining to:

  - vi) a decision concerning negotiations for an agreement or contract between the Board and a third party
10. **CORRESPONDENCE.**
11. **ADJOURNMENT.**

# MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, November 9, 2023 at 6:30 PM



Board Meeting via Zoom Video Conference

Board Members Present:

Jerry Brandt      Ted Knight  
Teri Brandt      Tom Lundy  
Janice Bray      Peter McIsaac  
Ted Collins      Jamie McGarvey  
Joel Constable      Sharon Smith  
Mike Dell      Rick Zanussi  
Teresa Hunt

Board Members Absent:

Ryan Baptiste  
Gail Finnon

Staff:

Jennifer Harris, Administrative Officer  
Shannon Johnson, CFO  
Tammy MacKenzie, CAO

Guests:

**1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER:**

The meeting was called to order by the Board Chair, Rick Zanussi at 6:30 PM.

**2. TRADITIONAL LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT.**

**3. DISCLOSURE OF PECUNIARY INTEREST.**

**4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

4.1 October 12, 2023

***Resolution 23 11 01***

**CARRIED**

*Moved by Tom Lundy*

*Seconded by Teresa Hunt*

“THAT the Board meeting minutes of Thursday, October 12, 2023 be approved as presented.”

**5. DEPUTATIONS & PRESENTATIONS.**

**6. REPORTS:**

### 6.1 Chair

Reminder that our December meeting is a week earlier than normal, it will be held on Thursday, December 7<sup>th</sup>, 2023

### 6.2 Chief Administrative Officer

Ms. MacKenzie was available to take any questions regarding the CAO report.

### 6.3 Chief Financial Officer

Financial report was presented and reviewed by Ms. Johnson.

## **7. OUTSTANDING ISSUES.**

## **8. NEW BUSINESS:**

### 8.1 Appointment of Auditors for 2023

A written report was presented and reviewed by Ms. Johnson.  
Discussion ensued around the cost and location of the new firm.

#### ***Resolution 23 11 02***

**CARRIED**

*Moved by Sharon Smith*

*Seconded by Ted Knight*

“THAT the Board appoints the firm of KPMG LLP as auditors for the District of Parry Sound Social Services Administration Board (DSSAB) for the year ended December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2023.”

### 8.2 National Housing Accord

A written report was presented and reviewed by Ms. MacKenzie.

#### ***Resolution 23 11 03***

**CARRIED**

*Moved by Teri Brandt*

*Seconded by Joel Constable*

“THAT the District of Parry Sound Social Services Administration Board supports the National Housing Accord’s multi-sector approach to ending Canada’s rental housing crisis, including their 10 recommendations;

AND THAT the District of Parry Sound Social Services Administration Board supports the attached letter from NOSDA;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT a copy of this resolution be forwarded to the two Members of Parliament representing the District of Parry Sound, the Federal Minister of Finance, and the Federal Minister of Housing;

AND FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED THAT a copy of this resolution be shared with Municipalities within the District of Parry Sound requesting their support of this resolution.”

## **9. IN-CAMERA: 1**

***Resolution 23 11 04***

**CARRIED**

*Moved by Ted Collins*

*Seconded by Peter McIsaac*

“THAT pursuant to Section 38 of the District of Parry Sound Social Services Administration Board’s *Procedural Rules*, the Board moves to an In-Camera session in order to address matters pertaining to:

- vi) a decision concerning negotiations for an agreement or contract between the Board and a third party”

Ms. Bray joined the meeting at 7:05 PM.

***Resolution 23 11 05***

**CARRIED**

*Moved by Jamie McGarvey*

*Seconded by Mike Dell*

“THAT the Board now rises out of In-Camera without report.”

**10. ADJOURNMENT.**

The meeting was adjourned to the next regular meeting to be held Thursday, December 7, 2023 via Zoom Video Conference.

***Resolution 23 11 06***

**CARRIED**

*Moved by Jerry Brandt*

*Seconded by Janice Bray*

“THAT the Board meeting now be adjourned to the next regular meeting to be held Thursday, December 7, 2023 at the hour of 6:30 PM via Zoom Video Conference.”

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District of Parry Sound



Social Services  
Administration Board

# **Chief Administrative Officer's Report**

*December 2023*

## Mission Statement

To foster healthier communities by economically providing caring human services that empower and enable the people we serve to improve their quality of life.

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## **Ontario Child Care Workforce Strategy and Protection of Children**

The government announced new measures for safer child care and a workforce strategy to aid with the attraction and retention of child care staff to help address labour shortages in the sector.

The new action taken is intended to further protect the safety of children by requiring all licensed child care operators to implement a Safe Arrival and Dismissal Policy by January 1, 2024. This will ensure that when a child does not arrive at the licensed child care program or is not picked up as expected, parents will be informed in line with existing protocols within Ontario's publicly funded schools.

The Workforce Strategy, made possible with funding through the Canada-Ontario Canada-wide Early Learning and Child Care Agreement, includes wage enhancements and other ways to address issues facing the sector. The strategy will support workforce development starting in 2024 by:

- Increasing the starting wage for RECEs employed by child care operators enrolled in the Canada-wide Early Learning and Child Care (CWELCC) system to \$23.86/hour in 2024 from the planned \$20/hour
- Extending the eligibility ceiling for a \$1/hour increase so more RECEs can benefit
- Supporting entry into the profession and career development
- Cutting red tape for employers and providing more flexibility in staffing their programs
- Launching a promotional campaign to bolster awareness and value of the child care profession

## **OMSSA's 2023 Policy Conference**

As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, the work of OMSSA (Ontario Municipal Social Services Association) (Including PSDSSAB) has been forever transformed. The pandemic has demonstrated the vital socio-economic importance of children's services, it has forced a rethink of how employment and income supports are delivered, and it has challenged an already strained housing and homeless system.

Through all of this, we have had to rapidly develop new policies and find innovative ways of effectively supporting the service users. Alongside all the successes that we have had navigating these trials, new economic challenges have emerged.

The 2023 Policy Conference, held from November 30<sup>th</sup> to December 1<sup>st</sup>, was OMSSA's annual forum for discussion and debate focused on the present and future of human services policies in Ontario. Two staff members and I were fortunate enough to attend this conference. This event brought human services leaders and policy experts, together with provincial leaders, stakeholder organizations, and other subject matter experts. This year's conference was packed with relevant content for all OMSSA Members and beyond!

**Licensed Child Care Programs**

**Total Children Utilizing Directly Operated Child Care in the District  
October 2023**

Age Group	Fairview ELCC	First Steps ELCC	Highlands ELCC	Waubeek ELCC	HCCP	Total
Infant (0-18M)	2	0	3	2	20	27
Toddler (18-30M)	10	7	9	22	28	76
Preschool (30M-4Y)	17	17	28	50	50	127
# of Active Children	29	22	29	52	98	230

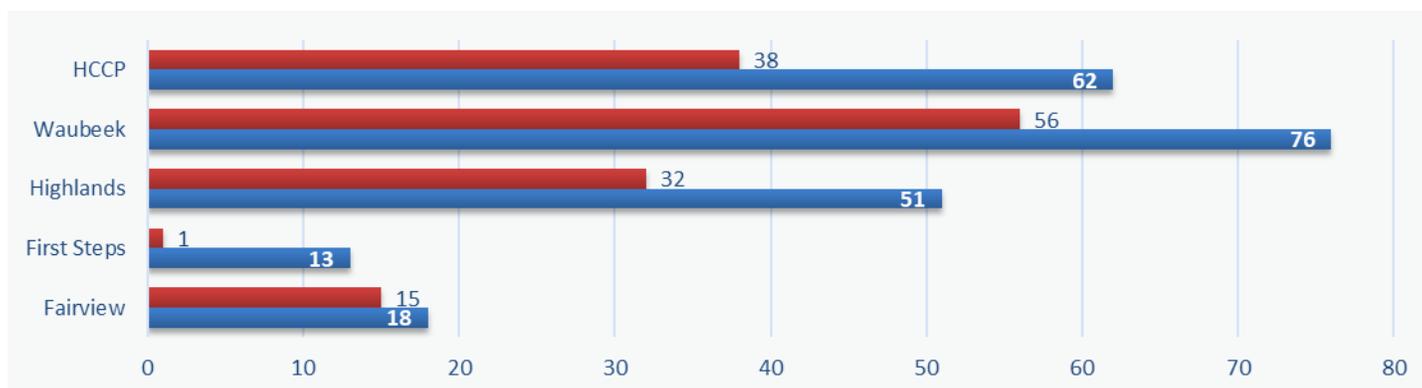
The licensed child care programs increased the enrollment by 30 children this month with the biggest enrollment being in children aged 12 – 30 months.

**School Age Programs  
October 2023**

Location	Enrollment	Primary Waitlist	Secondary Waitlist
Mapleridge After School	26	5	0
Mapleridge Before School	10	0	0
Sundridge Centennial After School	13	3	0
Home Child Care	52	15	2
# of Active Children	95	28	1

Both school age programs are currently at their operating capacity.

### Directly Operated Child Care Waitlist by Program October 2023



Waitlists in all programs continue to expand. The blue bar indicates the current number of children needing care now that cannot be accommodated. The red bar shows the number of children that will be needing care in future months. Please note: these numbers may be duplicated as families are placing their children on multiple waiting lists.

### Inclusion Support Services October 2023

Age Group	EarlyON	Licensed ELCC's	Monthly Total	YTD Total	Waitlist	New Referrals	Discharges
Infant (0-18M)	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
Toddler (18-30M)	0	9	9	19	1	3	0
Preschool (30M-4Y)	7	30	37	59	3	2	2
School Age (4Y+)	5	23	28	46	2	0	7
Monthly Total	12	62	74	-	6	6	9
YTD Total	12	79	-	128	37	37	28

There has been a slight increase in referrals as new children are enrolled in licensed child care.

## EarlyON Child and Family Program October 2023

Activity	October	YTD
Number of Children Attending	935	9,322
Number of New Children Attending	53	533
Number of Adults Attending	639	5,783
Number of Virtual Programming Events	4	39
Number of Engagements through Social Media	209	6,523
Number of Views through Social Media	4,334	89,876

There is a steady increase in attendance at all the EarlyON programs across the district with many new families seeking out the resources made available through the Resource Facilitators.

## Funding Sources for District Wide Childcare Spaces October 2023

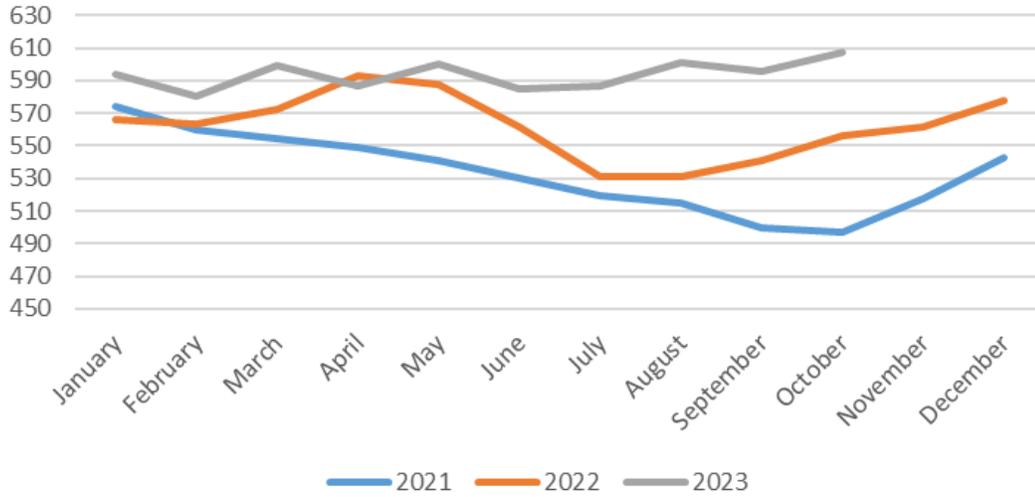
Active	# of Children	# of Families
CWELCC*	70	69
CWELCC Full Fee	200	196
Extended Day Fee Subsidy	1	1
Fee Subsidy	36	27
Full Fee	20	18
Ontario Works	16	12
<b>Total</b>	<b>343</b>	<b>323</b>

Funding Source - New	# of Children	# of Families
CWELCC	5	5
CWELCC Full Fee	6	6
Fee Subsidy	2	1
Full Fee	1	1
Ontario Works	4	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>15</b>

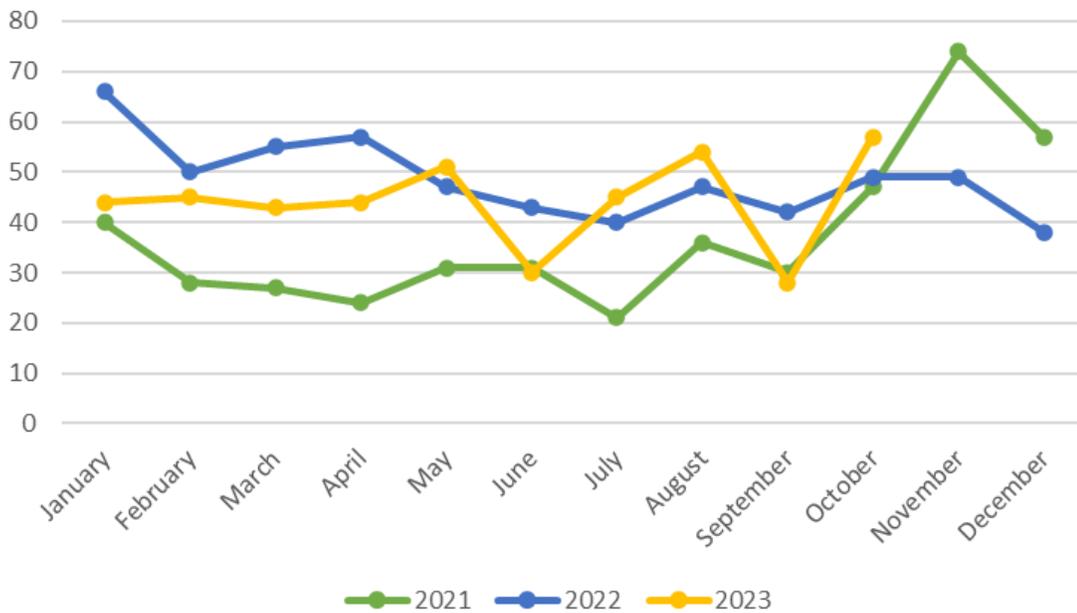
Funding Source - Exits	# of Children	# of Families
CWELCC	2	2
Full Fee	1	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>

\* CWELCC – Canada-Wide Early Learning Child Care; eligible for children 0 - 6

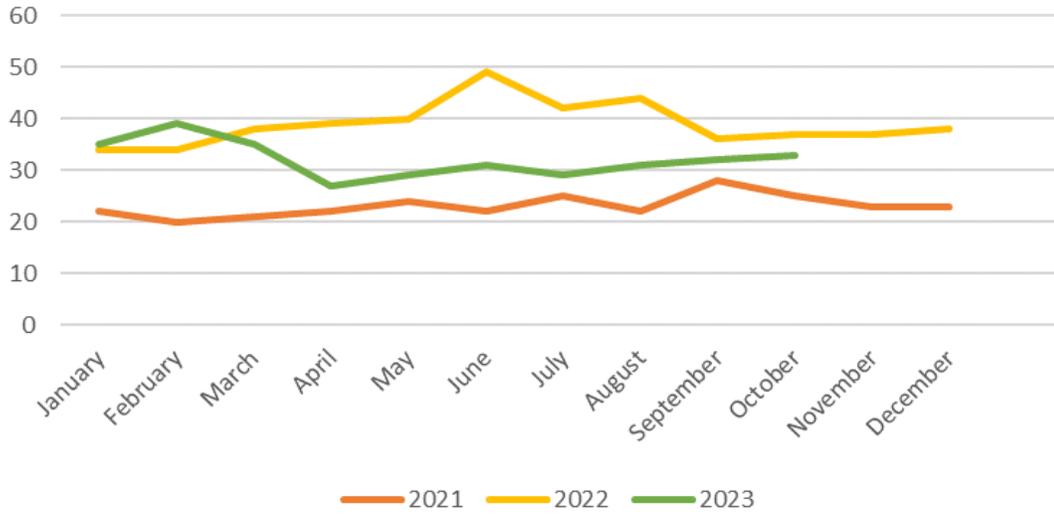
### Ontario Works Caseload



### Ontario Works Intake - Social Assistance Digital Application (SADA) & Local Office Ontario Works Applications Received



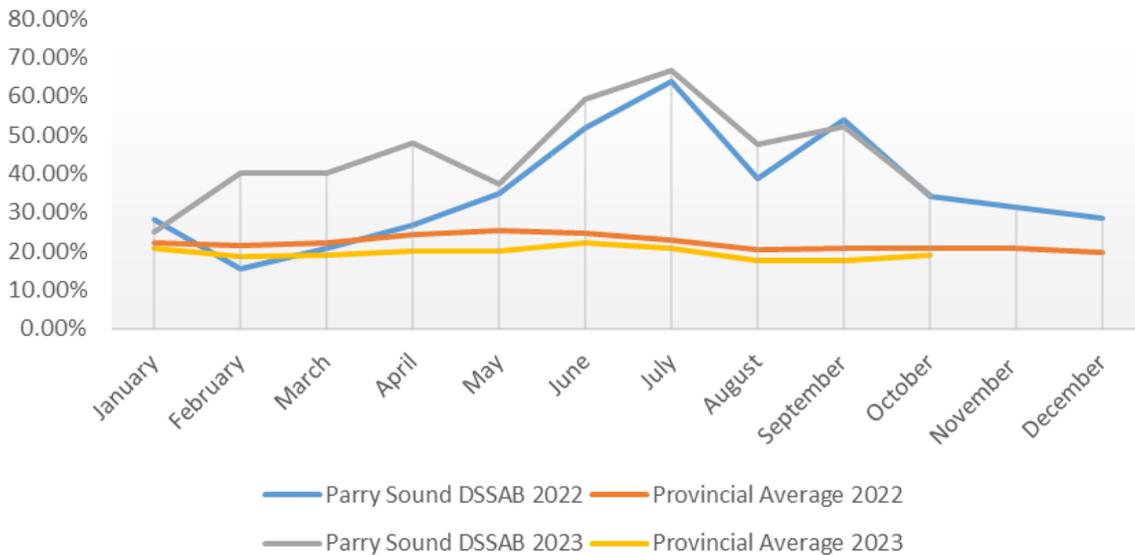
## ODSP Participants in Ontario Works Employment Assistance



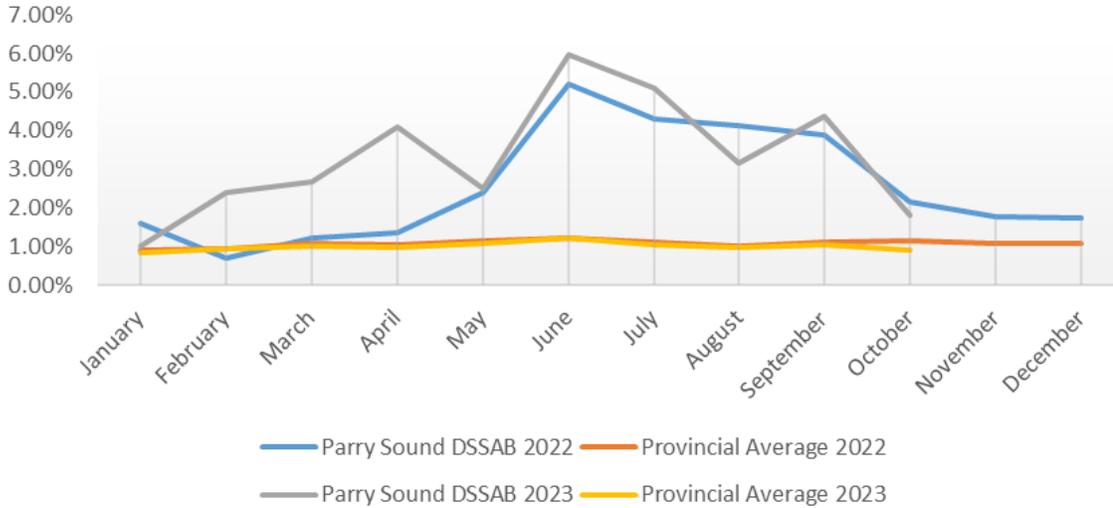
The OW Caseload as of the end of October is now 607 (there are 973 beneficiaries in total). That is the highest we have seen since 2020. We are supporting **33** ODSP participants in our Employment Assistance program. We also have **55** Temporary Care Assistance cases. Intake saw a sharp increase in October. We had **57** Ontario Works Applications (40 of those online) and **40** cases for Emergency Assistance in August which is trending higher than historical norms.

## Employment Assistance & Performance Outcomes

% of Closures Exiting to Employment

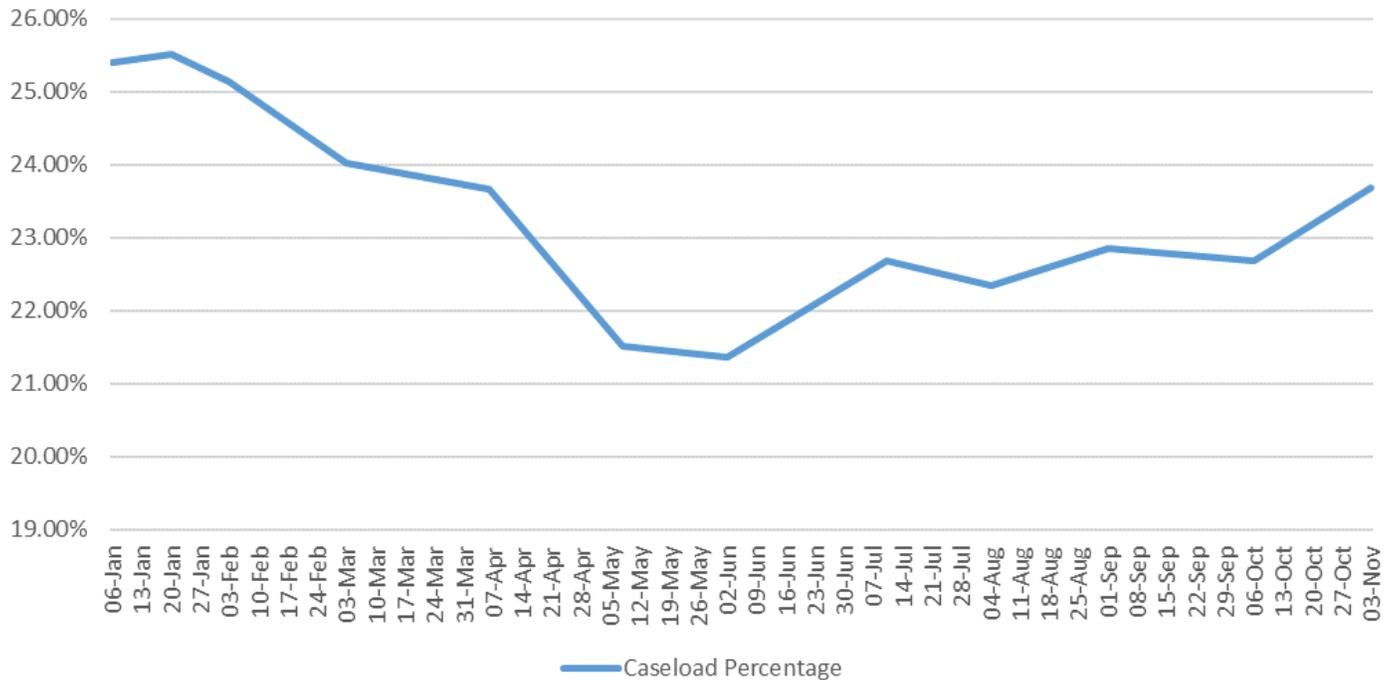


### % of Caseload Exiting to Employment



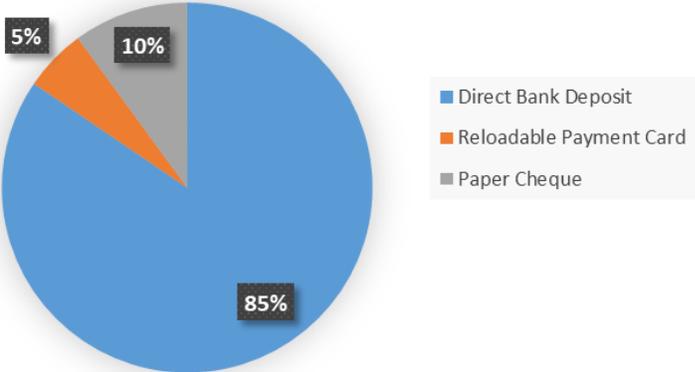
Our Employment Outcomes performance in October are on pace at the same point last year. This is likely due to the end of many seasonal jobs and the change in weather. It aligns with the sharp increase we have seen with applications we saw in October. We also exited 5.27% of the caseload for any reason in October. This is also very strong as we are into the fall season when we see many seasonal jobs ending.

### MyBenefits Enrollment 2023



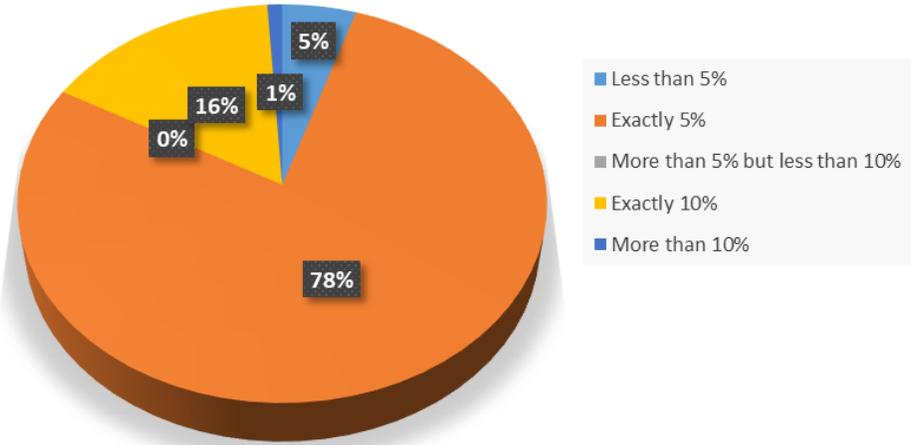
**DBD Enrollment**

**Payment Receipt Method  
October 2023**



**Overpayment Recovery Rate**

**October 2023**



## Housing Stability Program - Community Relations Workers

### Support

All services performed, provided, or arranged by the Homelessness Stability Program staff to promote, improve, sustain, or restore appropriate housing for individuals active with the Homelessness Stability Program, periodically within the month, not requiring intense case management.

### Intense Case Management

Intense Case Management involves the coordination of appropriate services and the provision of consistent and on-going weekly supports, required by the individual to obtain, and sustain housing stability.

### Contact/Referrals

October 2023	East	West	YTD
Homeless	0	4	71
At Risk	6	14	101
Esprit Outreach Homeless	0	0	6
Esprit Outreach at Risk	0	0	10
Program Total			172
Esprit in Shelter clients calculated in Homelessness numbers			
Esprit in Shelter	2		20

October 2023 Income Source	East	West
Senior	6	14
ODSP	10	28
Ontario Works	4	22
Low Income	18	33

October 2023 Income Source	East	West
Senior	13	22
ODSP	4	14
Ontario Works	8	15
Low Income	9	53

### Short Term Housing Allowance

	Active	YTD
October 2023	6	40

**Housing Stability: Household Income Sources and Issuance from HPP**

October 2023 Income Source	Total	HPP
Senior	3	\$2,100
ODSP	8	\$5,787.79
Ontario Works	2	\$2,000

October 2023 Reason for Issue	Total
Utilities/Firewood	\$1,000
Food/Household/Misc	\$8,292.41
Transportation	\$595.38
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$9,887.79</b>

**Ontario Works: Household Income Sources and Issuance from HPP**

October 2023 Income Source	Total	HPP
Senior	1	\$1,000
ODSP	17	\$10,738.45
Ontario Works	13	\$11,879.97
Low Income	3	\$1,033

October 2023 Reason for Issue	Total
Rental Arrears	\$5,936.89
Utilities/Firewood	\$4,743.97
Transportation	\$645.93
Food/Household/Misc.	\$12,420.63
Emergency Housing	\$904
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$24,651.42</b>

**By-Name List Data**

**September 2021– October 2023**



**Housing Programs**

**Social Housing Centralized Waitlist Report  
October 2023**

	East Parry Sound	West Parry Sound	Total
Seniors	47	117	164
Families	129	434	563
Individuals	512	196	708
Total	688	747	1,435
Total Waitlist Unduplicated			461

**Social Housing Centralized Waitlist (CWL) 2022 - 2023 Comparison  
Applications and Households Housing from the CWL**

Month 2022	New App.	New SPP	Cancelled	Housed	SPP Housing	Month 2023	New App.	New SPP	Cancelled	Housed	SPP Housing
Jan	5			1		Jan	5	1	13		
Feb	9	1	2			Feb	5	1	10		
Mar	12		5	2	1	Mar	6		35		
Apr	12	1	1			Apr	11		17	6	
May	11	1		3		May	13	2	9	2	
June	15		3	2		June	9	1	2	1	
July	13	2	10	1		July	5	1	5	1	
Aug	5		17	2	1	Aug	14	1	3	1	
Sept	16		10	1	1	Sept	12		4		
Oct	14		12	6		Oct	8	1	1	4	2
Nov	12	1	8	3		Nov					
Dec	1			5		Dec					
Total	125	6	68	26	3	Total	88	8	99	15	2

- Housing Programs approved eight new applications to the Centralized Waitlist in the month of October
- One new approved application was also approved for Special Priority Placement
- Four applicants were housed, two of them held Special Priority status
- One application was cancelled as the applicant is deceased

**Parry Sound District Housing Corporation  
October 2023**

Activity for Tenant and Maintenance Services

	Current	YTD
Move outs	5	31
Move in	6	28
L1/L2 forms	0	5
N4 - notice of eviction for non payment of rent	2	9
N5 - notice of eviction disturbing the quiet enjoyment of the other occupants	2	12
N6 - notice of eviction for illegal acts or misrepresenting income for RGI housing	0	0
N7 - notice of eviction for willful damage to unit	0	1
Repayment agreements	4	63
No Trespass Order	0	1
Tenant Home Visits	21	182
Mediation/Negotiation/Referrals	18	168
Tenant Engagements/Education	1	89

**Property Maintenance  
October 2023**

Pest Control		3 buildings are currently being inspected monthly for bedbugs; 3 unit has been treated
Vacant Units	12	one-bedroom (7); multiple bedroom (5) (not inclusive of The Meadow View)
Vacant Units - The Meadow View	7	one-bedroom market units available
After Hours Calls	6	Smoke detector defect, water leaking from upstairs, fire panel “trouble” alarm, building toilet plugged, flooded laundry room 4 staff participate in the on-call phone tree system
Work Orders	162	Created for maintenance work, and related materials for the month of September
Fire Inspections		12 units inspected within the month of September **as per Fire Code, we will be moving to monthly inspections **

**Capital Projects  
October 2023**

- Esprit Renovation project ongoing
- The Duplex Project ongoing
- Asbestos removal in vacant family home
- Retaining wall repair
- Main line water leak planning

Ongoing Challenges

Prices of services and materials are inflated. Wait times on certain items remains a challenge.

**Esprit Place Family Resource Centre  
October 2023**

<b>Emergency Shelter Services</b>	<b>October 2023</b>	<b>YTD</b>
Number of women who stayed in shelter this month	10	100
Number of children who stayed in the shelter this month	6	43
Number of hours of direct service to women (shelter and counselling)	275	1,672
Number of days at capacity	15	80
Number of days over capacity	13	71
Overall capacity %	110%	82%
Resident bed nights (women & children)	342	2,293
Phone interactions (crisis/support)	33	277

<b>Transitional Support</b>	<b>October 2023</b>	<b>YTD</b>
Number of women served this month	20	103
Number of NEW women registered in the program	5	25
Number of public ed/groups offered	0	3

<b>Child Witness Program</b>	<b>October 2023</b>	<b>YTD</b>
Number of children/women served this month	28	160
Number of NEW clients (mothers and children) registered in the program	3	43
Number of public ed/groups offered	0	7

**Report #:** 8.1  
**Subject:** Child Care & Early Years Plan Update 2023  
**To:** Board Members  
**Presented By:** Pam Nelson, Director of Housing & Child Care Service Management  
**Prepared By:** Pam Nelson, Director of Housing & Child Care Service Management  
**Date:** December 7, 2023

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For Information

**Report:**

Please find attached the Child Care & Early Years Plan Update 2023.

# Child Care And Early Years Plan Update 2023



The operation of childcare centres, programs for in home child care, recreational programs, children's developmental programs and child care subsidies.

Children's Services



Affordable housing directly and in collaboration with the district's housing non-profits.

Housing Services



Ontario Works for those in the community that are unemployed and seeking employment.

Income Support & Stability



Programs to address homelessness and violence against women, including the operation and management of a women's shelter.

Women's Services



## *Our Mission*

To foster healthier communities by economically providing caring human services that empower and enable the people we serve to improve their quality of life.

## *Our Vision*

A community where people know they are valued, belong, and have opportunity and purpose.

# Our values



## Kind

We are patient, understanding, caring, compassionate and trauma-informed.



## Integrity

We are honest, transparent and equitable, recognizing the public trust that is placed in us.



## Respectful

Our interactions with all people are sincere, considerate and without prejudice.



## Collaborative

We work as a team with our colleagues, community partners and the people we serve to achieve the best outcomes.



## Inclusive

We embrace the personal values, beliefs, and cultural practices of the people we support.



## Dependable

We can be relied on to deliver our services in a consistent, coordinated and professional manner.

# Demographics



**46,909**

In 2021, the enumerated population of Parry Sound (District), was 46,909, which represents a change of 9.5% from 2016. This compares to the provincial average of 5.8% and the national average of 5.2%.



**9113 Sq. KM**

The land area of Parry Sound (District) is 9,113.92 square kilometres and the population density was 5.1 people per square kilometre.



**We deliver services to people living in 22 municipalities and two unincorporated areas within the District of Parry Sound**

Township of Seguin  
Town of Parry Sound  
Township of The Archipelago  
Township of Carling  
Municipality of Whitestone  
Municipality of McDougall  
Township of McKellar  
Town of Kearney  
Village of Burk's Falls  
Township of Armour  
Township of McMurrich/Monteith  
Village of South River  
Village of Sundridge  
Township of Joly  
Township of Machar  
Township of Strong  
Municipality of Magnetawan  
Municipality of Powassan  
Corporation of the Municipality of Callander  
Township of Perry  
Township of Ryerson  
Township of Nipissing

# Canada - Wide Early Learning and Child Care Agreement (CWELCC)

The Government of Canada has identified child care as a national priority to enhance early learning and childhood development, support workforce participation and contribute to economic recovery.

Through its 2021 Budget, the federal government committed to investing in a national child care system with all provinces and territories, as well as Indigenous organizations.

Funding under CWELCC will be used to build and leverage the success of Ontario's existing early learning and child care system by increasing quality, accessibility, affordability and inclusivity in early learning and child care, towards achieving the objectives of:

- Providing a 25% fee reduction, building to a 50% reduction in average parent costs for licensed early learning and child care by the end of 2022 and reaching an average parent fee of \$10 a day by 2025-26 for licensed child care spaces.
- Creating 86,000 new high-quality, affordable licensed child care spaces.
- Addressing barriers to provide inclusive child care; and
- Valuing the early childhood workforce and providing them with training and development opportunities.

## Eligibility

All licensed service providers with programs serving children under the age of 6 (or turning 6 before June 30) in the District of Parry Sound are eligible to apply to participate in the CWELCC System. Upon approval, providers must enter into an Agreement with PSDSSAB to receive funding related to the CWELCC initiatives and will need to demonstrate financial viability to PSDSSAB.

New licensees must meet the criteria outlined in O. Reg. 236/22: GENERAL (ontario.ca)

- The centre must be licensed and show viability based on financial reports;
- The licensee must provide proof that the premises is zoned appropriately at the time of application;
- The program must be identified as a priority neighborhood (in advance of service system plan submissions);
- The licensee must comply with the legislation as set by the Ministry of Education.

## What does this mean locally?

The District of Parry Sound introduced CWELCC applications to licenced operators in June 2022. There was an immediate uptake with 95% of operators "opting in".

Fee reductions were introduced to families on August 1, 2022.  
By November 1, 2022, our district had 100% of child care operators opt-in.  
A further fee reduction was introduced to families on December 31, 2022.



# Workforce Development

Workforce Development was introduced in 2022 and supports the retention and recruitment of a high-quality child care and early years workforce. This funding is to be used to build on existing approaches and/or implement new professional learning strategies for eligible staff and home child care providers in licensed care (centre-based and home-based) and EarlyON Child and Family Centres as well as mentorship opportunities for ECE students and/or staff.

Key objectives of this funding are to:

- Sustain the existing child care and early years workforce to ensure a more stable and high-quality early years and child care system.
- Enhance access to opportunities for the workforce that promote retention and recruitment, including professional development, training, and qualification upgrade programs.
- Grow the number of qualified staff in the early years and child care workforce to increase access to high quality licensed child care for families.
- Attract and support the development of an increasingly diverse workforce to more effectively reflect the children and families accessing early years and child care programs.

## What does this mean locally?

In 2022/2023, staff and supervisors were able to access 23 different training opportunities. 23 training events or opportunities (550 front line staff, 49 supervisors)



# Become an ECE Campaign

Workforce Development was introduced in 2022 and supports the retention and recruitment of a high-quality child care and early years workforce. This funding is to be used to build on existing approaches and/or implement new professional learning strategies for eligible staff and home child care providers in licensed care (centre-based and home-based) and EarlyON Child and Family Centres as well as mentorship opportunities for ECE students and/or staff.



Hwy 11



Hwy 124



Town of Parry Sound

## What does this mean locally?

- Billboards were installed on major highways throughout the district (Hwy 124 & Hwy 11) and within the Town of Parry Sound.
- A brochure was also designed for this campaign and mailed out to all addresses within the District of Parry Sound. As indicated by our campaign communication plan, we used this method to target the district in general, but specifically the communities that have limited access to internet.
- A website ([www.becomeanece.ca](http://www.becomeanece.ca)) was launched, and a Facebook page created (<https://www.facebook.com/www.BecomeAnECE.ca>).
- A series of 4 videos was created and published to encourage the field of Early Childhood Education.



# Access & Inclusion

Ontario's vision for the CWELCC system is that more families in Ontario have access to high quality, affordable, flexible, and inclusive early learning and child care no matter where they live. Under the CWELCC agreement with the Government of Canada, Ontario has been funded to support the creation of 86,000 new licensed child care spaces (relative to 2019) by December 2026. Since 2019, 33,000 new spaces have become operational, with another 53,000 spaces to be created.

To ensure that access to affordable child care aligns with the principles above, service system managers will play a role in directing where this growth occurs. The ministry will provide each service system manager with growth targets and allocations for their region and in turn, will be required to incorporate these targets in their local service plans.

## Directed Growth

As announced in December 2022, beginning in 2023 the Ministry of Education has shifted child care expansion from open enrolment to a targeted plan to create new child care spaces. A targeted growth approach will ensure funding is available to support new spaces in communities most in need of access to high-quality, affordable child care.

The DSSAB has developed a five-year growth plan that aligns with Provincial directives and space targets while meeting the needs of communities across the region. The DSSAB conducted a survey with licensed child care providers, January 2023, that included a review of current wait list data. 21 licensed child care providers across the district were surveyed for their formal wait list numbers, including the Home Child Care program, Licensed centres and After School Programs. Within the survey, the following priority neighbourhoods were identified: Town of Parry Sound, North East Parry Sound, and West Parry Sound.

The Ministry of Education has provided municipalities with space targets for CWELCC-funded growth. Parry Sound District received the mandate to expand the CWELCC system by 131 spaces in schools and community-based locations between 2022-2026.

- 106 Community based spaces
- Home Child Care Program & Licensed Centres
- 25 School based spaces
- New school build in Parry Sound will include child care centre

25 spaces have already been committed by the Ministry of Education within plans for new school build. Two centers within the Town of Parry Sound are set to expand between 2024 and 2026, adding an additional 66 spaces and the remaining spaces will be promoted within the Home Child Care Program to support the needs in rural communities.

## Next Steps

In the Parry Sound District, our focus continues to be on targeted expansion of key age groups by leveraging existing child care centres to expand in place and promote growth in licensed home child care. This plan builds on our existing five-year service plan and will be integrated into our new early learning child care plan currently under development.

# EarlyON Child & Family Centres

Having the ability to expand to virtual live and tapped programming during the pandemic has provided staff with the tools and confidence to continue this platform and reach families that are experiencing isolation and is now being offered through the Microsoft TEAMS platform and Facebook. As of November 2023, a full time Virtual Resource Facilitator position has been created and is a full-time focus on enhancing the virtual platforms for the EarlyON program.

A newer addition to the EarlyON Program is offering in-person Francophone programming at various sites during the school year as staff travel permits. The Francophone Resource Facilitator will be visiting each program location monthly to conduct a francophone activity and circle time for the children and families. They will also be contributing to the virtual platform to include french language based programming to the rural and remote families.

Thanks to a new initiative from the Ministry of Education, EarlyON centres are now able to offer parents respite services during pre-scheduled times for 1 – 5 children so parents who have a limited support system can attend appointments that are not suitable for young children knowing that their child is well cared for so they can focus on themselves.

## 2019 Identified Priorities Update



### Priority #1

**Improve recruitment, retention and training of qualified staff AND enhance capacity building opportunities based on community needs and to align with the Ministry of Education's vision of pedagogy for the early years.**

- Workforce Funding was allocated from MEDU to support the retention and recruitment of a high-quality child care and early years workforce.
- Workforce Capacity and Innovation Fund was allocated to engage and collaborate with local community partners to build and implement innovative strategies to support the recruitment and retention of the child care and early years workforce.
- Developed and implemented Become an ECE Campaign.
- In 2022 – 2023, within the District of Parry Sound all licensed child care staff and supervisors were able to access training opportunities. 23 training events/opportunities – 550 front line staff – 49 supervisors.
- Collaborated with NOSDA and partnered with northern Colleges to offer a FREE Pre-ECE Skills Building Certificate Program. A 10-week program designed to introduce students to child care (opportunity for paid placements and acquire First Aid/CPR, Food Handler and Workplace Health & Safety).



### Priority #2

**Improve affordability, accessibility and responsiveness of early years programs.**

- Implemented Canada Wide Early Learning Child Care – 100% of licensed operators within the District of Parry Sound have enrolled. Families have had fees reduced by 50%. Further reductions will be in place by September 2025.
- Development of Directed Growth Strategy

# 2019 Identified Priorities Update (continued)



## Priority #3

### Improve public education and awareness relating to children's services across the district

- Continue to create awareness and build on the Become an ECE Campaign to help generate a public awareness of the importance of registered ECE's and the impact they have on our communities and the families and children we support. In addition, support and educate on the importance of a diverse, equitable and inclusive learning and professional environment.
- Developed messaging/utilizing social media platforms – Facebook, LinkedIn, external webpages for EarlyON.
- Marketing Plan for Home Child Care Program targeting communities in need of providers – flyers, target mail-outs, in-person promotional events.
- Launched new DSSAB website with easy access to fee subsidy applications and search engine functions to assist public in locating child care programs across the district.



## Priority #4

### Improve use of technology and data for planning and programming

- HiMama App provides directly operated programs with open communication with families, documentation for planning and programming. It also provides a platform for billing, invoices, and automated payments to families.
- EarlyON offers virtual programming through Microsoft Teams platform for Mom's-to-Mom's groups, interactive circle times with children, and wellness calls to families facing isolation.
- Utilize community demographic statistics to offer focused programming in communities with increased populations with diverse cultural and indigenous focus.
- Currently in discussion with third party to develop online portal for licensed providers to collect data that can support planning and programming.



## Priority #5

### Improve support for children with differing abilities

- Workforce Funding provided training opportunities for educators within the child care sector who support and assist children and families with unique needs and disabilities.
- Licensed providers continue to have the opportunity to access Special Needs Resource funding to support children in program – to support quality inclusion.
- Inclusion Support Services expanded program goals to include supporting and building capacity with licensed child care programs and EarlyON staff with a focus on inclusive environments as a third teacher and programming with class-wide focus to support all children. The program pivoted during COVID to include on-line and telephone consultations with families.